



**Survey and Research Report**  
**On The**  
**The Benjamin DeWitt Funderburk House**



**1. Name and location of the property:** The property known as the Benjamin DeWitt Funderburk House is located at 201 West Charles Street, Matthews, N.C.

**2. Name, address, and telephone number of the current owner of the property:**

Janet and James Johnson  
201 W. Charles Street, Matthews, N.C.  
P.O. Box 3318  
Matthews, N.C. 28106

3. **Representative photographs of the property:** This report contains representative photographs of the property.
4. **A map depicting the location of the property:** UTM coordinates 17 506711.4E 3914941.0N
5. **Current Tax Parcel Reference and Deed to the property:** The tax parcel number of the property is 19326104. The most recent deed to this property is recorded in Mecklenburg County Deed Book



**6. A brief historical sketch of the property:** This report contains a brief historical sketch of the property prepared by Frances Alexander.

**7. A brief architectural description of the property:** This report contains a brief architectural description prepared by Dr. Richard L. Mattson.

**8. Documentation of why and in what ways the property meets the criteria for designation set forth in N.C.G.S 160A-400.5.**

**a. Special significance in terms of its history, architecture and/or cultural importance:** The Commission judges that the property known as the Benjamin DeWitt Funderburk House possesses special significance in terms of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The Commission bases its judgment on the following considerations:

1. Constructed in 1904, the imposing Benjamin DeWitt Funderburk House is a remarkably well-preserved example of the transitional Queen Anne-Colonial Revival style in Matthews.

2. The Funderburk House is important, in terms of Matthews, as one the best examples of late 19th century architecture.

3. In its grand scale and fashionable style, this house clearly asserted Funderburk's rank among the leading citizens of Matthews.

4. The Funderburk House represent the prosperity and development of Matthew at the end of the 19th century.

**b. Integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling and/or association:** The Commission contends that the architectural description prepared by Dr. Richard L. Mattson demonstrates that the property known as the Benjamin DeWitt Funderburk House meets this criterion.

**9. Ad Valorem Tax Appraisal:** The Commission is aware that designation would allow the owner to apply for an automatic deferral of 50% of the Ad Valorem taxes on all or any portion of the property which becomes a "historic landmark." The current appraised value of the house and land is \$724,300.

**10. Portion of the Property Recommended for Designation.** The exterior of the house and the land associated with tax parcel number 19326104.

## **Statement of Significance**

Constructed in 1904, the imposing Benjamin DeWitt Funderburk House is a remarkably well-preserved example of the transitional Queen Anne-Colonial Revival style in Matthews. The house combines the boxy massing and bold classical detailing of the Colonial revival with such Queen Anne features as a curvilinear porch, bracketed cutaway bays, and a high hip roof covered in decorative slate shingles. Matthews developed a small, agricultural service center and shipping point along the Carolina Central Railroad which, at its completion in 1872, connected Wilmington at the North Carolina coast with the inland rail center of Charlotte. The railroad brought commercial prosperity to Matthews, and Benjamin DeWitt (B.D.) Funderburk rose to local prominence as a dry goods merchant and banker. In its grand scale and fashionable style, this house clearly asserted Funderburk's rank among the leading citizens of Matthews. With much of the town now swallowed by new suburban development, the Funderburk House survives as one of the few dwellings to predate the late twentieth century construction boom. Matthews contains only one other example of the Queen Anne style and no other examples of the Colonial Revival. The 1890 Edward Solomon Reid House on West John Street is a well-preserved and full expression of the Queen Anne cottage, boasting a corner tower and a profusion of decorative sawn work. By contrast, the later Funderburk House blends picturesque and classical traits, reflecting the rise of transitional Queen Anne-Colonial Revival dwellings in the county's bustling railroad towns after 1900.

By the turn of the twentieth century, domestic designs in Mecklenburg County's small, rail-related towns began to reflect the newfound wealth associated with the booming textile industry and a rural prosperity based on commercial cotton cultivation. Small town merchants and professionals began to favor up-to-date house designs popularized in widely circulating architectural publications and builders' guides. Often mirroring city dwellings in their sophistication, these houses introduced urbanity to the small towns and countryside. By the turn of the twentieth century, many builders were combining Queen Anne and Colonial Revival features as classicism, in its various forms, began to regain popularity over the exuberant picturesque styles of the late nineteenth century. For example, the complex roof silhouettes, jutting bays, and deep, wraparound porches were mixed with classical porch posts, pedimented gables, Palladian windows, and columned mantelpieces. Built in 1904, the Funderburk House marks this transition in architectural trends.

## **Historical Background**

Benjamin DeWitt (B.D.) Funderburk (1868 -1954) was born in Chesterfield County, South Carolina, to Ellison James (e>J.) and Selia Anne Funderburk, but shortly after his birth, the family which included ten children, moved to Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. A farmer and entrepreneur, E.J. Funderburk became a large landowner in eastern Mecklenburg County. In 1878, he began acquiring parcels in the small railroad settlement of Matthews, and in the ensuing decades, E.J. Funderburk and sons B.D., Thomas, and Ellison became civic leaders and prominent businessmen (southeast News 10 November 1975; Funderburk 1967: 329-331; Mecklenburg County Deed Book 59: 357).

The town of Matthews took shape after the Civil War as a farming community and marshalling point for agricultural products along the Carolina Central Railroad. In 1872, this East-West railway was completed between Charlotte and Wilmington, North Carolina, and two years later a depot was established at Matthews, southeast of Charlotte. Named in honor of Watson Matthews, a member of the Board of Directors of the Carolina Central Railroad, the town was incorporated in 1879. By the turn of the twentieth century, Matthews was a thriving agricultural service center. With over 200 residents, Matthews included a bank, several livery stables, a post office, drugstore, hotel, dry goods stores, and adjacent blocks of houses. Grist mills, blacksmith shops, and cotton gins were sited near the railroad tracks at the north end of town. In 1907, a public supported high school for white students arose at the south end. The main commercial street was North Trade Street, which runs perpendicular to the railroad (Southeast News 10 November 1975; Morrill and Little-Stokes 1978: 4; Mattson 1991: 4-5, 15).

As Matthews grew, the Funderburks prospered. B.D. Funderburk, the most prominent of the siblings, expanded his father's dry goods store on North Trade Street and in 1909 constructed another building for the Bank of Matthews, of which he was president. Civic minded, he also served on the Mecklenburg County Board of Education for over thirty years. His brothers Thomas and Ellison owned general merchandise stores, a blacksmith shop, and grist mill (Morrill and Little-Stokes 1978: 5-6; Southeast News 19 December 1979).

B.D. Funderburk married Sallie Faulkner on July 11, 1895, and raised three children into adulthood, each of whom was actively involved in the family's business enterprises. According to family history, shortly after his marriage in 1895, Funderburk acquired a one-story dwelling on the present lot from his father. In 1904, Funderburk constructed the existing two-story, Queen Anne-Colonial Revival residence on the site, incorporating elements of the original house. In 1926, the house was acquired by son, Lee Edward Funderburk (1899-1979), who married Mildred Elizabeth (Betty) Morrah in that year. Lee Edward Funderburk graduated from Erskine College in Due West, South Carolina, and served as the president of the Bank

of Matthews for fifty-six years. His wife, Betty, taught in the public schools. They had no children, but boarded school teachers in their spacious house. Betty Funderburk resided in the house until 1991 when she moved to a local retirement community – Plantation Estates where she died in 2001. Her niece Nancy and husband David Stafford purchased it from her in 1991 and did not do any renovations. The B.D. Funderburk House is currently owned by Jimaana Properties, LLC of Matthews who completely renovated the residence in 2009. (Southeast News 10 November 1975; 19 December 1979).

### **Architectural Description**

The Benjamin DeWitt Funderburk House is a transitional Queen Anne-Colonial Revival dwelling that occupies a roughly one-acre site on West Charles Street in the small town of Matthews. Matthews is located roughly fifteen miles southeast of downtown Charlotte in Mecklenburg County. Situated near the center of town, the house faces north on a corner lot with a wooded railroad right-of-way across Charles Street from the house. On nearby tree lined streets are a mix of houses, churches, and commercial buildings dating from the late nineteenth to late twentieth centuries.

The Funderburk property is notable for its evocative setting. The spacious lot encompasses mature landscaping, much of which appears to date to the early twentieth century. A small front lawn is bisected by a concrete walkway with mature magnolias framing the house. The large side and rear yards West and North of the house are shaded by tall hardwood trees that are interspersed with beds of mature camellias, azaleas, nandinas, and boxwoods. Along North Fremont Street, which forms the Eastern border of the property, is a large, mature tulip magnolia which matches one planted at the same time across Fremont on the Phillips' property. The site also includes several outbuildings. In the side (west) yard is a brick, hip roofed pump house (ca. 1904) that originally has a windmill to provide power to the pump. The original pump inside the building is extant. Along North Fremont Street is a brick, hip roofed garage which appears to have been a ca. 1904 carriage house with two bays that was remodeled ca. 1920 with the addition of two bays and a brick veneer. Just north of the garage is a hip roofed, German sided meat house (ca. 1904) with a decorative Eastlake door. The meat house, carriage house, garage, and pump house are all contributing recourses.

*To simplify the physical narrative, directions will be described by their closes cardinal point. For example, the house, which actually faces 20 degrees (i.e., Northeast), will be described as facing North.*

## Funderburk House: Exterior



*Side View, Facing West*

*Side View, Facing East*

Constructed in 1904 around a late nineteenth century dwelling, the Funderburk House blends Queen Anne and Colonial Revival elements with selected picturesque features of the earlier house. This imposing, two and one-half story, frame, dwelling with a symmetrical, three bay, double pile massing and a high hip roof has flared eaves and hip roofed dormers. A classical balustrade straddles the ridgeline of the roof. The rear ell has its own articulated, hip roofed, double pile massing that mimics the boxy proportions of the main block. The hip roof of the rear ell is also punctuated by hip roofed dormers.

One of the key elements of the house is the curvilinear, wraparound porch that almost fully encircles the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the house. The open porch is interrupted by a small sunroom and bathroom bay. This area was converted to a master closet and bath in

the 2009 renovation and projects from the east side. On the west side elevation, the porch terminated in an enclosed room and small bathroom bay which were mid-twentieth century additions, both of which were removed during the 2009 renovation allowing the porch to terminate in its original location at the rear ell.



*Rear of House*

Along the principal elevations, the porch is supported by Tuscan columns that sit on brick pedestals. The porch has a projecting entrance bay with a flat roof that caps a tall, vernacular entablature consisting of recessed panels framed by rows of dentil molding. A classical balustrade sits atop the flat roof. The house has an Ecostar slate style shingle roof embellished with scalloped shingles that form a broad, decorative band within the otherwise uniform field of rectangular shingles. The original 1904 slate roof had to be replaced during the renovation due to excessive leaking and non-existent flashing. The box cornice has a simple, denticulated frieze that is repeated along the porch. Metal cresting is found along the ridge of the hip roof. The original porch roof used soldered tin which has been covered by rubber. The rubber roofing was removed and a metal roof was installed during the 2009 renovation. The house originally had three interior, brick chimneys with corbelled caps. While weatherboards cover most of the exterior, German siding is found on the first story under the shelter of the porch. The house originally had one-over-one light, double hung, wooden sash windows, with at least one two-over-two window appearing to have been reused from the earlier house. The single pane windows were in bad shape and were replaced with new wood insulated windows during the 2009 renovation. The house has a brick foundation.

In addition to the porch, the symmetrical façade is enlivened by cutaway corners, with scrolled brackets at the cornice line, large, Queen Anne style windows flanking the



entrance, and a semi-circular opening in the center bay of the second story. The opening originally led to a slightly recessed doorway to the second floor but was filled in with weatherboard at some point in time. The molding that framed the opening is still intact as are the original wood and glass door. The weatherboard was removed and the original design of this opening was restored during the 2009 renovation. The main entrance to the house consists of a multiple light door framed by fluted pilasters rising from moillioned bas blocks and capped by a transom and classical cornice. The leaded glass transom over the door and the flanking Queen Anne windows are embellished with matching geometric and floral motives that are original to the home.

The porche originally continued around the rear elevation and utilized Tuscan columns for support along the rear elevation of the main block. This section was enclosed to allow for the expansion of the master bathroom and the addition of a powder room. Along the rear, the columns are spanned by a turned post balustrade and at one time there appeared to be framing for the screening. The rear ell porch has an L-plan configuration and incorporated elements of the original house including chamfered box piers and an inset, fluted staircase balustrade inspired by the Chinese Chippendale style. This staircase was removed, the porch was enclosed with glass walls and a French door which opened into the main block from the back porch was replaced with a double French door in 2009. Above the box piers is a frieze comprised of recessed, beaded board panels capped by dentil molding. Along the rear (south) elevation, the porch exterminated at an end bay that was converted to a bathroom in the mid-twentieth century. This section was reclaimed into the main block and converted to a small powder room and laundry room during 2009 renovations. The porch roof continued beyond the end bay to shelter a secondary entrance to the kitchen. The door was reached by a short, interior staircase that was supported by a single, Tuscan column at the corner. Also along the rear elevation was a simple, metal, shed roof that projected from the rear porch to cover the entrance to a cellar which is said to be associated with the earlier house on the sit. During the 2009 renovation, the metal shed roof was removed and the cellar opening was covered with storm cellar doors. Also, the rear kitchen entry was relocated and the old entry space was reclaimed as a pantry. The new brick stairway under the rear porte cochere which was also added to the rear ell during the 2009 renovation works leads to the new mudroom, laundry, and kitchen.

### **Funderburk House: Interior**

The Funderburk House has a well-preserved interior composed primarily of stylish Queen Anne and Colonial Revival elements. Some features appear reused from the earlier dwelling including some late nineteenth century, five-panel doors and simple, picturesque mantels in several bedrooms and the dining room. Classically inspired door and window surrounds consisting of tall plinths and wide, simply molded jambs

capped by flat friezes and molded cornices are present throughout the interior. 12 foot ceilings throughout the first floor enhance the spacious feeling of the home. These ceilings were covered with drop ceiling tiles prior to the 2009 renovation. The front of the house is divided into two parlors of unequal size. The entrance opens directly into the larger of these two formal rooms with French doors into the smaller parlor and pocket French doors at the entrance to the rear hall. The larger room has a deep cornice molding and a classically-inspired, mirrored overmantle, Ionic columns and entablature, and a bracketed mantle. The decorative metal firebox cover is also intact and the fireplace has been restored and now has gas burning coal baskets. The smaller parlor repeats the formality of the living room with a similar, highly embellished, mirrored overmantel with classical stylistic elements and molded cornice. The baseboards found in the two parlors repeat the tall plinth and molded cornice design of the surrounds found through the house. The smaller parlor was embellished with built-in bookcases during the 2009 renovation.

Behind the two front rooms is a short stair hall. The hall has both vertically and diagonally laid, beaded board wainscoting capped by molded chair rails and a broken, closed- string staircase with a classical box pier newel and turned post balustrade. Candlestick light fixtures from the 1930's on the newels and the bottom of the stairs and on the landing were replaced with single turned spheres and a French door at the rear of the hall leading on to the rear porch was converted into the entry for a small powder room.

A five panel door, apparently reused from the earlier dwelling on the site, opens off the stair hall into a bedroom located behind the smaller parlor. This room had a mirrored overmantel, curvilinear mantel supports, and short, Tuscan columns supporting the entablature. The mantel was replaced with anew curvilinear mantel with longer Tuscan columns which matched the other added custom cabinetry where the two closets had been located. A French door led into the bathroom area off this bedroom a sunroom in the mid-twentieth century. During the 2009 renovation, this bathroom was expanded to encompass the area of the curvilinear porch adjacent to the bedroom and a double French door was added for entry in the expanded bathroom.

Behind the larger parlor is the dining room which has a simple, picturesque mantel that also may have been a part of the earlier dwelling. A French door leading to the enclosed porch area was replaced with a double French door when the porch was re-opened and allowed to extend back to its original location at the rear ell. A double width opening connects the dining room with the interior of the rear ell. The ell was divided unevenly between a large family room and a smaller kitchen that stretched across the rear of the ell. The kitchen at the rear of the house had laminate counters, a washer and dryer and simple, built-in cabinets that reflected its mid-twentieth century remodeling. These two rooms were combined and the rear chimney was removed

during the 2009 renovation.. The bricks from the chimney were used to build the new fireplace hearth. This one room is now a large kitchen and keeping room. In addition, a French door leading into the glass enclosed sunroom was expanded to a double French door. The simple molded door and window surrounds, and the tall baseboards found in the formal front rooms of the house are repeated through the rear ell.

During the 2009 renovation, it was discovered that the home had extensive termite damage throughout the first level and much of the floors and wall material had to be replaced. There was also evidence of a fire in the east first floor bathroom where the master bathroom is now located. The replacement hardwood for the first floor was obtained by custom milling heart pine timbers into flooring during the renovation work. The timbers were salvaged ceiling timbers obtained during the demolition of an old mill on the west side of Charlotte.

The upstairs has a broad center hall off which opens four bedrooms. Three remained intact, but the fourth, at the southwest corner, was partitioned in the mid-twentieth century to create a bathroom. All hardwood floors on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor are original. The 2009 renovation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor removed the mid-twentieth century bathroom and created two small “jack and jill” bathrooms between the bedrooms on each side. To gain space for bathrooms it was necessary to close the fireplaces in the rear bedrooms. The upstairs hall is lighted by a window on the stair landing at the rear and by the multiple light and wood paneled door that opens onto the front balcony.

The attic stair and enclosure configuration which appeared to be an original feature of the house partially obscured the rear window. This was opened up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor hallway and the rear dormer was expanded to allow the stairway to be fully functional up to the third floor. The plaster walls have been removed in the upstairs, but the beaded board wainscoting, the molded chair rails, the fireplace mantels, the wooden trim work, and the horizontal paneled doors are all original. The bedroom mantels are simpler versions of the classically-inspired, mirrored overmantels found on the first floor.

The third floor has a large, central room off of which two rooms open on either side. Each side room has two five panel doors with original box locks. The attic retains its horizontal beaded board walls and ceiling and hardwood floors. In the ceiling of the attic is an opening which provides access to the “widow’s walk” on the roof of the house.

### **Meat House {Contributing Resource}**

Sited along Freemont Street, the frame meat house appears to date with the construction of the house in 1904. This outbuilding has a hip roof and German siding. The meat house had two Eastlake doors with picturesque lower panels and single light upper panels that may have been reused from the original house on this property. The Eastlake door on the east side of the shed (facing Freemont St) was removed and re-used as an entrance to the old carriage house.

### **Pump House {Contributing Resource}**

The hip roofed pump house sits in the large side yard on the west side of the house. The pump house has battered, timber frame walls with brick infill. There is an entrance on the south elevation, and each of the other elevations is punctuated by a single light window. Although the windmill that originally provided power is no longer extant, the water pump is intact. During the 2009 renovation the original tilt-down windows were restored.

### **Carriage House/Garage {Contributing Resource}**

Located at the southeast corner of the property is a brick carriage house/garage. The carriage house/garage has a broad hip roof exposed rafters, and four bays with double leaf, wooden doors. The doors have recessed lower panels above which are unevenly divided, multiple lights. The side and rear elevations are punctuated by four-over-four, double hung, wooden sash windows. The carriage house/garage reflects its ca. 1920 remodeling, but the arrangement of the rafters indicates that the southern half of the building predates the 1920s and may have been built as a carriage house in 1904. In addition, the doors in the two sections are slightly different from each other. The doors in the original carriage house have two lower panels while the two doors in the ca. 1920 addition each have single panels. The wire-cut brick veneer may also have been added at the time of the remodeling. During the 2009 renovation all of the original doors and windows were restored and an opening was added between the two garages where a window was once located. Also, a small bathroom was added at the rear of the building.

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### **Major Bibliographic References (Footnotes):**

Funderburk, Guy B. Funderburk History and Heritage. Salem Press: Pageland, South Carolina. 1967

Gatza, Mary Beth. Architectural Inventory of Rural Mecklenburg County. Survey files available at the North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, 1987.

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Mecklenburg County. Mecklenburg County Courthouse, Register of Dees. Funderburk Brothers Buildings." On file at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission, Charlotte 1978.

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National Register Nomination 2009.