Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

DATA SHEET 8. The Contemplative Society

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INIVENITODY NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAY 3 0 1975

MARIAIOKI -	- NOMINATION	I FURNI	ATE ENTERED """	
SEE IN	STRUCTIONS IN <i>HOW</i> TYPE ALL ENTRIES -	TO COMPLETE NATA	IONAL REGISTER FORM	IS
NAME				
HISTORIC Cony	verse College Histo	oric District		
AND/OR COMMON S ame	<u> </u>			
LOCATION				
STREET & NUMBER	580 East Main Stree	et		
CITY, TOWN Spart	 canburg		NOT FOR PUBLICATION CONGRESSIONAL DIST	
		VICINITY OF	#4	CODE
Soutr		45 ^{CODE}	Spartanburg	083
CLASSIFICA	TION			
CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRE	SENT USE
XDISTRICTBUILDING(S)	PUBLIC	X_OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
STRUCTURE	_XPRIVATEBOTH	UNOCCUPIEDWORK IN PROGRESS	COMMERCIAL .XEDUCATIONAL	PARK
SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION		ENTERTAINMEN	—PRIVATE RESIDENC T —RELIGIOUS
OBJECT	_IN PROCESS	YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
	BEING CONSIDERED	X_YES: UNRESTRICTEDNO	—INDUSTRI≜L —MILITARY	_TRANSPORTATION
OWNER OF	PROPERTY			OTHER:
NAME Board of	Trustees			
STREET & NUMBER	Callaga			
Converse CITY, TOWN	Correge		OTATE	
Spartanbı	urg	_ VICINITY OF	STATE South Caro	lina
	OF LEGAL DESC	RIPTION		
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC	Spartanburg Co	unty Courthouse		
STREET & NUMBER	Magnolia Stree	t		
CITY, TOWN	Spartanburg		South Caroli	na
REPRESENT	ATION IN EXIST	TING SURVEYS	5	
TITLE				
Inventory	of Historic Place	s in South Carol	ına	
1973		FEDERAL	XSTATECOUNTYLOCA	L
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS SOL	uth Carolina Depar	tment of Archive	s and History	
CITY, TOWN	mh i a		State South Carol	ina
1.11111	10 1 1 A		SOUTH LAKOL	1114



__FAIR

CONDITION

XEXCELLENT __DETERIORATED _XGOOD

__RUINS __UNEXPOSED **CHECK ONE**

__UNALTERED XALTERED

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XORIGINAL SITE

__MOVED DATE____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Converse College was chartered in 1889 and incorporated in 1896. During its first session it had only one building. In September 1891 an additional structure, a 4-story brick building, known as the Annex was completed. It was located near Main Building and connected to it by a covered passageway on the first, second, and third floors. In January 1892 the Main Building was destroyed by fire; however, the Annex was saved. The cornerstone of the present Main Building was laid April 21, 1892 on the site of the burned structure. The exterior of Main Building, renamed Wilson Hall in 1929 in honor of the first president of Converse. B. F. Wilson, is similar in design to that of the original Main Building. Converse's formative years Main Building served as a center for the school's activities as well as providing dining facilities, faculty and student living quarters, classrooms, and administrative offices. The Annex, which served as classroom, dormitory, and dining area until the erection of Main Building, is today a dormitory. In 1941 it was named Pell Hall in honor of Converse President Robert P. Pell.

Over the years Converse's enrollment has increased, and the facilities of the school have expanded to meet the growing needs of the campus. Today Converse consists of some 27 structures and has an enrollment of approximately 750 students. The historic district is comprised of six buildings on the Converse front campus, the Towne House behind Pell Hall, and the alumni house (Cleveland House) located across the street from the college.

Historic Structures within the Converse College Historic District:

- Annex (Pell Hall): 1891, 4 stories, brick, central tower; oldest structure within district; connected by 3-storied passageway to west wing of Wilson Hall.
- 2. Wilson Hall (Main Building): 1892, Richardsonian Romanesque, 3 stories with elevated basement, brick; central portico; east & west corner towers have hipped roofs & 2-storied bay windows; towers repeated on either side of central portico with eastern tower containing bell.
- 3. Twichell Auditorium: 1898-1899, 2 stories, brick; arches, designed by Charles Hook; auditorium enlarged in 1908; interior renovation in 1957; connected by one-story bridge to east wing of Wilson Hall.
- 4. Dexter Hall: 1899, 4 stories, brick, entrance porch; originally contained dormitory suites, gymnasium and later swimming pool and was originally connected to Wilson Hall by covered passageway. Renovated in 1960 and converted into dormitory.

(see continuation sheet)

SPECIFIC DAT	ES 1889, 1896	BUILDER/ARCH	HITECT	
_PREHISTORIC _1400-1499 _1500-1599 _1600-1699 _1700-1799 x1800-1899	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORICARCHEOLOGY-HISTORICAGRICULTUREXARCHITECTUREARTCOMMERCECOMMUNICATIONS	COMMUNITY PLANNINGCONSERVATIONECONOMICSYEDUCATIONENGINEERINGEXPLORATION/SETTLEMENTINDUSTRYINVENTION;	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE LAW LITERATURE MILITARY MUSIC PHILOSOPHY POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	RELIGION SCIENCE SCULPTURE XSOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN THEATER TRANSPORTATION OTHER (SPECIFY)
PERIOD	AF	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	HECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In March, 1889 a group of citizens met in Spartanburg to discuss the formation of a "female school." Concerned with the lack of educational opportunity for young women in the Spartanburg community, these citizens spearheaded a movement which led to the establishment of Converse College. Included among these interested citizens was Dexter E. Converse, an influential leader of the textile industry in South Carolina and the benefactor for which the college was named. Also attending was Reverend Benjamin Franklin Wilson, Converse's first president. Designed to provide a liberal arts education for young women, Converse was founded during the years in which the importance of education for women was being supported in the South through the founding of such institutions as Agnes Scott (1889), Sweet Briar (1901), and Randolph-Macon (1891). Today Converse, with an enrollment of approximately 750 students, is a liberal arts college with a professional School of Music.

Although located in an urban area and within a modern campus complex, the Converse College Historic District preserves the character of the original campus. The district contains the oldest structure built on the campus, Pell Annex, as well as other buildings which reflect the school's early history. Main Hall, a focal point of the college both in its formative years as well as today, still remains. Main Hall is an example of Richardson Romanesque architecture, a style not generally seen in South Carolina. Judd Science Hall represents Gothic revival influence while Carnegie reflects a classic design. Dates of construction on buildings within the district range from 1891 to 1915. All but one are of brick. Situated in a carefully landscaped area, the district possesses compatibility of scale and material.

Landrum, Dr. J.B.O. History of Spartanburg County, 1900. p.62.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

e, Mary Wilson. <u>Yes Ma</u>	'am Miss Gee. Char		3. T.
		lotte, N.C.: Her	tage House, 1957.
oler, Lillian Adele. T Converse College, T	973.		rtanburg, S.C.:
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LIST ALL STATES AN	ND COUNTIES FOR PROPERT	IES OVERLAPPING STAT	E OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
5.7.1.2	5552		
11 FORM PREPARE NAME / TITLE	D BY		
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

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PAGE one

- 5. <u>Carnegie (Library)</u>: 1905, 2 stories, brick, entrance porch with pediment, fluted columns with ionic capitals, central dome; today houses Development, Alumni Affairs, and Public Relations offices.
- 6. <u>Judd Science Hall:</u> 1915, Gothic influence; 2 story brick with central tower, window labels.
- 7. <u>Towne House</u>: 1898, 2 stories, brick, originally watercloset connected to Main Hall; presently used as day-student center.
- 8. Cleveland House: East Main Street; ca. 1905, 3 stories, frame, one-story porch; hip roof; converted into alumni house in 1974.

Also included within the district is Gwathmey Library. Opened in May, 1951, this 3 story contemporary brick structure is compatible with other buildings within the district and is not considered an intrusion.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

9

PAGE two

Landrum, Dr. J.B.O. <u>History of Spartanburg County.</u> Atlanta, Ga.: The Franklin Printing and Publishing Co., 1900.

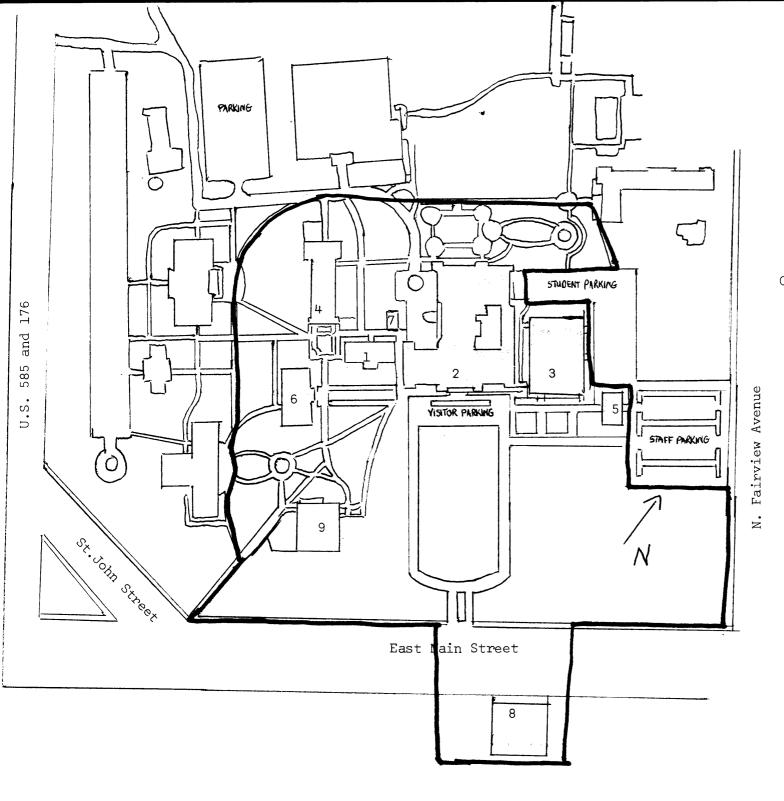
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Visitors Guide, Converse College.

Information received from Georgianna Graham, Historic Preservation Coordinator, Appalachian Council.



CONVERSE COLLEGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

1. Pell Hall (Annex)

2. Wilson Hall
 (Main Building)

3. Twichell Auditorium

4. Dexter Hall

5. Carnegie Library

6. Judd Science Hall

7. Towne House

8. Cleveland House (Alumni House)

9. Gwathmey Library