

Raleigh Department of City Planning
One Exchange Plaza
3rd floor
Raleigh, NC 27602
919-516-2626

www.raleighnc.gov/planning

Fee	_____
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Rec'd By:	_____
Completion Date:	_____

(Processing Fee: \$266.00 - valid until June 30, 2011 - Checks payable to the City of Raleigh.)

RALEIGH HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION APPLICATION

This application initiates consideration of a property for designation as a Raleigh Historic Landmark by the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission (RHDC) and the Raleigh City Council. It enables evaluation of the resource to determine if it qualifies for designation. The evaluation is made by the Research Committee of the RHDC, which makes its recommendation to the full commission which in turn makes its recommendation to the City Council. Procedures for administration by the RHDC are outlined in the Raleigh City Code, Section 10-1053.

Please type if possible. Use 8-1/2" x 11" paper for supporting documentation and if additional space is needed. All materials submitted become the property of the RHDC and cannot be returned. Return completed application to the RHDC office at One Exchange Plaza, Suite 300, Raleigh or mail to:

Raleigh Historic Districts Commission
PO Box 829 Century Station
Raleigh, NC 27602

1. Name of Property (if historic name is unknown, give current name or street address):

Historic Name: Jessie A. and George T. Morris House
Current Name: Morris Lustron House

2. Location:

Street 314 Haywood Street, Raleigh, NC 27601
Address: _____
NC PIN No.: 1713072650
(Can be obtained from <http://imaps.co.wake.nc.us/imaps/>)

3. Legal Owner of Property (If more than one, list primary contact):

Name: Owen Gwyn
Address: 801 Willow Drive #2
City: Chapel Hill State: NC Zip: 27514-7074
Telephone No: _____ Fax No. () ()-()
E-Mail: _____

4. Applicant/Contact Person (If other than owner):

Name: Cynthia de Miranda, MdM Historical Consultants for Raleigh Hist. Dev. Comm.
Address: PO Box 1399
City: Durham State: NC Zip: 27702
Telephone No: _____ Fax No. () ()-()
E-Mail: _____

5. General Data/Site Information:

Date of Construction and major additions/alterations:

Originally erected at 3612 Buffaloe Road in 1949.
 Moved to 314 Haywood Street in 2017, restored 2022-2026.

Number, type, and date of construction of outbuildings:

n/a

Approximate lot size or acreage:

.11 acres

Architect, builder, carpenter, and/or mason:

Lustron Corporation; Restoration by Ben Hale of Benjamain Hale Builders of Raleigh.

Original Use:

dwelling

Present Use:

dwelling

6. Classification:

A. Category (check all that apply):

Building(s) Structure Object Site

B. Ownership

Private Public Local State Federal

C. Number of contributing and non-contributing resources on the property:

	Contributing	Noncontributing
Buildings	1	0
Structures	0	0
Objects	0	0

D. Previous field documentation (when and by whom):

n/a

E. National Register of Historic Places Status:

Check One:

Entered Date:	Nominated <input type="checkbox"/>
Determined Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Date:	Determined Not Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Date:
Nomination Not Requested: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Removed <input type="checkbox"/> Date:

Significant changes in integrity since listing should be noted in section 10.B. below.
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7. Reason for Request:

To ensure preservation of dwelling and to recognize significance of building's architecture.

8. Is the property income producing? Yes No 9. Are any interior spaces being included for designation? Yes No 10. Supporting Documentation (Attach to application on separate sheets. Please type or print):

A. Photographs/Slides:

At least *two sets of current exterior archival-grade photographic prints* (minimum print size 5"x7") of all facades of the building and at least one photo of all other contributing and non-contributing resources. If interior spaces of the property are being considered for designation, please include two sets of photos for these features. Prints may be created by using archival-grade black and white film photography and processing or digital photography. The minimum standard for a digital print is 5x7 at a resolution of 300 pixels per inch (ppi). This translates into a pixel dimension of 1950 x 1350. Digital images must be printed with an acceptable ink and paper combination as determined by the National Park Service Go to: <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/photopolicy/index.htm>. All photographs must be labeled with the name of the structure, address and date the photograph was taken with pencil or archival-approved photo pen. In addition to prints, all digital images should be submitted on a CD-R in TIF format. Any additional exterior or interior views and views of other structures on the property (color, black and white, or slides) will be helpful.

B. Boundary Map:

Please include a map showing the location of the property. A sketch map is acceptable, but please note street names and number. Any other structures on the property should also be shown. Please include a "North" arrow. Map should be no larger than 11" x 17". A tax map with boundaries marked is preferred, which can be found at: <http://imaps.co.wake.nc.us/imaps/>.

C. Architectural Significance:

Describe the property, including exterior architectural features, additions, remodelings, and alterations. Also describe significant outbuildings and landscape features. If the owner is including interior features in the nomination for the purpose of design review protection; describe them in detail and note their locations. Include a statement regarding the architectural significance of the property.

D. Historic Significance:

Note any significant events, people, and/or families associated with the property. Include all major owners. Note if the property has ever been recorded during a historic building survey by the City of Raleigh or by the NC State Historic Preservation Office. If so, who and when? (See application item 6.D.) Please include a bibliography of sources. Information regarding prior designations can be found by contacting the Survey and Planning Branch of the NC State Historic Preservation Office (NCSHPO) at 919-807-6570, 919-807-6573 or at: <http://www.hpo.dcr.state.nc.us/spbranch.htm>.

E. Special Significance Summary:

Include a one to two paragraph summary of those elements of the property that are integral to its historical, prehistorical, architectural, archaeological, and/or cultural importance.

10A. Photographs



Photo 1. Overall view showing façade and front-yard planter, view SW.



Photo 2. Façade, view W



Photo 3. Porch post detail, view W.



Photo 4. N side elevation showing living room bay window at center, view SW.



Photo 5. W (rear) elevation, view SE..



Photo 6. S side elevation, view NW.



Photo 7. Bathroom window at S side elevation, view NW.



Photo 8. Front door, view N.



Photo 9. Interior view at living room, view NE.



Photo 10. Interior at back hall to bathroom and bedrooms, view N.



Photo 11. Interior at dining room with built-in separating from kitchen..



Photo 12. Interior at bathroom hall, view to SE.



Photo 13. Interior at bathroom, view S.



Photo 14. Interior at northwest bedroom, view NE.

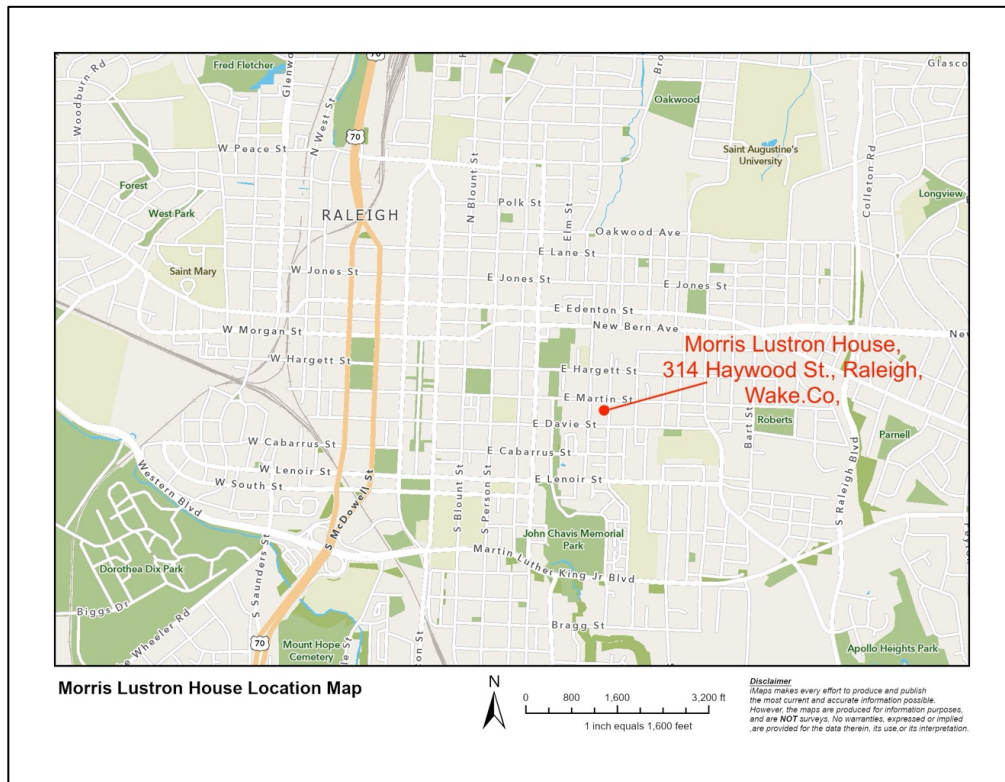


Photo 15. Interior at northwest bedroom, view SE.



Photo 16. Interior at southwest bedroom, view N.

10B. Location Map & LHD Boundary Map





10C. Architectural Significance

Description

The Morris Lustron House is a two-bedroom all-steel, post-World War II manufactured dwelling. The house is a Westchester Deluxe model of the Lustron Corporation. Like all Lustron-brand houses, it is a single-story, gable-roofed, steel-framed building with steel wall and ceiling panels, steel roofing, and aluminum casement and picture windows. The Morris Lustron House originally stood on a 6.81-acre parcel at 3612 Buffalo Road near the Starmount neighborhood in north Raleigh. The house was dismantled down to its frame, which was relocated to 314 Haywood Street in 2017. The parts were put into storage.¹ Several years later, the house was re-assembled and restored at its new location. The work was completed and this description prepared in April 2026.

The new location is in the northeast quadrant of the large East Raleigh/South Park Historic District (NRHP 1990). This predominantly residential neighborhood developed slowly from the mid-1800s into the 1940s. Parts of the district, and the 300 block of Haywood Street in particular, has seen redevelopment in the last

¹ “Moving Raleigh’s Lustron Home,” City of Raleigh You Tube Channel, posted October 18, 2017 at YouTube.com.

decade. On the surrounding block, a number of front-gabled, two-story houses have replaced front- or side-gabled one- and two-story frame dwellings from the early twentieth century. The 1910 Queen Anne shotgun at 322 Haywood Street is the only intact historic dwelling fronting Haywood Street on the block. The adjacent 300 block of S. Swan Street is a much more intact block of early twentieth-century, one-story, frame houses.

Lustrons were site-built of manufactured parts, including enameled steel for interior and exterior wall panels, ceiling panels, interior and exterior trim, built-in furniture, and roof tiles. The company had a set of custom colors for the steel components, and the Morris Lustron House originally had a color scheme of Desert Tan exterior panels with Maize Yellow and Dove Gray interior panels and Maize Yellow exterior doors. Standard ivory-colored enamel covered the steel trim pieces inside and out, as well as exterior panels in gable ends and bay windows. The roof tile enamel was blue. The wall and ceiling panels are two feet square, a modular base for spatial planning throughout the dwelling.

The enameled surfaces of the Morris Lustron House's steel component parts were in poor shape even before the dwelling was dismantled in 2017. Rust stains and exposed rusted steel afflicted many panels, and re-coating the surfaces with enamel was not possible. To remedy this, all parts were hand-sanded to remove rust and then primed for painting. The exterior walls and trim were painted with automotive paint in a color matched to the original Desert Tan and ivory enamel. The roof tiles were painted with metal roof paint and the interior pieces were sprayed and cabinet rolled. All colors used in the rehab were matched to the original color of the same surface.

Lustron designed the rectangular-plan, double-pile Westchester Deluxe model to fit both narrow and wide parcels. An inset corner porch holds the front entrance, allowing either the adjacent gable end or eave wall to be the façade. In the original location of the Morris Lustron House, the eave wall was considered the façade. On its new parcel, the gable end faces east across Haywood Street. In this configuration, the façade is two bays wide with a picture window flanked by casements at the left and the recessed corner porch with single-leaf front door at the right. Steel panels with vertical grooves cover the gable end. The steel roofing tiles are just visible at the raking edges of the gable-end panel. The roof is flush with the gable ends but overhangs slightly at the eave walls.

The inset porch that occupies half of the façade has a poured concrete floor, steel tile ceiling, and single post at the northeast corner. The post is cleverly designed with one true support column, in ivory, paired with a downspout extending at an angle from the gutter along the overhanging eave to the edge of the porch floor. The downspout and gutters are painted the same blue as the roof tiles. The porch post and downspout are linked by a slender metal zigzag element painted yellow to match the original Maize Yellow enamel.

All window openings conform to the modularity created by the square wall tiles cladding the walls. Casement windows plus trim are the width of a single two-foot-wide steel tile and the picture windows with flanking casements and trim are four tiles wide. The exterior doors are two tiles wide and, with the lintels, rise to the full height of the walls, which are four tiles high.

Side and rear elevations are arranged with fenestration that reflects interior spatial configuration and respects the modular pattern. At the center of the north side elevation, a rectangular bay holds the living room picture window. Square wall panels below feature the same ivory enamel as the window trim, highlighting the bay against the Desert Tan of the rest of the elevation. A second picture window pierces the west end of the north elevation to light a bedroom at the dwelling's northwest corner. The south side elevation, from front to back, features a paired set of aluminum casements to light the kitchen; an original, partially glazed, single-leaf door; a single casement window at the bathroom; and a picture window flanked by casements at the second bedroom. A poured concrete step is at the side door. The back gable wall has two sets of paired casement windows, one for each bedroom. Only a few of the original windows were intact enough to retain, namely the kitchen, bathroom, and one of the smaller bedroom windows. All the other windows are genuine Lustron originals, salvaged from a model in Wisconsin. The owner had installed replacement windows but kept the originals in storage and sold them for this rehabilitation.

The Morris Lustron House interior features original steel kitchen cabinets, pocket doors at the bedrooms and bathroom, and built-in furniture in addition to the steel walls and ceilings. A unit dividing the kitchen from the dining room has display shelves, drawers, and cabinetry on the dining room side and upper and lower cabinetry on the kitchen side, along with a kitchen counter worktop and pass-through back to the dining room. Two original upper cabinets remain on the west wall of the kitchen, but the lower cabinets, countertop, and appliances are all new. The original lower cabinets and appliances had been replaced prior to 2017. The living room has bookshelves recessed into an interior wall. Bedrooms have closets with sliding steel doors, and one bedroom has a built-in vanity with large mirror, countertop, and storage drawers. The floor plan is typical of a Ranch house, with living room and dining room spaces that flow into adjacent areas, such as the kitchen and a corridor leading to bathroom and bedrooms.

During the rebuild and rehabilitation, a number of work items addressed energy efficiency and HVAC considerations. All the windows, save the bathroom window, were reglazed with double-paned glass. Insulation was added in the walls and ceiling. Thermostat-activated radiant heat warms the flooring as the temperature drops outside. Central air conditioning, with ducts in the ceiling, will cool the house in warm weather.

In completing the rehabilitation, Ben Hale of Benjamin Hale Builders consulted with other Lustron owners and with people who had dismantled and/or reassembled the houses.

In addition to the windows from the house in Wisconsin, a number of missing or damaged elements were replaced with Lustron materials from other houses or custom replacements made in the same or similar materials or configurations. John and Sandra Irving, longtime owners of Raleigh's other remaining Lustron House, sold a Lustron-made exterior door and porch downspout for the rehabilitation. Swisco makes an identical crank handle for the casement windows, and all the cranks are new Swisco models. Fly screen clips were 3-D printed to mimic the original metal clips. Some framing studs needed to be custom made, and some pieces needed to be re-welded. Other new materials include the slab foundation, bathroom tile, and interior flooring in linoleum tile, a material that was commonly used in the 1940s. A copy of the original assembly manual was useful in reconstructing the dwelling.

A partnership among the City of Raleigh, the Raleigh Historic Development Commission, and Preservation North Carolina facilitated the relocation and sale of the house. Wolfe House and Building Movers relocated the frame of the dwelling in 2017, including the intact roof. All the remaining parts were put into storage. The new owner coordinated reassembly and restoration with contractor Ben Hale. The work was completed in April 2026.

Architectural Context: Lustron Houses in Raleigh

At the close of World War II, with the economic engines of the United States revived, American business and government turned toward long-neglected problems on the home front. One was housing. The war and its rations had come on the heels of the Great Depression. Combined, these events left the housing industry at a near standstill for fifteen years. The demand for new housing was great and the supply nonexistent.

The industry had long been prefabricating components for dwellings. Window sash, doors, shingles, molding, mantels, columns, newels, balustrades, cabinets, and built-ins were all mass-produced. From the middle of the nineteenth century, parts could be shipped to local markets by rail. Eventually, consumers could order house components from retail catalogs like Sears and Montgomery Ward. Next came the kit houses of the early twentieth century, marketed by Sears, Montgomery Ward, Aladdin, Standard Homes, and others, which included nearly everything needed to build a house. World War II accelerated the use of prefabrication in housing as military mobilization required massive building projects. The long, slow industrialization of the housing industry was poised for a new kind of prefabrication

after the war: a house built of components entirely manufactured in a single factory.²

Carl G. Strandlund, vice president and general manager of the Chicago Vitreous Enamel Products Company, was ready to make this happen. He had joined the company before the war, and his role was to get government contracts related to military readiness. He soon became interested in the porcelain-enameled steel panels made by company subsidiary Lusterlite Laboratories. By the late 1930s, Lusterlite was providing oil companies with panels that hung on steel frames to create small buildings. Oil companies began erecting all-steel gas stations with Lusterlite exterior panels. Strandlund saw the potential for steel buildings like this to become fully factory-built, potentially realizing a long-held goal of the construction industry. As Lustron historian Douglas Knerr put it, Strandlund saw that “A virtually indestructible, maintenance free, and potentially elegant structure was possible” and it was feasible to manufacture the entire thing. While in Washington, D.C., trying to get the federal government to allocate some steel to the company, Strandlund managed to stir up interest in factory-made steel dwellings to alleviate an anticipated post-war housing shortage. With encouragement from federal officials, Strandlund worked up a business plan—including a layout for a prototype house. With it, he secured multimillion-dollar loans from the federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation.³

The general public was not particularly keen on prefabricated housing, associating it with wartime shortages and temporary solutions. However, the Lustron Corporation’s marketing highlighted the product’s ease of maintenance and functionality. It never needed painting, inside or out; was termite- and rat-proof; was full of built-ins; had an open living room-dining room floor plan; and had time- and space-saving devices like a single washing machine for both dishes and clothing. Lustron exterior wall panels came in fashionable colors with evocative names—Desert Tan, Dove Gray, Maize Yellow, and Surf Blue.⁴

While an all-metal prefabricated house might challenge homebuyers, the ranch style that Lustron’s designers chose for both the prototype and the production models was accessible, even popular. Housing surveys of the period reflected homebuyers’ interest in flexible, open floor plans in contrast to the separate-rooms-for-separate-functions model of early twentieth-century house styles. The post-war consumer wanted a dwelling with multipurpose rooms and an open interior flow. The ranch house type could deliver that. Ranch houses also had the advantage of being cost-efficient to produce, no matter the building materials.⁵

² Douglas Knerr, *Suburban Steel: The Magnificent Failure of the Lustron Corporation* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2004), 2-5, 55-57.

³ Knerr, 55-90.

⁴ Knerr, 76-80; “The Lustron Dream—Housing and the Machine Age 1947-1951,” Make it Midcentury website, www.makeitmidcentury.com, September 9, 2025.

⁵ Knerr, 78.

Stylistically, the Lustron Corporation continued and domesticated the look of the Lusterlite-made gas stations. Lustron historian Douglas Knerr posits that the buildings referred to the “Streamlined, art deco elegance [that] pervaded industrial design” of the period, “urging consumption on the depression-ravaged American consumer by appealing to high style and by employing design cues from airplanes and other ‘high-tech’ harbingers of an exciting future.”⁶ The Lustron Corporation added gabled roofs, picture windows, front porches, attractive color schemes, and all manner of built-ins to foster livability. The steel frames for walls and roof trusses were welded together in the factory. The interlocking enameled steel panels were fabricated to hang on the walls at the interior and exterior. Plastic weather stripping sealed the seams. Enameled steel panels also composed ceilings. Built-in wardrobes, vanities, shelves, and cabinets were likewise steel with enameled finish.

Lustron Houses were sold through local distributors, similar to automobiles. Jones-Whitehead Homes, Inc., of Raleigh and Wilson was a regional distributor. In September 1949, Jones-Whitehead purchased the parcel at 409 Yarmouth Road in Raleigh’s Budleigh neighborhood and erected a three-bedroom model, advertising the effort and inviting to public to come and watch the house go up. Whitehead Homes continued to advertise Lustron houses in the Raleigh morning paper into 1950. The company sold the house on Yarmouth to Evelyn and J. Lewis Allison in February 1950. The publicity probably also encouraged Gladys and Ashby Rice to purchase the parcel across the street at 406 Yarmouth Road in January 1950 for a Lustron. They erected a three-bedroom, Dove Gray Westchester Deluxe model. They put a Dove Gray single-car garage on the parcel also, a short distance from the house.⁷

Budleigh was a great location for Jones-Whitehead to showcase a Lustron house. The average price of models was \$10,500 “well beyond the reach of lower-income families,” according to Knerr. Shipping from Columbus, Ohio, where the Lustron factory was, added another expense. And, although Lustrons were approved for federal FHA and VA financing, private banks may have been reluctant to provide good loan products for a new housing model. Budleigh was platted before World War II but developed afterwards, offering spacious, suburban-style lots on winding streets. The target market was the white middle-class, and a number of North Carolina State College faculty and graduates erected Lustrons in Raleigh.⁸

⁶ Knerr, 74-75.

⁷ J.Y. and Elizabeth Phelps to Jones-Whitehead Homes, September 8, 1949, Wake County Deed Book 1026, page 641; “Jones-Whitehead Erecting Lustron Home Here,” *News & Observer*, January 8, 1950; “Lustron Built in Wilson,” *News & Observer*, March 20, 1949; Jones-Whitehead Homes, Inc to J. Lewis and Evelyn M Allison, February 17, 1950, Wake County Deed Book 1041, page 17; Robert and Louise Dunn to Ashby and Gladys Rice, January 17, 1950, Wake County Deed Book 1027, page 657.

⁸Knerr, 152-156; M. Ruth Little, “The Development of Modern Architecture in Raleigh 1945-1965,” Raleigh Historic Districts Commission, 2006, 8; “Lustron Houses,” www.ncmodernist.org, February 4, 2018.

Two more were built in the developing subdivisions southwest of Glenwood Avenue. The house at 1700 Banbury Road in the Windemere section of Budleigh was built by William and Jean Maxwell in 1950, but sold by the fall of 1951 to Bruce and Pauline Porter. Fred and Hazel Crouch built a Lustron at 1733 Brooks Avenue in the Barber section of Budleigh. Of the four Budleigh Lustrons, only the Rice Lustron House at 406 Yarmouth Road remains, although altered with a ca. 1990 addition between the original Lustron house and matching detached garage. Some were destroyed in hurricanes, others demolished to build new dwellings.⁹

Lustrons appeared elsewhere in Raleigh as well. At least one Lustron was erected at the campus of North Carolina State University. A 1950 issue of the *NC State Agriculturist* printed a photograph of what appears to be a two-bedroom Westchester Deluxe “on the college poultry farm.” The house is no longer extant; the location may be the parking lot near the Don E. Ellis Building on south campus, according to the school’s Campus Planning and Strategic Development office.¹⁰ Just north of campus, Paul Edwin Pickett built a Lustron in West Raleigh at 2821 Van Dyke Avenue in West Raleigh. Pickett worked with the college’s Extension Service, and purchased land near campus in April 1950 from his parents. The house was destroyed in a hurricane in 1997 and replaced with a new house soon after.¹¹ The seventh confirmed Raleigh Lustron is the former Morris House, built at Gotno Farm outside town in 1949 and moved to Haywood Street in 2017. (See the historical context, below, for Morris House history.)

The Lustron experiment was short-lived, both locally and nationally. Knerr argues that the product was good and was in demand, but blames the program’s failure on the heavy investment by federal government at the end of the war and then abandonment of the idea a few years later, as the housing crisis eased. The idea of substantial government investment in a private-sector company during peacetime did not enjoy public support. Lustron struggled to pay back the millions loaned, and although distributors, including a representative from Jones-Whitehead Homes, testified to a Senate subcommittee that they believed they could sell enough to

⁹ “Lustron House: A Modern Touch on Louisburg’s Main Street,” reprinted from *The Franklin Times*, October 19, 2017, The Tar River Center for History and Culture page, Louisburg College website, www.louisburg.edu, viewed February 4, 2018; Clarence and Sallie Shimar to William and Jean Maxwell, March 24, 1950, Wake County Deed Book 1044, page 127; William and Jean Maxwell to Bruce and Pauline Porter, November 26, 1951, Wake County Deed Book 1084, page 443; Theodore and Naomi Haigler to Fred and Hazel Crouch, March 9, 1950, Wake County Deed Book 1041, page 239.

¹⁰ “Rural Construction Has Come a Long Way,” *NC State Agriculturist*, Vol. 23 No. 4 (November 4, 1950), 12, 18, 21, 25. More information about this Lustron house, and whether others were built at NCSU, may exist in the Office of Campus Planning records at the NCSU Special Collections. The collection is North Carolina State University, Office of Finance and Administration, Office of Campus Planning and Strategic Investment Records, UA 003.026, Special Collections Research Center, North Carolina State University Libraries, Raleigh, NC.

¹¹ Maude and Heber O. Clark to Paul Edwin Pickett, April 19, 1950, Wake County Deed Book 1044, page 514; “Southeast Lustrons,” US Modernist Website, www.usmodernist.org, September 9, 2025; John and Sandra Irving, interview with the author, February 22, 2018.

enable Lustron to pay back its loans, the federal government foreclosed on the company in 1950. The foreclosure was heavily covered in the national and local press.¹²

The Morris Lustron house at 314 Haywood Street retains integrity to reflect the history of Lustron houses and their appearance in Raleigh around 1949 and 1950. The building retains five of seven aspects of integrity under this area of significance, as outlined below.

Location: The building has been relocated and therefore has lost its integrity of location.

Design: The building was dismantled and reassembled using documentation from the Lustron Corporation. As reconstructed, the Morris Lustron House retains the same appearance and layout as when it was originally erected on Buffalo Road. The house therefore retains integrity of design.

Setting: While many Lustron Houses were erected on residential streets, the Morris Lustron House originally occupied a rural setting on a large parcel of land. Over time, the setting was further developed with pieces of plaster sculpture built by George Morris. The relocation of the Morris Lustron House to Haywood Street has resulted in the loss of the historic setting of this particular Lustron model. However, the house has been relocated to a residential street in a neighborhood that was experiencing development in the immediate postwar period.

Materials: The house retains virtually all of its original materials, which largely consist of enameled steel panels, steel structural supports, and enameled steel doors. A few of the aluminum windows are original to the house; others are authentic Lustron Corporation windows salvaged from another model. The integrity of materials is therefore intact.

Workmanship: The physical evidence that the Lustron House is constructed of manufactured pieces remains in the regularity of those component parts. The retention of original manufactured material and the reassembly of the parts preserves the integrity of workmanship, allowing it to express the technology used to create the house.

Feeling: The physical features of the Lustron House are impressively intact, due to few changes during its use in its original location and the careful restoration since its relocation. Because the house is significant as a representation of a particular type, a prefabricated house of the Lustron Corporation, the retention of these physical features translates to intact integrity of feeling.

¹² Knerr 12, 187-89; "Wilson Man Appears Before Senate Group," *News & Observer*, March 1, 1950.

Association: The separation of the Morris Lustron House from its original location and setting has resulted in the loss of integrity of association with the original owners. However, as a manufactured product that still exhibits its characteristic materials and design, the essential elements of a manufactured product, the Morris Lustron House retains its integrity of association with the history of Lustron housing and the Lustron Corporation.

10D. Historic Significance

In 1949, after an intentionally itinerant life together, Jessie Arnold Morris (1903-1997) and her husband George T. Morris (1901-1988) purchased and erected this Lustron house at 3612 Buffalo Road. They paid \$8,000 and it arrived in pieces, ready for construction, on a tractor trailer.¹³

Jessie and George had met in Raleigh, married in 1929, and happily moved from place to place. The couple lived in trailer parks while George found work as a plasterer. They continued traveling after their son Tom was born in 1937. Through work, school, and church, the Morrises anchored themselves in each new community. Tom Morris reports that as building projects dried up with start of World War II, the family arrived in New Orleans pulling the trailer behind their 1939 Lincoln Zephyr. George worked at the shipyards, wrapping pipes in asbestos insulation. The family sold the car and trailer, settled into a house, and stayed in one place until the war was over.¹⁴

The Morrises then returned to North Carolina and to a nearly seven-acre parcel on Buffalo Road, a portion of the tract that had been owned and farmed by George's parents. George called their acreage GotNo Farm, the translation of a sign he'd seen years earlier in California, "NoTengo Rancho." They were surrounded by farms, but George continued working as a plasterer.¹⁵

While it is appealing to think that the Morrises opted for a Lustron house because it reminded them of their days in the trailer, Tom Morris has no idea why his parents chose it. "I imagine it was cost and being up to date. Dad didn't mind taking a chance on something new or unproven," explained the younger Morris. He considers his parents' Lustron a good investment, as it needed little maintenance over the decades of their residence there. He also recalled some novelties. The dishwasher

¹³ Dr. George Thomas Arnold (Tom) Morris, interview with the author, January 22, 2018; Ancestry.com, *North Carolina, Death Indexes, 1908-2004* [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2007); "GotNo Farm," June 27, 2017, blog entry at strangecarolinas.com, viewed September 4, 2025.

¹⁴ Tom Morris interview; *North Carolina, Marriage Records, 1741-2011* [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2015); Ancestry.com, 1940 United States Federal Census [database on-line] (Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012).

¹⁵ Lizzie Arnold et al to Jessie Arnold Morris and George Morris, May 5, 1947, Wake County Deed Book 1019, page 536; Arnold Farm subdivision, Wake County Book of Maps 1947, page 21; Tom Morris interview.

that came with the house could be used as a clothes washer; removing some parts left an empty drum for laundry. The heating system was in the roof and blew hot air down into the rooms. There was no air conditioning, but the family installed window units.¹⁶

Jessie and George Morris lived the rest of their lives in their Lustron, eventually surrounded by plaster sculptures that George made. He had always enjoyed the artistry involved in creating moldings for buildings. In retirement, he framed large-scale planters and sculptures with metal lath and coated them with white or tinted plaster. He is said to have built the lighthouse that stands at the N.C. State Fairgrounds in Raleigh, and a matching lighthouse stood at GotNo Farm. George's sense of humor and whimsy were evident in his work, including large mushrooms, a frog posed like Rodin's "The Thinker," and a twelve-foot-tall polka-dotted dog.¹⁷

The Morrises' parcel was combined with another and sold to a real estate developer in 2017. Preservation North Carolina and the Raleigh Historic Development Commission worked together to relocate the polka-dot dog and to dismantle and move the Lustron house. The dog sculpture now stands behind PNC headquarters on Oberlin Road, and the Morris Lustron House has been rebuilt at 314 Haywood Street. A large planter from GotNo Farm has been installed in the front yard. The Lustron house has been sold and a restoration of the dwelling has been completed by Ben Hale and Benjamin Hale Builders of Raleigh.¹⁸

10E. Special Significance Summary

The Morris Lustron House is the most intact of Raleigh's two surviving Lustrons. It is an excellent example of a notable chapter in the history of the United States housing industry. The development, distribution, and erection of Lustron houses illustrates a novel attempt to alleviate the housing crisis of the post-World War II period. The house type is a unique architectural artifact of that period. The architectural design, materials, and residential appearance of the Morris Lustron House are integral to its historical significance. The large plaster planter in the front yard does not contribute to the Lustron narrative or the significance of the house in this location. However, as an example of George Morris's retirement-era plasterwork, it is a fitting tie to the original homeowner and the yard decorations that once surrounded this dwelling.

¹⁶ Tom Morris interview.

¹⁷ Tom Morris interview; "Gotno Farm and its quirky menagerie come to an end," *News & Observer*, September 25, 2017.

¹⁸ George Thomas Arnold Morris, Trustee, to Cand D Capital Holdings LLC, August 8, 2017, Wake County Deed Book 16870, page 1969; Wake County Book of Maps 2016, page 550.

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