

LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK PROGRAM

Forsyth County Historic Resources Commission

Johann Christian Loesch House

Local Historic Landmark #100

5576 Main St., Bethania

Construction Date: c. 1772

Landmark Designation Date: 12/16/1996

Johann Christian Loesch was born in 1756 in Bethabara. His father, Jacob, was one of the first men to arrive and settle the Wachovia Tract in 1753. As a young boy, Johann returned with his family to Pennsylvania, where his father became a minister in the Moravian Church. Johann was sent back to Wachovia, in North Carolina, allegedly to be cured of an adolescent romance that was not approved by the Church. Loesch lived for a time with an uncle in Bethabara; however, he soon returned to the north where he learned to be a tanner at another relative's home in New Jersey. In 1782, Loesch's father died following a fall from a horse on his way to visit his son in New Jersey. Shortly after this time, Johann returned to Wachovia, where he was assigned to work in Salem's Community Store (Local Historic Landmark #5).

Loesch eventually moved to Bethania into a house that was originally constructed by a non-Moravian, Casper Fisher. However, it is Johann Christian Loesch, his family, and his heirs, who made their mark upon this property in Bethania. Loesch's industriousness gave way to several endeavors. In 1789, he constructed a substantial building on the property's grounds. Loesch operated a tanyard and distillery on the site, as well as a store and tobacco factory, which was run by slaves. A post office began on Loesch's property in 1800 and operated on the site until 1855. In 1802, Loesch's store became a community store similar to the ones in Bethabara and Salem. In 1803, Loesch was appointed by the Bethania congregation to collect rent in the community. The same year he was appointed by the North Carolina General Assembly as a justice of the peace and was frequently called upon to marry local couples. In 1804, he gave his tanyard and distillery to the Church; however, he continued to operate the businesses.

Johann Christian Loesch married three times and fathered seven children. One son, Israel George Loesch was born in 1810, and was elected to the United States House of Representatives, where he served two terms.

For many years, Johann Christian Loesch contributed to the town of Bethania and the Church. He was well



respected and considered as an entrepreneur with great stature and wealth. He died on January 12, 1844, at the age of 85. In honor of Loesch, the road abutting Loesch's main street property in Bethania, was named Loesch's Lane.

The Johann Christian Loesch House is a two-story, frame house with brick noggin. The house was enlarged in the mid 19th century to its present appearance. Original fabric visible in the older left side includes the fieldstone foundation and cellar, the roof rafters and one door with six raised panels and strap hinges. The house has interior end chimneys with corner fireplaces, boxed eaves, and Greek Revival interior finish.

The Loesch House property may yield important archaeological information as early tins, bottles, and assorted hand-wrought ironware have been unearthed. Pottery shards are abundant around the property.

Today the Johann Christian Loesch House is privately occupied.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

**Bethania Historic District Amendment
and Boundary Increase National Register Nomination**
<http://www.hpo.ncder.gov/nr/FY2044.pdf>

<http://www.townofbethania.org/visit.htm>



This information is also available
at the Forsyth County
Historic Resources Commission's web site:
<http://www.ForsythCountyHRC.org>