



**31st Annual
Romance of the Home and Garden Tour
Hickory, North Carolina**

**Saturday, May 16, 2026
9:00 am to 4:00 pm**

**Featuring Self-Guided tours of
7 properties, including homes, gardens,
a historic house museum,
and a restaurant open (2pm -4pm only) for your enjoyment.**

**Cost:
\$35.00 per person in advance (includes tour and cocktail).
\$40 day of event.**

Tickets Are on Sale Now @ www.hickorylandmarks.org

**Other Tickets Sales Locations:
(after April 14)**

***Jenny's Gifts & Accessories
436 Main Ave., NW**

***DASH Home + Kitchen
228 Union Square NW, #B**

***Lowe's Foods – Viewmont
260 14th Ave. NE**

***Adrienne's – Viewmont
1001 2nd Street, NE**

***Bumblebees Interiors
2945 North Center Street**

Same Day Tour Tickets: \$40.00 per person all day. Available at any Tour Site location.

The Sites:

Donald S. Menzies House
223 Second Avenue, NE
Owners: Paige and Dianne Straley



The Menzies house was designed by local architect Q.E. Herman and built by contractor M.G. Crouch in 1931. The contract signed on April 15, 1931 is for the sum of \$3900. Donald S. “Ram” Menzies (1898 – 1982) served as mayor from 1952 – 1959 and was a long-time member of the Hickory City Council. He and his family moved into this home by early August 1931. The one-story, brick-veneered house of asymmetrical plan has a side-gable roof with a front cross gable that encompasses a front chimney and the gabled and round arched entrance. The most unusual feature of the exterior is the large, engaged porch with plain brick posts that accounts for half the width of the façade. A black metal railing was added to the front porch in 2002. A long wing projects from the rear of the house.

In 2007, the Straleys purchased the house and have worked to make it a comfortable home with modern conveniences while maintaining the historic features of the design. They started by shoring up the structural integrity and systems in the home. One of the original beams became a decorative feature in the breakfast nook. A wall was removed to open up the kitchen and three small closets have been combined to create a pantry. The bathrooms in the house were upgraded with a formica ceiling in the master bath shower to prevent the need to repaint, along with period appropriate tile décor (and heated toilet seats). The master bedroom is at the rear of the house where an exterior door was removed to allow room for a walk-in closet. Upstairs is Paige’s office with panel wainscoting from his family home in West Virginia. It is a tribute to his dad who cut trees on the property and had them milled for interior paneling. The hallway showcases a collection of license plates. A peek into the large attic reveals room for expansion or lots of storage.

The backyard is surrounded by a wooden fence to provide a private oasis for the garden. From a patio with a pergola, enjoy the “moon garden” with all white blooms and the contrasting wildflower garden which explodes with color. Also notice the wrought iron opening in the fence that allows the Straleys to talk to their neighbors the Browns and enjoy their garden.

David and Donna Brown Garden
215 2nd Street NE



In July of 1935, Marshall R. Wagner obtained the building permit for this house. Local architect Q.E. Herman provided the design. It is one of the finest and largest Tudor Revival houses in the Claremont High School Historic District. The house presents an extremely varied silhouette created by numerous projecting and receding brick-veneered wall planes capped by steeply pitched half-timbered and stuccoed intersecting gables which vary in size. The impressive design of the house is highlighted by its sitting on a piece of high ground which dominates the northeast corner of Second Avenue and Second Street NE. A small guest cottage was built in the 1950s designed and built to employ materials resembling those of the main house. The lot is enframed by a tall, coursed stone wall inside of which is nestled a lovely garden.

David and Donna Brown have lived in the Marshall Wagner house for over two decades. When purchased, this English Tudor home with guest house was like a diamond in the rough. Many repairs and changes have been made over the years. One of the key features that was neglected on the outside was the gardens. They had laid dormant for a number of years. Donna, who loves all kinds of flowers, felt the English Cottage garden was best suited for the home as well as her taste. English Cottage Gardens are known for their lush, informal planting schemes, vibrant colors and beautiful atmosphere. They provide a cozy environment to be enjoyed by gardeners and visitors. Truly rooted in practicality and beauty, the cottage garden is synonymous with rural England, where homeowners grew a mix of flowers, herbs and vegetables. Unlike formal gardens with rigid symmetry and perfect planting, the English Cottage garden thrives on a sense of abundance and spontaneity. Plants are allowed to spill over pathways, mingle with one another, and grow in a way that feels natural and uncontrolled. David has also been a beekeeper for over twenty years, reaping the benefits of bee pollination and some of the very best honey in Hickory. The walled garden is flanked on either side by the beehive and a potting shed.

Dragonfly Inn
B.B. Blackwelder House
224 Third Avenue NW
Owners: David Cortello and Tracy Tegart



The Blackwelder House is a handsome, two-story Dutch Colonial Revival-style house with a gambrel roof, a central entrance portico, and grouped windows. It was built in 1914 for Barrie Bascom Blackwelder, Sr. (1884-1961), a state senator, and his wife, Esther Shuford Blackwelder (1883-1957), daughter of Abel A. Shuford I. The local newspaper printed on March 19, 1914 that “Messrs. B.B. Blackwelder and Hugh D’Anna are having lumber placed on their lots.... They will build two handsome homes there in the near future.” Rose Shuford D’Anna was Esther’s sister, and the two homes were built on lots from the estate of their father. By the mid-1970’s the family home had become a business establishment. It was briefly the House of Interior Design and then for several years the Follies Book Store. Barringer and Associates conducted business from the house for next iteration of its history. David Cortello and Tracy Tegart purchased the house from Phil Barringer in April 2022 and have combined its former uses as a family home and a business with the Dragonfly Inn. The main part of the house is once again a family home, with some walls reconfigured to open up the space and make it airy and full of light. Over the years, the full kitchen had been removed and has been reimaged. The changes are all in keeping with the original design of the house. The Dragonfly Inn has a separate entrance and can be completely closed off from the home. As advertised, it has “the charm of a boutique hotel, the warmth of a traditional bed and breakfast, and the convenience of an Airbnb. In a tribute to the Mountain to Sea Trail, the suites are the Mountain Room and the Sea Room. Breakfast is served in the Garden Room which is a wonderful sunroom welcoming the morning light. Guests can also enjoy the deck, the back lawn and the new firepit.

**J. Summie Propst House Museum
Shuford Memorial Park and Garden
Corner of 3rd Ave. NW and 6th St. NW**



The Propst House is a well-preserved example of the Second French Empire architectural style, constructed in 1882–83 and now operated as a historic house museum. It was originally the residence of John Summie Propst (1853–1940), a skilled carpenter, homebuilder, and woodcarver, and his wife, Nancy Jane “Jenny” Abernethy Propst (1858–1932). Propst was responsible for building several notable early twentieth-century homes in Hickory. Located in what was then a fashionable West Hickory neighborhood near the railroad, the two-story house reflected the aspirations of the middle-class couple, who married in 1874 and later supplemented their income by renting rooms to boarders.

After falling into disrepair and standing vacant by the 1960s, the property was preserved through the efforts of the Hickory Landmarks Society, Inc., founded in 1967 in part to save the house. The building was relocated to its current site in 1970. Today, the Propst House is interpreted as it appeared in the late nineteenth century and remains the only surviving example of this architectural style in Hickory. Original family furnishings and artifacts are displayed throughout the house. Special exhibits for the Romance of the Home and Garden Tour include a scale model of the Propst House built by David Armbruster (ca. 1978-80) for his wife and an 1870’s account book from “Propst & Sons” store. A most interesting feature of the ledger is a handmade architectural sketch of what appears to be the tower of the Propst House.

The HOPE Garden – Corinth Reform Church **150 16th Ave. NW**



Located behind the Lane Mission House on the West Campus of Corinth Reformed Church, the HOPE Garden is a walled space dedicated to growing fresh produce and supporting those in need. Inspired by a mission trip to Moldova, the garden was founded by Christine Cofer and established in 2010 with initial sites in Newton, on Springs Road, and at the Hickory YMCA. The garden relocated to Corinth during 2017–2018.

Guided by the mission statement from Romans 12:13, *“Share with the Lord’s people who are in need,”* the HOPE Garden features raised beds with portable trellises, irrigation, and clear labeling to identify plantings. Crops include cucumbers, squash, zucchini, beans, corn, grapes, blueberries, blackberries, figs, and peaches. Natural gardening practices are emphasized, including companion planting, herbs and flowers to deter insects, and vinegar used as a weed control method.

Each year, the HOPE Garden provides an average of one ton of fresh produce to the local soup kitchen, supporting food access through sustainable and community-focused stewardship. The garden is cared for by volunteers, many of them Master Gardeners. Vacation Bible School attendees and youth organizations in the community participate, as well as High School students from around the county in fulfillment of volunteer requirements. Students from Hickory Christian Academy have an annual volunteer day. The group also offers workshops for youth, such as an event recently held at Conover Hardware where participants learned to plant and took home an example to watch it grow.

Carolyn & Vince Patrone Garden 320 40th Ave. Dr., NW



Imagine moving into a house in a new development. All of the houses are fairly similar. The yards have limited space and little existing landscaping. You have a blank canvas in which to work magic. The Patrone's faced this challenge in 1998 and filled the canvas with a garden initially inspired by Charleston which has evolved over the years. In 2001 there was an addition to the house that includes a garden room, porch, breakfast nook and upper porch. The design was sketched out on a napkin on vacation, polished by architect Ed Lunow and built by Pete Zagaroli. The addition is in keeping with the original construction so much so that it doesn't look new at all. It allows a wonderful view of the entire garden. The gardens here became more relaxed in keeping with the casual areas. The pool was added at the same time and renovated in 2025.

The garden includes 181 boxwood of multiple varieties. Carolyn is a member of the American Boxwood Society and completed the Master Gardeners course. The garden also features a collection of garden antiques. In front of the house note the gas lanterns by Bevelo, a 19th

Century marble sundial from a Virginia estate, and cast-iron Athens urns by Kraner Brothers.

The entry gate to right side of the house leads into the formal Charleston part of the garden. This early work was done by Deward Clark with Creative Landscapes in collaboration with Carolyn Patrone. The entry gate and arch are local iron work incorporating a Charleston lantern. A climbing Banksiae rose graces the iron work. The center cast iron inserts of the side garden balcony rails are French and date to the 1840's.

The rear garden is casual, European inspired with predominantly green foliage of various textures and pops of color. Kevin Sipe and Scenic View Landscapes have worked with Carolyn on the garden since 2001. Follow the path to the Right Upper Garden to meet "Stanley" the vintage goose from Gardners Cottage in Asheville. Continue along the path to see the black cast iron gate found in Richmond, Virginia, dated 1923 with the word "Familia" across the top. Flanking the steps are 2 18th Century French cast-iron urns. Exit the garden through a double gate comprised of 2 panels from the mid to late 1800s featuring thistles.

From 2pm—4pm Only

Ticket holders can enjoy one complimentary

Cocktail at the Vintage House.

271 3rd Ave. NW

Owners: The Robert Lackey Family



Sponsors:

Hickory Furniture Mart
Sowers & Webber Financial Strategies Group
Allegra Print Marketing and Mail
Robert Lackey Family
Adrienne's Premier Consignment
Bumblebee Interiors
Robin Creel, Realtor
DASH Home + Kitchen
Natural Estate Management
Grassroots Custom Builders
Graystone Eye
Hickory Park Furniture
Janee Krauth Real Estate Team
McKinney-Graham Dental Arts
Southeast Retirement Planners Inc.
The Nesting Space
Zagaroli & Graham Interiors

For more information call (828)322-4731 or e-mail info@hickorylandmarks.org.

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