

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina
COUNTY: Henderson
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE OCT 15 1973

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Flat Rock Historic District  
AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
See continuation sheet #2  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Flat Rock  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Eleventh  
The Hon. Roy Taylor  
STATE: North Carolina  
CODE: 37  
COUNTY: Henderson  
CODE: 089

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Various owners  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
CITY OR TOWN:  
STATE:  
CODE:



STATE: North Carolina  
COUNTY: Henderson  
ENTRY NUMBER: 089  
DATE: 10/15/73  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Henderson County Courthouse  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Hendersonville  
STATE: North Carolina  
CODE: 37

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey  
DATE OF SURVEY: Various  
 Federal  State  County  Local  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
East Capitol and Independence Avenue  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington  
STATE:  
D. C.  
CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Flat Rock settlement grew up along the road up the mountain from South Carolina. Though paved, the road remains narrow and winding and is lined with large old trees. The houses are mostly set well back from the road and, for many of them, the stone gates are all that is visible from the road. There is a very small shopping area near the center of the district which contains the post office. At this point there is a crossroad and it is along this north-south road and the east-west roads intersecting it that the houses of Flat Rock are scattered. Few are close to each other or even visible to each other but they are all closely tied through social and family bonds. Highland Lake is east of the highway and roughly near the center of the district.

The typical Flat Rock estate consists of a major residence set amid a complement of dependencies on a site chosen for its favorable exposure. There does not seem to be a typical Flat Rock style, but most reflect an extended association with wealth and taste. There is a wide stylistic range, from Federal through Greek and Gothic Revivals, Second Empire, and Stick-style, to the Neoclassic Revival style which appears frequently. In many cases, smaller early houses were grandly overbuilt.

In addition to the major estates there are simpler structures, no less important to the overall picture of Flat Rock; included among these are the old post office, the mill, and various smaller cottages dating from mid-nineteenth century to well into the twentieth century.

Above all else, Flat Rock is characterized by peaceful, uncluttered roads; large open spaces interrupted only by tree-lined drives and walks; and the near absence of commercial intrusion among the wooden and stone fences and unmarked gates which lead to many of the concealed great houses. There has been some intrusion of commercial and residential developments, especially to the north. This intrusion has excluded from the district one of the larger estates, Brooklands. Not all structures or even estates have been mentioned specifically, since this is such a large district, but those mentioned have been selected as being most prominent or representative of a type or style found in Flat Rock.

A number of the most outstanding buildings are listed chronologically below; the numbers refer to the map key list, which also includes several other structures of secondary significance individually but important to the district as a whole.

Mountain Lodge (1).

At the northern end of the Flat Rock Historic District is the first of the summer homes, Mountain Lodge, which is a much altered five-bay square house with a sharply pitched hip roof pierced by gable and hip dormers. An ambitious two-story, columned porch wraps around much of the house, and a large wing extends to the south; both are recent additions. The house retains much of its Federal trim, including an especially interesting front entrance, mantels, and stair. Southwest of the house is an elongated octagonal structure featuring good Federal trim which appears unaltered.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



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(Continuation Sheet)

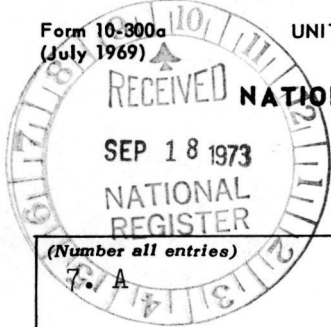
STATE	North Carolina	
COUNTY	Henderson	
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2. Location

Beginning at the junction of the Southern Railroad track and S.R. 1783, on the east side of Flat Rock, go west along S.R. 1783. Continuing with S.R. 1825 to the junction with U.S. 25, turn south on U.S. 25 to S.R. 1166 and along S.R. 1166 to S.R. 1164. Go west on S.R. 1164 to a point just north of the junction of S.R. 1164 and S.R. 1165. From this point the boundary runs in a straight line, southwest, to Mud Creek. Following Mud Creek south to a point northwest of Teneriffe Mountain, go northwest, in a straight line, to S.R. 1127--just south of S.R. 1139, 1245, and 1127. Continue south with S.R. 1127 to the junction of S.R. 1123 and go east on S.R. 1123 to Twin Bridges. From this point, follow a line directly east to the top of Glassy Mountain. From Glassy Mountain the boundary runs in a straight line, southwest to a point west of McCabe's Pond, thence directly east to U.S. 25, then north, northeast to the junction of S.R. 1812 and S.R. 1865. Go east with S.R. 1812 to the railroad and north with the railroad track to the beginning.





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7. A

There is a stone well house on the west side of the house.

Argyle (2).

Near the southern end of the district, easily seen on the east side of the road, is Argyle, a two-and-one-half-story, five-bay, main block with large flanking, two-story wings which are two bays wide and two rooms deep. A two-story porch carries across the entire length of the main facade, including the wings. A central chimney and three dormers pierce the roof of the main block. Opening onto the first floor porch are bays which at first appear to be nine-over-nine sash windows with panels below; however, the bottom sash and the panels below combine to function as a door. Variations of this theme occur at several Flat Rock homes and will be referred to as window-doors. Though the house is heavily altered on the first floor, the second-floor interiors of the main block retain, almost untouched, their late Federal trim. The attic of this large house contains several elements of early fabric.

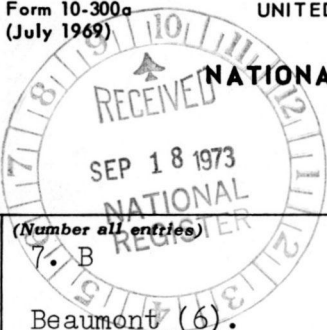
A large number of outbuildings range to the rear of the house. Of particular interest are the kitchen and a storage building with delicate scroll-sawn bargeboards and queen pins at the gable ends.

St. John-in-the-Wilderness (3).

Near the center of the district in the heart of Flat Rock is St. John-in-the-Wilderness. This gable roof brick church is six bays long and three wide. The main (east) facade features elaborate bargeboards outlining the splayed gable with a wide band of applied fretwork above a sawtooth border. This gable treatment recurs on the several secondary entrances. Buttressed at the corners and between the side bays, the structure has at its southeast corner a three-story, square tower with pyramidal roof. The main entrance is through this tower. All openings are surmounted by round arches, and the side windows have unusual blinds each of which covers the entire window but hinges at the point where the arch begins.

The interior is dominated by a double hammer beam truss system which springs from turned columns. These rest in turn on a wide shelf whose face is covered with horizontal sheathing covering from window sill to floor. The pews are enclosed along the bottom with quatrefoil-patterned panels, which also appear on the low pew doors. There are several memorial stones along the church wall including those for Charles and Susan Baring.

The graveyard surrounding the church is well kept and has a number of fine iron fences. The gravestones of most of the early prominent family names of Flat Rock are found among the ivy and grass covered graves, shaded by large evergreen and hardwood trees.



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7. B

Beaumont (6).

Beaumont, a two-and-one-half-story stone house, is near the westernmost point of the district and is surrounded by a proliferation of unusual lawn furniture. A Stick-style renovation greatly expanded the house and changed its appearance inside and out. The large entrance hall is Neoclassic Revival in style and gives access to a dining room, which is Adamesque, and a parlor which has a large, Baroque mantel. The ceiling of the parlor is molded plaster with interlacing geometric patterns in low relief.

Tall Trees (Greenlawn) (22).

Tall Trees, located on the highway in the south portion of the district (across the road from argyle), is a two-story, five-bay frame structure with delicately bracketed eaves beneath a hip roof. A commanding portico, supported by six Doric columns, has been added to the full length of the main facade. Window-doors open onto this porch at the first level. The center hall stair is Greek Revival in style and is similar to several found in mid-nineteenth century houses of Flat Rock, as are the architraves and mantels. A large four-leaf folding door separates the parlor from the hall.

Many Pines (16).

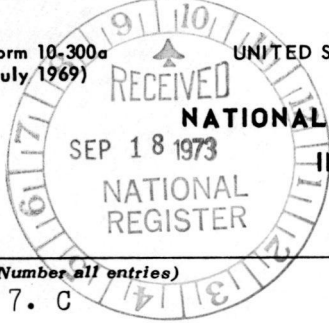
Many Pines, near the east boundary of the district, is a two-and-one-half-story frame house, three bays wide and three deep. Its pyramidal roof is pierced, front and rear, by dormers with Palladian-shaped windows and on each side by a single dormer near an interior chimney. The front porch and porte cochere are an airy composition of delicate latticework arches, spindlework, and other wooden ornament. Large bays with mansard roofs project from both sides of the house near the front corners.

The interior follows a center hall plan, two rooms deep. A Victorian marble mantel appears in the parlor, and ornamental fire backs and hearth tiles are found throughout the house. The house also contains unadorned wooden door knobs. Also of interest are the outbuildings which range to the rear of the house, including a row of servants' quarters, a carriage barn, a cottage, and various supply, storage, and utility buildings.

Chanteloupe (11).

At the northern end of the district is Chanteloupe, a large, rambling, two-and-one-half-story house of uncoursed stone, which is situated on a rather steep hill with terraced gardens above and below the house. The extensive gardens are said to have been designed by Frederick Law Olmsted. It appears that the central three-bay, two-story, hip-roof section of the house is the nucleus to which large wings, each equal to or larger than the original structure, were added in the twentieth century.





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7. C

Dominating the central hall is a cantilevered stair which rises near the front door along the east wall and turns gracefully to pass just across the large fanlight of the rear door. An especially interesting feature of the Federal-style stair is the concentric volute of the first two steps with the balustrade ending its graceful downward flight on the second step which repeats the volute of the handrail.

Old Post Office (15).

The Old Post Office, located near the center of Flat Rock, is a small frame building. It is two stories high and four bays deep, and its three-bay gable end sits almost flush with the highway. Below a gable of flush sheathing is a two-story shed porch which protects the large six-over-six sash windows flanking the second-level door. The second-floor porch has a scroll-sawn balustrade. At the first level, the typical Victorian door is flanked by large four-light windows.

Teneriffe (14).

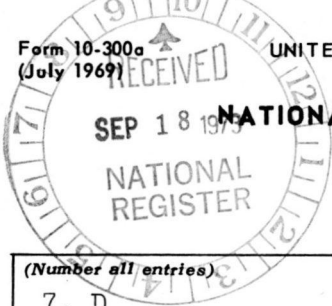
Teneriffe, west of the center of the district, is a circa 1850, two-and-one-half-story, gable roof structure which was overbuilt about 1900 into a Tudor Revival house. Its renovation appears to have been influenced by Biltmore Village, as were several of the older houses of Flat Rock.

St. John-in-the-Wilderness Rectory (17).

St. John-in-the-Wilderness Rectory, just south of the church, is a one-and-one-half-story, T-shaped, stone house with a high pitched roof which contains a finished attic. From the front door the hall runs east-west through the house with one room on the south and two on the north. A partially enclosed circular stair with a curious, crude balustrade rises in the hall.

Rutledge Cottage (7).

Rutledge Cottage, at the south end of the district (near Argyle and Kenmure), is a one-and-one-half-story house with a steep pitched roof. The entrance is in the center bay of the three-bay east gable end and is protected by a small gable hood. The two-bay sides have matching, hip roof porches protecting the easternmost bays. The north side is more elaborately treated with two large window doors at the first level and two large dormers flanking a smaller one. Graceful, scroll sawn bargeboards relieve the severity of the gables while the eaves are finished with a simple, inverse scallop pattern. The interior has a very narrow center hall plan two rooms deep. The Federal style stair with a turned newel rises near the rear of the hall. The mantels are simple, with marble ones being used in the north rooms of the first floor. The kitchen, several feet northwest of the house, is a one-story, three-bay, board-and-batten structure with a central chimney. It is now a guest house.



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7. D

Dunroy (10).

Dunroy, basically a T-shaped, one-and-one-half-story Gothic cottage which has been heavily renovated, sits well back from the road on a pleasant, wooded rise. The house has handsome scroll sawn trim at many of its numerous gables. Of special note inside Dunroy is the Greek Revival stair and an especially fine Adam-style mantel said to have been taken from nearby Mountain Lodge. To the rear of the house is grouped a particularly interesting collection of mid to late nineteenth century outbuildings.

Woodfield Inn (Farmer's Hotel) (12).

The Woodfield Inn, one of the most visible landmarks of Flat Rock, is south of the Post Office. It is a three-story, hip-roof, frame structure with a two-story, hip-roof porch running the length of the main facade. The building, which faces east toward the highway, is seven bays long and four bays deep. Bargeboards ornament the eaves of the main block and recur on the porch which has graceful latticework arches on the second level. Six-over-six sash is found at most windows except at the porches where there are window doors.

Treholm-Rhett House (13). *Oh dear it is Treholm*

The Treholm-Rhett House, the easternmost house in the district, began about 1850 as a two-story, three-bay structure with a central entrance and pedimented gables. The frame building was later expanded about twice its original size into a U-shaped house with the main entrance centered in the base of the U. The entrance is protected by a classical portico supported by four square pillars.

Kenmure (Glenroy) (9).

Kenmure, which faces Argyle from far west of the highway, is a two-story, three-bay frame house with a low hip roof surmounted by a square cupola with a corresponding roof. The parapeted porch, a recent addition, has fluted Doric columns with a porte cochere on the south side. The first-floor windows have been replaced by French doors in the area protected by the porch. The most prominent feature of the interior is a freestanding open-string Federal style stair which rises near the central entrance and turns across the back of the stair hall which is open to the cupola. The first-floor rooms are ornamented by well-executed, Adam-style replacement mantels. To the rear of the house, separated only by a road's width, are two stone dependencies. One is an apothecary shop which belonged to the original builder, and the other is a large, two-story building which was both a kitchen and servant quarters. The extensive grounds about Kenmure are particularly well tended.



Form 10-300a  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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7. E

Vincennes (Elliott House) (18).

Vincennes, just across the road from St. John-in-the-Wilderness but hidden from view, is a bracketed frame house which is five bays long, two stories high, beneath a gable roof. A one-story, hip-roof porch with particularly interesting bracket treatment carries across the main facade and into the large, three-bay projections at the east and west ends of the one-room deep main block. The six windows which open onto the porch have been converted into tall, glazed doors. The molded cornice of the main facade is broken just above the central bay by a small false gable. The interior of the center-hall-plan house has large sliding doors dividing the two front rooms from the hall and is ornamented with medallions and standard, late nineteenth century mantels. The stair is simple Greek Revival in style.

Sallie Parker House (28).

The late nineteenth century, Sallie Parker House, east of the Post Office, is one of the simplest of the Flat Rock summer homes. The two-story, rectangular frame house has its entrance in the two-bay gable end. The wide overhang of the roof emphasized by the exposed rafter ends which are ornamented with a sawtooth motif. A one-story Stick-style porch with scroll sawn brackets carries across the main facade and past the first bay on each of the two-bay sides.

Enchantment (19).

Enchantment is a two-and-one-half-story Stick-style cottage overlooking Highland Lake. Its strong vertical lines lead the eye to the striking queen-pin truss system in the main facade gable which incorporates a very large, pointed fan made up of wooden blades. The three-bay gabled main facade has the entrance placed in the westernmost bay and the regular placement of the first and second floor bays contrasts with the irregular placement of the roomy attic windows and the irregularly placed side bays and projections. The late nineteenth century sash, bracketed porches, and eaves are all prominent features of this well executed late Victorian cottage and make it the best representative of the Flat Rock cottages for its period.

The Lowndes Place (The State Theatre of North Carolina) (25).

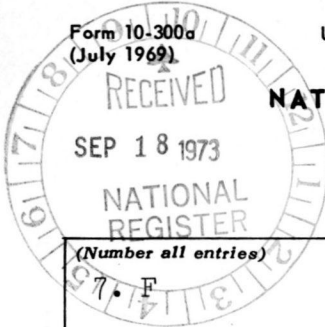
The Lowndes Place, called The Rock, serves as the green room, administrative office, and dormitory of the Flat Rock Playhouse and drama school. It is located quite prominently on the west side of the highway near the center of the Flat Rock Historic District. The two-story, five-bay house is much in the same style as the nearby Elliott House, the most conspicuous difference being the use of splayed eaves without brackets and a one-bay, gable porch at the central bay of the second floor. The theatre itself is housed a short distance northwest of the house.



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Bonclarken (Heidleberg) (27).

Bonclarken consists of paired two-and-one-half-story frame structures abutted by twin towers. The bracketed gables of the two main buildings, pierced by groups of double windows, face Highland Lake below and are given a more unified facade by the two towers, located at the east and west corners of the building complex. Bonclarken is said to have been built in three stages--the west block in 1886, the east block and Stick-style porches with porte cochere in 1892. The three-story towers with open fourth levels, also in the Stick-style, carry concave, pyramidal roofs. The towers as well as the connector buildings for the main blocks are said to have been added in 1902.

Saluda Cottages (San Souci) (4).

Saluda Cottages, several miles west of the center of Flat Rock, is a very large, handsome two-and-one-half-story Second Empire house with a three-story central tower. The five-bay main facade has a large flat-roof porte cochere surmounted by a turned balustrade over the central entrance bay which is located in the tower. The concave mansard roof is surmounted by a most elaborate and delicate cresting which is highlighted at each corner by a finial in a similar pattern. The convex tower roof is topped by the same cresting.

The interior is characterized by large, heavy mantels with ornate tiles surrounding the fire openings and elaborate metal fire backs. Patterned woods and tiles are used extensively throughout the house. There are two stairs in the house--one, a metal circular stair at the east end of the house has a delicate floral balustrade; the other, near the center of the house toward the rear, is a grand stair with mirrored arches and various flights which conclude at the third floor ballroom. The interior is characterized by large, rambling spaces and opulence of detail. Saluda Cottages is the most architecturally ambitious building in Flat Rock. A number of supporting structures remain about Saluda Cottages.

Tranquility (20).

Tranquility, also west of the center of the district, is a late nineteenth century, T-shaped, two-and-one-half-story frame house which faces south from the top of a high sharp bluff. A three-story stair tower with a pyramidal roof rises in the rear (north) angle of the T. The house has a two-story porch across the west end and another on the south side of the T. The house is characterized by a variety of ornamentation and forms which are playfully combined and well executed.

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7. G

Rhue House (24).

The Rhue House, on the east side of the district, is a large two-and-one-half-story frame house which appears to be of late nineteenth century date. The irregular gabled structure features a bracketed cornice and two-over-two sash except for the Flat Rock window doors along the one-story front porch. There are several interesting outbuildings of both stone and wood.



**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | <u>Social History</u>                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   | _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |   | _____   |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Flat Rock Historic District is a vast and idyllic area in the mountains of North Carolina, dotted with well-kept estates centering on the ambitious summer houses of the prominent Charlestonians who began to settle there in the early nineteenth century. Vital to the significance of Flat Rock is the long association with a list of politically and socially notable families, names seldom rivalled in the Carolinas.

Flat Rock, located in the southwest section of North Carolina, is removed from the mainstream of the state's commercial and agricultural activity. Tourism, however, has a venerable history there since the area was settled largely by wealthy South Carolinians in search of a salubrious climate in which to vacation while escaping the rigors of low country summers. There exists, as a physical reminder of Flat Rock history, a major collection of country estates which represent a unique segment of Southern social history; these serve as a living record of the scale and quality of life led by the affluent of the Carolinas in the nineteenth century. Many are being used today in a manner totally in keeping with their original intent.

The significance of Flat Rock lies not only in the handsome estates and well-preserved ambience of the area, but also in the long associations with some of the most outstanding individuals and families, primarily Charlestonians, who settled or summered there. Extensive information about the buildings and their owners has been amassed by local historians, and is reflected in the brief histories of these properties below.

The long procession of Charlestonians to the cool, healthful mountains of the Flat Rock area began in the early nineteenth century.

Mountain Lodge (1).

Charles Baring, a member of the well-known banking family of England, married Susan Heyward, the widow of James Heyward of Charleston, South Carolina, about 1798. Heyward, a brother of Thomas Heyward who signed the Declaration of Independence and became governor of South Carolina, had left his wife a life interest in his substantial estate. As her husband, Baring became a prominent rice planter in South Carolina. Anxious to protect his wife's health, he sought a more moderate climate than that of the swamps and fields of a low country rice plantation and found it in

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Research by Charles Greer Suttlemyre, survey specialist, based on research supplied by Flat Rock Historical Association; architectural description by Charles Greer Suttlemyre.  
 Buncombe County Records, Buncombe County Courthouse, Asheville, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds and Wills).  
 Buncombe County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).  
 Flat Rock Historical Association, research reports on Flat Rock and other material (1971-1973); copy in survey files.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds
NW	35° 17' 30"	82° 30' 00"	0	'	"
NE	35° 17' 30"	82° 25' 21"	0	'	"
SE	35° 15' 06"	82° 25' 21"	0	'	"
SW	35° 15' 06"	82° 30' 00"	0	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 4,000 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History DATE: 12 September 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:  
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh STATE: North Carolina CODE: 37

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name H. G. Jones

Title Director, Division of Archives and History

Date 12 September 1973

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest A. Connolly  
 Associate Director  
 Professional Services

Date OCT 15 1973

ATTEST:

Gene M. ...  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 10-9-73

NW17/363560  
 NW17/363560  
 SE17/370550/3901680  
 SW17/363550/3901790  
 3906220  
 CD

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

## INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

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8. A

Flat Rock in 1827 where he purchased substantial acreage and began construction of a home, Mountain Lodge, the first Flat Rock house built by members of the Charleston group. Mr. Baring is said to have developed his property along the lines of an English estate: extensive lands with a manor house, formal gardens, a porter's lodge at the entrance gate, a deer park enclosed by a high fence, and a private chapel with a parsonage.

Mountain Lodge was built on a 300-acre tract of land which was purchased by Baring in his wife's name on September 10, 1827. At Mrs. Baring's death in 1845, her estate in South Carolina reverted to the Heyward family, but the Flat Rock property, then in excess of 3,000 acres, passed to her husband. In 1853, however, Charles Baring sold Mountain Lodge to Edward L. Trenholm in order to reconcile a massive indebtedness. Trenholm, the second resident of Mountain Lodge, was a member of the cotton mercantile firm in Liverpool and Charleston that owned the ship Alabama, a famous blockade runner during the Civil War.

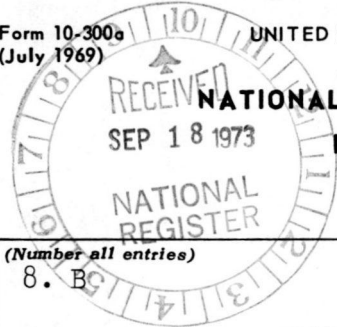
After the Barings settled at Flat Rock, other Charlestonians began to follow their example.

Argyle (2).

Judge Mitchell King, a prominent lawyer and judge in Charleston, purchased 1,390 acres of land in Flat Rock from John Davis on October 12, 1830, ". . . including the dwelling house in which I [Davis] now reside, the offices, saw mills, and all other dwellings and improvements. . . ." It is undetermined whether the Davis house is the central core of Argyle or perhaps the kitchen, or if indeed the Davis house remains. In any case, Judge King was the second Charlestonian to build a house in Flat Rock. Like Charles Baring, Judge King added other tracts to his land holdings until he owned several thousand acres in what is now Henderson County. Judge King died in 1862, and Argyle has remained in the King family; Alexander King, a great-grandson, now resides at Argyle for part of each year.

St. John-in-the-Wilderness (3).

The congregation of St. John-in-the-Wilderness was established on August 27, 1836, when Charles and Susan Baring deeded their private chapel and its grounds to the Episcopal Church. The chapel, constructed by the Barings in 1833, was enlarged by the church in 1852 to nearly its present form. It is the oldest church in the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina. The cemetery surrounding the church contains the graves of three families of signers of the Declaration of Independence (Heywards, Middletons, and Rutledges); the grave of C. G. Memminger, secretary of the Treasury of the Confederate States; and those of members of the de Choissuel family, prominent in the history of France, and other notables.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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8. B

Connemara (Rock Hill) (5). (Carl Sandburg N.H.S.)

Designated a National Historic Site because of its association with Carl Sandburg, who lived there from 1945 until his death in 1967, Connemara was built in 1838-1839 by Christopher Gustavus Memminger, later secretary of the treasury of the Confederate States, on land purchased from Charles Baring in 1838. Memminger called the place Rock Hill. The property remained in his possession until his death in 1888. An intermediate owner of the property, Captain Ellison Adger Smyth, prominent textile executive, changed the name from Rock Hill to Connemara.

Beaumont (6).

Andrew Johnstone, a rice planter from Georgetown, South Carolina, purchased the original 257 acres of Beaumont in 1839. Johnstone was shot by "Bushwhackers" at Beaumont in June of 1864. Through the years Beaumont has been expanded and remodeled extensively by a succession of owners.

Flat Rock Mill (23).

The Flat Rock mill property was acquired on December 21, 1830, by Peter A. Summey, who operated a small mill there until 1850. The mill passed through several ownerships before the turn of the century, when William Jordan constructed much of the present building and installed a large overshot wheel which remains in place. In the 1940s the property was converted to its present use as a motel-apartment complex.

Tall Trees (Greenlawn) (22).

was

Tall Trees or (Greenlawn), built about 1840 by Arthur M. Huger, a descendant of the first Huguenot to settle in Charleston, on an 80-acre tract given to him by Judge Mitchell King, his father-in-law. After Huger's death the place was owned by Governor Thomas Bennett of South Carolina.

Many Pines (16).

Many Pines was built in 1847 by James Pringle, a descendant of Robert Pringle, who was one of the early major landowners of South Carolina. Many Pines has always had strong ties with Charleston, and is owned by Mrs. Augustine T. Smyth whose daughter, Frances Edmunds, has directed the preservation efforts of the Historic Charleston Foundation.

Chanteloupe (11).

Chanteloupe was built in 1841 by the Count Joseph Marie Gabriel St. Xavier de Choissuel, a nephew of the Duke de Choissuel who was instrumental in arranging the marriage of Marie Antoniette of Austria to Louis XVI of France. His wife and son, Lt. Col. Charles de Choissuel, are buried in the churchyard of



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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(Number all entries)

8. C

St. John-in-the-Wilderness at Flat Rock. The latter died of wounds received in Virginia in 1862 where he served with the seventh Louisiana Regiment of the Confederate Army. De Choissuel sold the property to David Urquhardon June 4, 1858. It has been enlarged by subsequent owners.

Old Post Office (15).

The structure known as the Old Flat Rock Post Office was built about 1846 by Peter Stradley, a blacksmith, who was appointed postmaster in 1845. The building served in that capacity until 1877, and intermittently from 1879 to 1901, 1913 to 1922, and 1953 to 1965.

Teneriffe (14).

Dr. J. G. Schoolbread of Charleston built Teneriffe and named it after one of the Canary Islands. The Schoolbreads had been coming to Flat Rock since 1852, but the exact building date is unknown. In 1883 the estate was sold to Charles Albert Hill, an Englishman who was a wealthy Charleston cotton broker. The house took on its present appearance in 1903 when Hugh Delacy Vincent, a member of Mr. Hill's firm, remodeled it.

Old Rectory (17).

The Old Rectory of St. John-in-the-Wilderness was built in 1853-1854. Minutes of the vestry of the church, signed by the Reverend Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, confirm the construction dates and the fact that the building committee consisted of Izard Middleton, Edward Trenholm, and Andrew Johnstone. They also show that G. G. Memminger of the vestry, was reimbursed for payment of the architect's fee of \$125.00.

Rutledge Cottage (7).

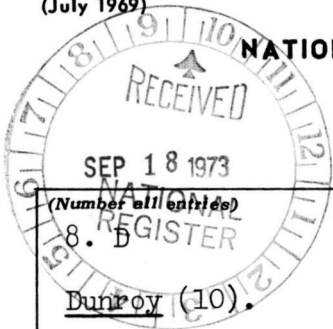
When Dr. Mitchell Campbell King, son of Judge Mitchell King, completed his medical studies in South Carolina, he established a medical practice in Flat Rock about 1840, which continued until his death in 1901. As a young man Dr. King studied at the University of Goettingen in Germany where he was a fellow student and close friend of Otto von Bismarck. Their correspondence, which continued for many years, is in the Library of Congress.

The first Flat Rock house built and occupied by Dr. King was known as The Cottage and later as Rutledge Cottage. It was constructed soon after he established himself in Flat Rock, and reflects the architectural influence of German country houses of the period. The Cottage was Dr. King's home until 1857 when he moved to Glenroy (Kenmure), a large house he built in that year. The grounds on which The Cottage was constructed belonged to Dr. King's father until 1856 when Judge King formally deeded 293 acres to his son. On October 21, 1857, Elizabeth Pinckney Rutledge, daughter of Frederick Rutledge of Hampton Plantation, South Carolina, purchased The Cottage from Dr. King.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)



Dunroy (10).

Dunroy was built in 1850 by David Williams, a rice planter from Camden, South Carolina. His wife was the sister of May Boykin Chestnut, author of "Diary from Dixie," in which she described her life during the war years when her husband was a member of Jefferson Davis's cabinet. Mrs. James Rutledge of Charleston and her daughter, Mrs. Julius Heyward, descendants of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, were successive owners of Dunroy. Major General Campbell King, grandson of Judge Mitchell King, acquired the estate when he retired from his last command in 1933. His son, Dr. Duncan Ingraham Campbell King, is the current owner.

Woodfield Inn (Farmer's Hotel) (12).

In 1847 several prominent landowners in Flat Rock purchased four hundred acres in the center of the community "with the design of promoting the establishment of a good, commodious tavern at or near the Saluda Road." Construction of the impressive structure was completed by 1852 under the direction of Henry Tudor Farmer, who purchased the property in 1853 and operated the famous old inn, under the name "Farmer's Hotel," until his death in 1883. A later owner, Mrs. Annie T. Martin, changed the name to the Woodfield Inn.

Trenholm-Rhett House (13).

The Trenholm-Rhett House was built by Charles Baring in 1854, shortly before his death. It became the home of George Trenholm, second secretary of the Confederate Treasury. Henrietta Rhett acquired the house in 1876. She was a member of the Rhett family of Charleston, which included Colonel William Rhett, who led the capture of the pirate, Stede Bonnet, companion of "Black-beard;" and Robert Barnwell Rhett, owner of The Charleston Mercury, who is called the "Father of Secession" for having written the first draft of the Ordinance of Secession. His son, Andrew Burnett Rhett, married Henrietta, daughter of Governor Aiken of South Carolina, in Flat Rock in 1863. Both Henrietta and her father spent many years in Flat Rock. She was the grandmother of Barnett Maybank, senator and governor of South Carolina. The house, currently owned by Our Lady of the Hills Camp, has fallen into disrepair.

Kenmure (Glenroy) (9).

When Dr. Mitchell Campbell King, son of Judge Mitchell King, built his large new house about 1850, he named it Glenroy. After Dr. King's death, Glenroy remained in the possession of his daughter until 1903. W. Gordon McCabe, who bought it in 1920, renamed the place Kenmure and added the columned porch. McCabe, descendant of George Taylor, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, passed the estate to his son, Gordon McCabe, vice-president and director of J. P. Stevens Textile Co., Greenville, South Carolina.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Vincennes (Elliott House) (18).

Colonel William Elliott, United States senator from Beaufort, South Carolina, built his summer home in Flat Rock in 1877 near the site of his father's summer dwelling, now gone. For years it was known simply as the Elliott place. William E. Hartman, the present owner, has restored the house and named it Vincennes.

Enchantment (19).

Enchantment was built about 1887 by Dr. Allord Memminger, son of C. G. Memminger. Dr. Memminger studied medicine in Germany and the house is said to reflect German country styles. His niece, Mary Wilkinson Middleton, married Robert E. Lee III, grandson of the general, and lived in this house for many years.

The Rock or The Lowndes Place (The State Theatre of North Carolina) (25).

Richard Henry Lowndes, a South Carolina rice planter, bought a tract of land from Charles Baring in 1847 which contained the house originally built as the rectory for St. John-in-the-Wilderness. The house, which has since burned, was named "The Diamond in the Desert" by the Lowndes. On the south part of this tract Richard I. Lowndes, son of Richard, built a house he called The Rock in 1885. The house came by its name because it is near the rock outcropping from which the community takes its name. The Vagabond School of the Drama, Inc., acquired the structure in 1956 and uses it as an administrative office building and dormitory in its operation of the Flat Rock Playhouse and Drama School. In 1961 the General Assembly of North Carolina referred to this summer theatre as the "State Theatre of North Carolina."

Bonclarken (Heidleberg) (27).

In 1885 Dr. Arthur R. Guerard purchased land from the Lowndes family and constructed a three-story, Stick-style house said to be patterned after a European chalet. He named the structure, which overlooked Highland Lake, Heidleberg. Encountering financial difficulties, he doubled the size of the building and operated it as a hotel and later as a sanatorium. Neither of these commercial ventures proved successful, and Dr. Guerard sold the property and moved to New York. Since 1921, the Associated Reformed Presbyterian Church has owned the structure and grounds as part of its Summer Conference Center, Bonclarken.

Saluda Cottages (Sans Souci) (4).

Saluda Cottages takes its name from origins predating the present house. Located on the Saluda Road, the estate consisted of a group of cottages and was named for the road and this group of houses. Count de Choissuel purchased

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries)

8. F

Saluda Cottages from Charles Baring in 1836 and built a larger house. He occupied the property as a summer home until 1841. After successive ownerships by Willinghams, Memmingers, Pinckneys, and Middletons, in 1888 it became the summer home of Rudolph Seigling, owner of The News and Courier of Charleston. Seigling made extensive alterations which made Saluda Cottages the magnificently flamboyant Second Empire house it is today. He called it Sans Souci, but the current owners, Mr. and Mrs. L. Campbell Boyd, call it Saluda Cottages.

Tranquility (20).

Edward Memminger, son of C. G. Memminger, built Tranquility in 1890 for his bride. Forced by ill health to give up his law practice in Charleston, Edward turned to botany. At Tranquility he established a garden spot with many unusual plants. Upon his death, his collection of about 1,000 rare specimens went to the University of North Carolina.

Piedmont (8).

Piedmont, which burned in 1949, was built by Reverend Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of Charleston, son of the ambassador to the Court of St. James appointed by George Washington. Piedmont has long been associated with the prominent Middleton name of South Carolina. A smaller house has been rebuilt on the site.





**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Henderson	
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(Number all entries)

- 9.
- Henderson County Records, Henderson County Courthouse, Hendersonville, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).  
Henderson County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).  
Marsh, Kenneth F. and Blanche. Historic Flat Rock: Where The Old South Lingers. Asheville: Biltmore Press, 1961.  
Patton, Sadie Smothers. Flat Rock: The Little Charleston of the Mountains. Asheville: Church Printing Co., no date.  
The Story of Henderson County. Asheville: The Miller Printing Company, 1947.  
Ray, Lenoir. Postmarks: A History of Henderson County, North Carolina, 1787-1968. Chicago: Adams Press, 1970.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Henderson	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	07 15 93

(Number all entries)

Key to Map

1. Mountain Lodge
2. Argyle
3. St. John-in-the-Wilderness
4. Saluda Cottages (Sans Souci)
5. Connemara (Rock Hill) *Natl. Hist. Site*
6. Beaumont
7. Rutledge Cottage
8. Piedmont
9. Kenmure (Glenroy)
10. Dunroy
11. Chanteloupe
12. Woodfield Inn (Farmer's Hotel)
13. Tremholm-Rhett House
14. Teneriffe
15. Old Post Office
16. Many Pines
17. St. John-in-the-Wilderness Rectory
18. Vincennes (Elliott House)
19. Enchantment
20. Tranquility
21. Hillgay
22. Tall Trees (Greenlawn)
23. Flat Rock Mill
24. Rhue House
25. The Lowndes Place (The State Theatre of North Carolina) *The Rock*
26. Five Oaks (Grimshaw House)
27. Bonclarken (Heidleberg)
28. Sallie Parker
29. Diamond-in-the-Desert



PROPERTY Flat Rock Historic District STATE N. C.

WORKING NUMBER 9.18.73.3607

*Henderson*  
*73001352*

TECH REVIEW  
Photos 4  
Maps 1

CONTROL REVIEW

*cm*  
*9-21-*  
*73*

HISTORIAN *excellent*

*OK*  
*Accept*  
*Amel*

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN *This is beautiful - would love to see more pictures.*

*9/24/73*  
*Accept*  
*9-25-73 E. Shuck*  
**ACCEPT**  
*KAC 10/2/73*

ARCHEOLOGIST

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

BRANCH CHIEF

*Accept*  
*10/5/73*

KEEPER

*Wm*  
*10/9*

National Register write-up \_\_\_\_\_

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_

Federal Register entry 12-4-73

Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

Entered 10 15 1973







NEGATIVE NUMBER N-73-6-761  
PHOTOGRAPHER Randall Page  
PHOTO DATE 4-73  
SUBJECT Saluda Cottages

SR 1123

Flat Rock, Henderson Co.

NPS Number 10.15.73

Title: Flat Rock Historic

District

Loc. Henderson Co., N.C. (1)

Saluda Cottages

Looking north

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

FROM STATE DEPARTMENT OF  
ARCHIVES AND HISTORY,  
RALEIGH, N. C.

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N. S. FILE NUMBER N-73-6-901  
PHOTOGRAPHER Randall Page  
PHOTO DATE 8 @ 4/75  
SUBJECT Argyle US 25

Flat Rock, Henderson, Ca

NPS Number 10.15.73

Title: Flat Rock Historic

District

Loc. Henderson Co. N.C. (2)

Argyle, looking east

901

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NEGATIVE NUMBER N-73-6-860  
PHOTOGRAPHER Randall Page  
PHOTO DATE 4-73  
SUBJECT Mountain Lodge  
Flat Rock, Henderson, Co.

NPS Number 10.15.73  
Title: Flat Rock Historic  
District  
loc. Henderson Co., N.C. (3)  
Driveway of Mountain  
Lodge, looking south

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NEGATIVE NUMBER N-73-6-1407  
PHOTOGRAPHER Greer Suttleyre  
PHOTO DATE 4-73  
SUBJECT Kenmare

U.S. 25

Flat Rock, Henderson, Co.

NPS Number 10.15.73

Title: Flat Rock Historic

District

Loc. Henderson Co., N.C. (4)

Kenmare, looking

westward

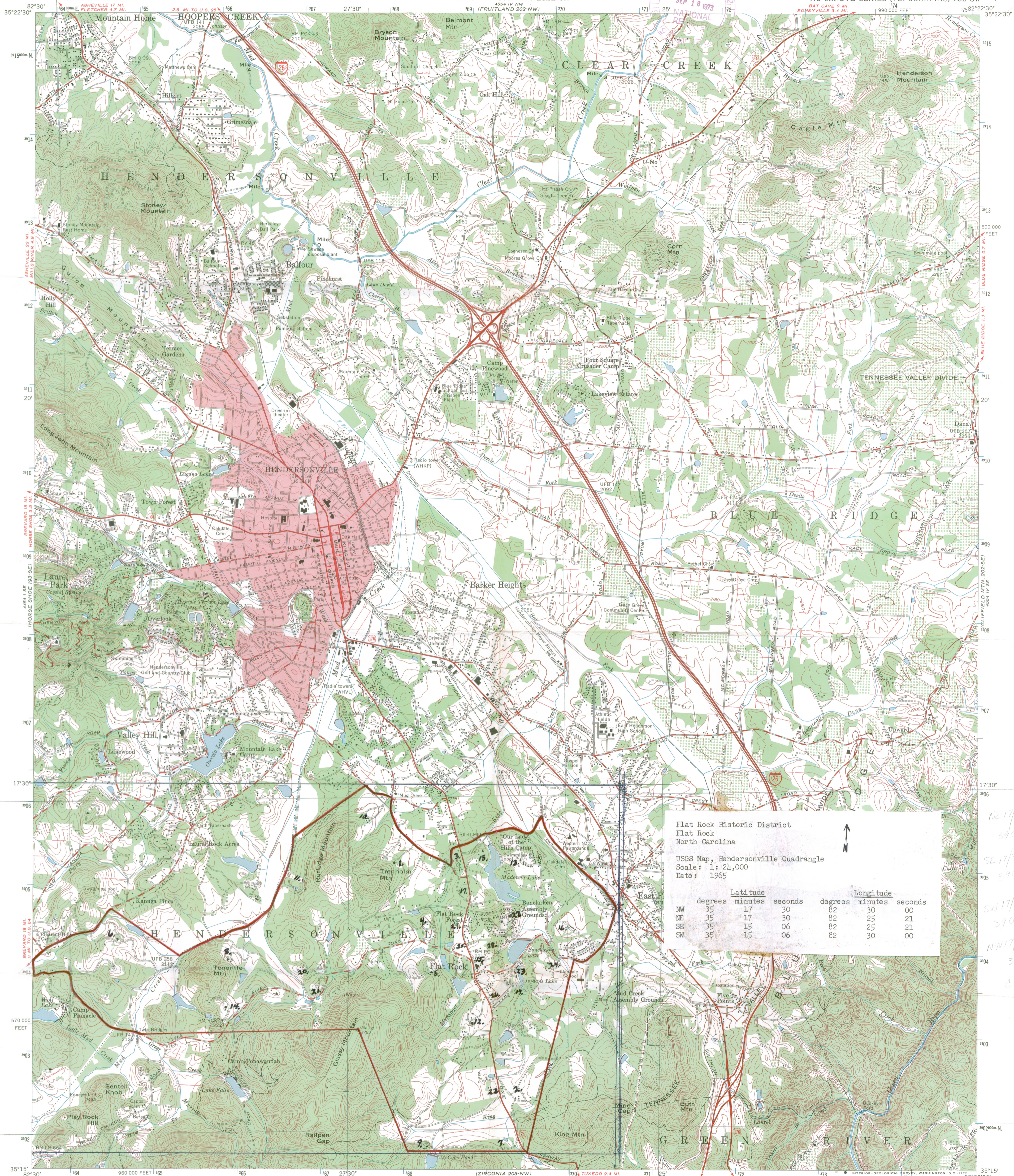
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JUL 20 1973

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MUSEUM OF HISTORY





Flat Rock Historic District  
Flat Rock  
North Carolina

USGS Map, Hendersonville Quadrangle  
Scale: 1:24,000  
Date: 1965

	Latitude			Longitude		
	degrees	minutes	seconds	degrees	minutes	seconds
NW	35	17	30	82	30	00
NE	35	17	30	82	25	21
SE	35	15	06	82	25	21
SW	35	15	06	82	30	00

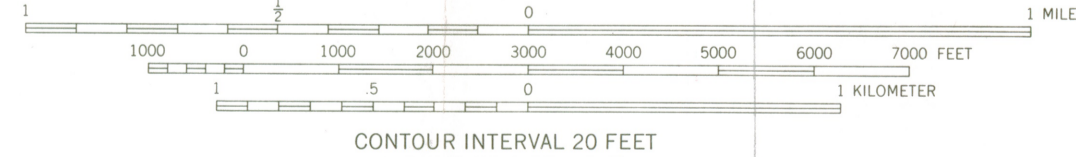
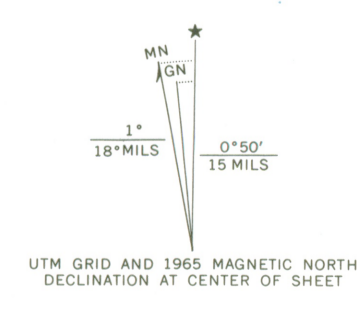
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3906 110  
SE 17/25.50  
3901 680  
SW 17/30.50  
3901 740  
NW 17/36.50  
3906 220  
24

Maped and edited by Tennessee Valley Authority  
Published by the Geological Survey  
Control by US&GS, USGS, and TVA

Revised by TVA in 1962 by photogrammetric methods using  
aerial photographs taken 1962 and by reference to TVA USGS  
quadrangle dated 1946. Map field checked by TVA, 1965

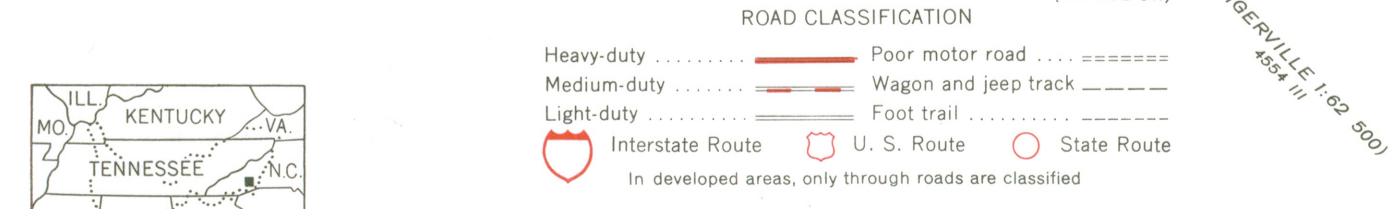
Polyconic projection, 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on North Carolina  
rectangular coordinate system  
1000 meter Universal Transverse Mercator Grid ticks,  
Zone 17, shown in blue

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines  
visible on aerial photographs. This information is uncheckd  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

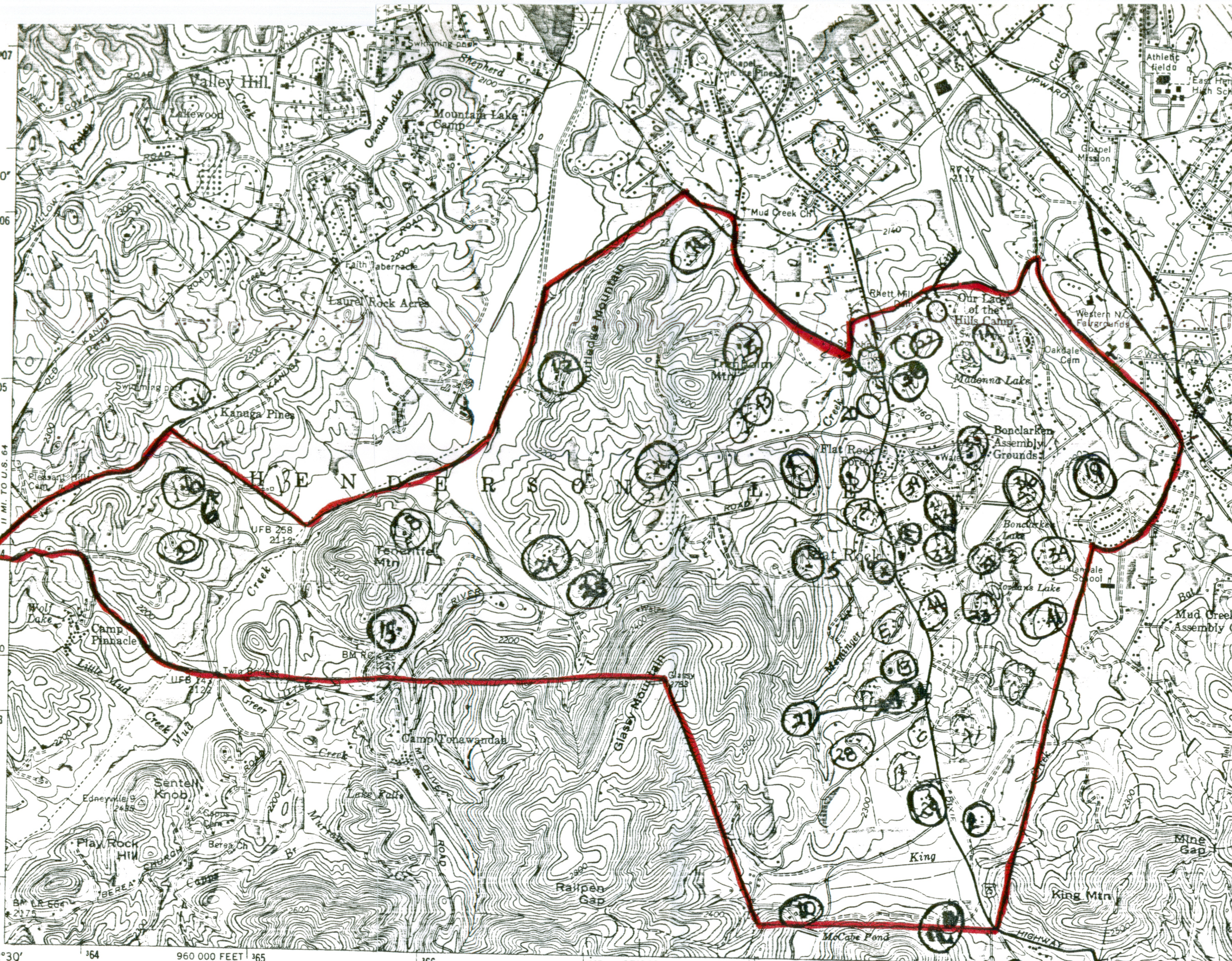
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242,  
AND BY U.S. TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY, CHATTANOOGA, TENN. 37401 OR KNOXVILLE, TENN. 37902.  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



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N3515-W8222.5/7.5

1965  
AMS 4554 IV SW-SERIES 9B42



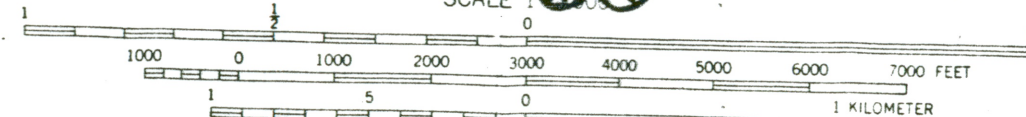
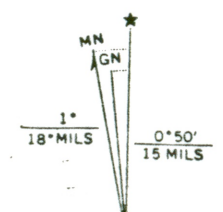


Mapped and edited by Tennessee Valley Authority  
 Published by the Geological Survey

Control by USC&GS, USGS, and TVA

Revised by TVA in 1962 by photogrammetric methods using  
 aerial photographs taken 1962 and by reference to TVA-USGS  
 quadrangle dated 1946. Map field checked by TVA, 1965

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
 10,000-foot grid based on North Carolina  
 rectangular coordinate system

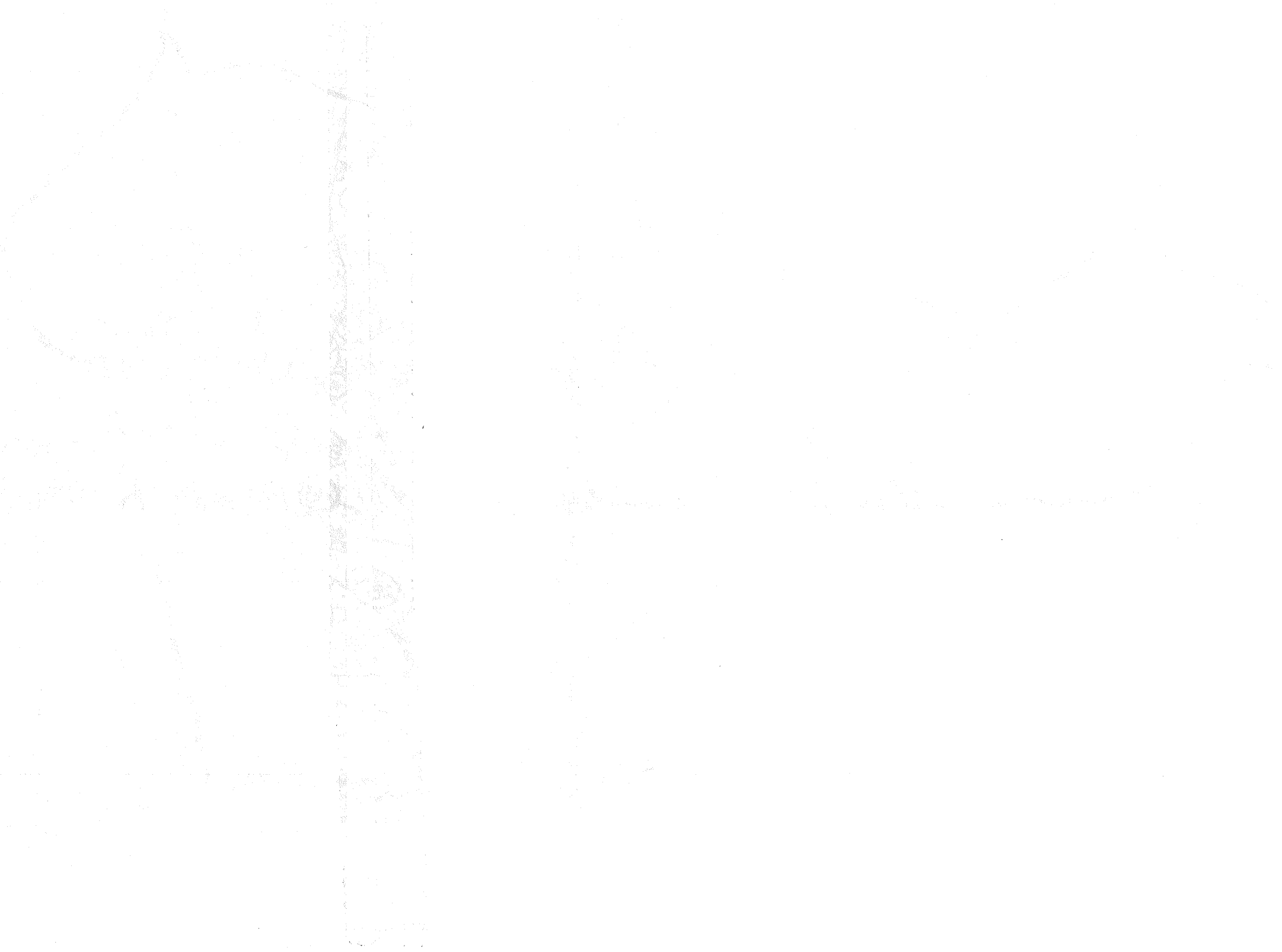


CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET  
 DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

(ZIRCONIA 20 MI. N. W. CORNER)  
 4554711  
 SCALE 1:50,000  
 TUXEDO 2.4 MI. E. N. E. CORNER  
 GREENVILLE 36 MI. S. E. CORNER



Flat Rock  
Henderson Co. NC



Form 10-301  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**PROPERTY MAP FORM**

*(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)*

STATE

North Carolina

COUNTY

Henderson

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**1. NAME**

COMMON: Flat Rock Historic District  
AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:

See location sheet

CITY OR TOWN:

Flat Rock

STATE:

North Carolina

CODE

37

COUNTY:

Henderson

CODE

089

**3. MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE:

USGS Map, Hendersonville Quadrangle

SCALE: 1: 24,000

DATE: 1965

**4. REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE NORTH CAROLINA

Date Entered OCT 15 1973

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Yanceyville Historic District	Yanceyville Caswell County
Nixon, Samuel, House	Parkville Township vicinity Perquimans County
Currituck Beach Lighthouse	Corolla vicinity Currituck County
Flat Rock Historic District	Flat Rock Henderson County
Hillsborough Historic District	Hillsborough Orange County

Also Notified

Hon. Sam J. Ervin, Jr.  
Hon. Jesse Helms  
Hon. L. H. Fountain  
Hon. Walter B. Jones  
Hon. Roy A. Taylor  
  
Director, Southeast Region

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Dr. H. G. Jones  
State Historian and Director  
Division of Archives and History  
Department of Cultural Resources  
109 East Jones Street  
Raleigh, North Carolina

PHR

MMott

10/15/73





STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
Department of Cultural Resources  
Raleigh 27611

12 September 1973

James E. Holshouser, Jr.  
Governor

Grace J. Rohrer  
Secretary

Division of Archives and History  
H. G. Jones, Director

Dr. William J. Murtagh  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
18th and C Streets, N.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20240



Dear Dr. Murtagh:

We are enclosing a nomination for the Flat Rock Historic District in Henderson County, North Carolina, to be entered in the National Register of Historic Places.

We trust you will find this nomination in order. If there are any questions, please call us.

Sincerely yours,

  
H. G. Jones

enclosures

**LANGDON EDMUNDS OPPERMANN**  
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION and PLANNING**

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December 4, 1995

Mr. G. Edmund Cushing  
P.O. Box 1054  
Flat Rock, NC 28731

Dear Ed:

Thank you for your letter expressing the board's questions and concerns about an Intensive Survey and new National Register nominations for Flat Rock's historic properties. I have tried to answer the seven questions in your letter and will be happy to discuss them further with the board at their meeting on December 9th.

**1. Why is re-registration necessary?**

Flat Rock has long been recognized as an historically significant community. It was therefore in the first group of communities to be examined after passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and in 1973 a large historic district was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. However, the boundaries and scope of the 1973 district are no longer valid.

The significance of Flat Rock's historic properties is not disputed--it is their very importance that underscores the need for protective measures. Flat Rock remains one of North Carolina's most beautiful and little-known architectural collections. Situated in the Blue Ridge Mountains, it serves as the setting for an important group of nineteenth and early twentieth century estates and resort cottages as well as permanent dwellings and non-residential properties. Flat Rock's size, scale, style, materials, and setting, as well as its history, give the community a sense of time and place. Yet the elements which together create the character of Flat Rock are not recognized in the 1973 nomination.

The proposed project is not really re-registration, but registration of well-defined areas and of buildings and properties not covered under the 1973 nomination. The current nomination is unsound and gives the community a false sense of security. Flat Rock's current "historic district" is that in name only; little or no protection derives from its current status. The need for a survey and nominations has been apparent for some time.

There are several reasons for an Intensive Survey and new nominations of Flat Rock. The 1973 nomination included only "landmarks" as defined at that time. It gives only a superficial examination of the resources of the area and is misleading, giving the impression that only the "landmarks" are valid. The nomination itself admits, "...not all structures or even estates have been mentioned specifically, ...but those mentioned have been selected as

being most prominent or representative of a type or style found in Flat Rock." The nomination does not accurately reflect the broad spectrum of properties that make up historic Flat Rock. No study of the district's architecture has been done since 1973, although survey and nomination methodology has changed significantly since that time.

The boundaries of the 1973 nomination do not represent a true historic district. Instead, the boundary was drawn simply to encompass all the landmarks noted in the nomination. The great majority of buildings and the great majority of land within the boundaries were neither surveyed nor discussed in the nomination; thus they are not considered to be included in the district *despite their inclusion within the encircled area*.

The 1973 nomination closes Flat Rock's period of significance around 1900. With changing perspectives and the passage of twenty-two years, many twentieth-century properties in the area are now recognized as being important to the history and character of Flat Rock.

Finally, considerable change to the community has taken place since the 1973 nomination. Numerous new subdivisions and other insensitive modern development have altered the setting and ambiance of Flat Rock and its historic properties. These and other "non-contributing" properties must be acknowledged.

## **2. What happens if we do not re-register the district?**

Currently, the nomination is invalid as a base for planning. The large boundaries of the 1973 district include such a high percentage of recently-developed and non-contributing resources that the validity of the district can be questioned. Only twenty years ago, Flat Rock was untouched by commercial intrusions and enhanced by the striking beauty of its meadows, woods, and native vegetation. Since then, however, intrusive development has changed the character of the area. Just this past summer the threat of annexation by Hendersonville inspired the community to incorporate. Growth within the historic area, however, continues apace, and the need for comprehensive planning is critical.

The population of Henderson County has grown by an astounding 73% since 1970. Much of this growth has been in the numerous subdivisions built in Flat Rock's historic district, generally with little thought to the overall good of the community and rarely with any sensitivity to the historic and natural beauty of the area. A statistic of equal concern is the number of car and truck registrations which has grown by 165% since 1970, almost tripling the number of vehicles in the district. The certainty of continued road widenings and new roads underscores the need for comprehensive planning and protection of the community's historic resources.

The prospect of the Ingles shopping center at Highland Lake Road near the Spartanburg Highway should be a major wake-up call to all of us that we have almost no protection. National Register nominations alone cannot prevent this; they are the first step in developing planning decisions to address the character of Flat Rock.

**3. What additional advantages & benefits will accrue to the District as a result of re-registration?**

The Intensive Survey and National Register nominations will provide an invaluable resource to Flat Rock, East Flat Rock, and Henderson County. First and foremost, the project will enhance knowledge of Flat Rock's historic resources to the citizens of the county. The project will also be highly beneficial to revitalization efforts in the community, and will aid the newly-incorporated Village and Henderson County's Planning Board in future planning activities.

The survey report and nominations will:

- a) present a more complete and more accurate representation of Flat Rock's significant historic development;
- b) embrace important twentieth-century properties as well as nineteenth-century properties not included in the 1973 nomination;
- c) acknowledge modern development;
- d) determine valid, justified boundaries that reflect historic character and current-day land use;
- e) increase the number of properties eligible for the Rehabilitation Tax Credit and boost private investment in renovation of historic buildings;
- f) provide the first step of data-gathering essential to sensitive planning and growth: address the character, setting, feeling, association of Flat Rock as a basis for transportation and land planning decisions;
- g) increase community awareness of the richness of the area and broaden local participation in planning decisions;
- h) create a lasting record of Flat Rock's historic places and encourage their preservation;
- i) produce a survey report, description, history, files, photographs, and maps for every recorded property;
- j) become a local base of information about community history and architecture for use in local planning and preservation planning;
- k) facilitate environmental review of government-assisted projects; and
- l) meet current standards.

**4.a. How can the current District resist undesirable encroachment?**

The developments of the past two decades illustrate that the 1973 nomination has not been successful in guiding privately-funded development. Furthermore, major highway construction through the historic area is a serious and current threat. The easy vulnerability of the 1973 nomination will impede vigorous application of the few laws which defend historic properties.



**4.b. How would re-registration further strengthen the ability to defend the District vs. encroachment? Specifics requested.**

The National Register designation process is part of a comprehensive approach to planning. The Intensive Survey necessary to prepare nominations will be the foundation for a local preservation program which is integral to good community planning. During the course of the project and after its completion, Historic Flat Rock, Inc., should work to increase public awareness and seek the continued involvement of the local community. This will create an enhanced understanding of the benefits of the resources, and build a broader base of support for achieving your goals. Furthermore, National Register listing will facilitate decision-making about the potential impact of projects on historic properties; facilitate HFR's planning, local planning, and highway planning; facilitate environmental review of federally-assisted or state-funded projects to determine their potential effects on historic properties; enable additional properties to benefit from the Rehabilitation Tax Credit; and focus new investment in the economy and quality of life. There is no such mechanism in place at this time.

**5. Why does 3 days of reconnaissance work cost \$1,000?**

I am giving a discounted rate to Historic Flat Rock. I offered a flat-fee charge rather than an hourly rate to help HFR in your planning. The time required is more than 3 days. The fieldwork alone requires more than 3 days, followed by analysis of the data and preparation of numbers, time and cost.

**6. Why is the estimated cost (\$50,000 by Claudia Brown in May 95) so high?**

The Flat Rock project is a considerable undertaking. The appropriate course is a comprehensive examination of the Flat Rock area that encompasses hundreds of acres and a full range of architecturally and historically significant properties. The project will consist of an intensive architectural survey to include not only the earliest and most imposing buildings but also the buildings and landscapes which contribute to the richness and complexity of historic Flat Rock. The project requires considerable information on every property in the district, including those considered non-contributing. An Intensive Survey includes documentary photographs of all buildings and outbuildings in the survey area over fifty years old, including those determined to be non-contributing, processed and printed to archival standards; architectural descriptions using accepted academic methods and terminology; research beyond the existing secondary material prepared over the years; historical backgrounds of the properties classified within one of the state's accepted historical contexts; completion of historic structure computer data sheets for all properties, with sketch maps, representative color slides of properties, and a huge amount of organizational and clerical effort.

The project will result in a survey report giving an overview of local history and architectural development and a detailed inventory depicting and describing significant individual

properties, neighborhoods, and historic districts. This approach will provide the thorough documentation necessary for Flat Rock's historic resources and identify all of the properties that are eligible for listing in the National Register either individually or in small districts. The second phase would consist of nominations for all of the eligible properties and districts.

**7.a Why can't HFR members do the necessary work to accomplish re-registration?**

Consultants qualified to conduct such a project require specific training and experience not acquired in avocational efforts. The board may want to discuss this further with Jennifer Martin of Archives & History's western office and with Claudia Brown and Catherine Bishir in Raleigh.

**7.b. If we go forward with a consultant what can we do to moderate the cost? By how much?**

I don't know the answer to this. I have taken on projects that other consultants would not do, to involve a group or organization in a survey and nomination. For one district, I worked with a good force of interested, energetic, college-educated people. As a part of my project I formed committees and included considerable training in various categories (oral history interviews, several specific areas of research, photography, architectural descriptions). I had to check all of the work before using it. At the end, I had to re-do most of the work in order to prepare a survey and nomination which met standards. It increased my costs tremendously, and did not result in a better product. It did have the positive benefit of including the community as participants; however, that benefit can be had in other ways. Community members can be a part of the process and help the project by making contacts for the consultant. HFR members can also provide crucial assistance in gathering historical materials for the consultant. This will not reduce the cost but will help create a better product.

Ed, these are good, comprehensive questions. I hope my attempts to answer them will lead to helpful discussion by the board and a better understanding of the need for the Intensive Survey and nominations.

Sincerely,

