

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Zealandia

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 40 Vance Gap Road, Beaucatcher Mountain

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Asheville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

11

STATE

North Carolina

VICINITY OF

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Buncombe

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mrs. George M. Dixon

STREET & NUMBER

377 Country Club Road

CITY, TOWN

Asheville

VICINITY OF

North Carolina

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds, Buncombe County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Asheville

North Carolina

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Zealandia is an early twentieth century adaptation of the Tudor style. Both the exterior and interior display a finesse of historical detail and a high quality of materials and workmanship. The house is a blend of English rural Gothic styles including both the Elizabethan and Tudor. Many features of the Tudor Gothic which were prevalent in England from about 1509 to 1603 were adopted in the design of Zealandia. The three-story porte cochere is a modification of the Elizabethan frontpiece or two-story entrance porch. Boldly projecting masses, steep gables and massive chimneys give the building its character. Large window spaces with leaded diamond panes are typical Elizabethan features. Low rising Tudor arches are used in the fenestration and entries.

The house rises three stories above a basement which is carved out of the solid granite of Beaucatcher Mountain. It is laid out in a general cross plan or "T" with the main facade as the arms of the cross, the porte cochere as the tip, and the back wing as the stem. The exterior walls are laid in a random ashlar of blue granite, quarried on the site. The half story under the eaves and the prominent gables are plastered in a half timber technique. The most decorative of these is the steep gable of the porte cochere.

The front facade consists of three major bays. The left bay is divided by five window spaces on the first and second story. The first floor windows are topped by low rising Tudor arches and the second floor windows terminate in the low bracketed eaves. Three gabled dormers project from the steep roof and are decorated with dentils and brackets. The middle bay is formed by the three-story projecting porte cochere. The right bay is dominated by an enormous two-story window and a single dormer emerges from the roof. The demarcation of these three bays is emphasized by their three separate roof lines.

On the east side of the front facade there is a two-story porch wing. The first floor was an open loggia with one arched opening on the main facade and three on the side. It has been glassed in. Above is an enclosed sun room topped by a flat roof that extends from the eave line of the main house.

The rear of the house is divided into three blocks much like the front. The east wing is almost identical on the front and back except that the back has one less set of windows and has both a shed dormer and a gabled dormer in the roof. The center block forms the stem of the cross plan and tells the most about the changes made over the years. The east wall of the wing is basically a continuation of the connecting wall with plastering between the windows under the eaves. However, the first floor has a single arched window. The south wall of the wing is divided vertically, half stone and half stucco. The portion which is completely plastered was formerly an interior wall connecting the house built for John Evans Brown and part of the 1908 stone addition. The group of free-standing stone arches which connects with the crenellated stone wall were part of an earlier enclosed loggia. An additional 34 rooms once stood on the flat grassy area behind the house. The west wall of the rear block has probably been glassed in and was previously open on both floors. The window treatment is very different from the rest of the house. The windows have wooden mullions instead of lead and are not of a diamond pane design. On the first floor there are two large arched windows. The architect, Anthony Lord, who did the 1950s alterations to the house remembers making this

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hallway into a kitchen. The second floor has a single stone pilaster dividing two large glass spaces. On the interior it is an awkward and narrow space with stone as the wall finish. This supports the theory that this area was once open to the weather.

The west wing of the cross projects only slightly past the connecting wall, barely making the "T". It encloses the staircase of the grand entrance hall and has one arched window on the second story level. The gable is decorated in half timbering and contains three connected windows.

The interior of Zealandia reflects knowledgeable handling of Tudor details. Entered through the porte cochere is the large, two-story main entrance hall, suggestive of the major hall of the Tudor home. A large limestone fireplace faces the entrance doors on the opposite wall. The opening is a Tudor arch with stylized pilasters at each end. The entablature over the pilasters forms the mantel shelf and projects over each pilaster and in the middle. A small leaf and flower decoration is centered under the center entablature block. Oak wainscot reaches to the top of the door openings at about eight feet. Slightly raised rectangular panels are framed by stiles and rails.

The grand staircase doglegs over 360 degrees on all sides of the room. The balusters have a cap and base and are topped by a triglyph-like design. The balusters are joined by repeating arches with keystones. The balusters are also decorated with spindels and strapwork cutouts.

The ceiling reflects the feeling of old English timber framing. It has a ribbed barrel vault. The rafters are crossed by two purlins and a wall plate runs on each wall, making a type of gridiron in which the spaces between the beams are filled with plaster. The rafters form brackets when they join the wall. All the windows and door openings are topped with a Tudor arch and the windows are filled with leaded diamond panes.

Adjoining the entrance hall, on the left as you enter, is the old library which was later the living room when the house was reduced in size. The elaborate limestone fireplace is the focal point of the room, axially placed opposite the entrance. The chimney piece shows new Renaissance motifs while the rest of the room shows more medieval elements. Once again the fireplace is organized around an architectural order. On each side of the opening is a pedestal tapering toward the base. It is topped with an Ionic capital with volutes. The pedestal is decorated with swags and patera. The entablature above forms the mantel shelf and projects over each column and a center block which contains a grotesque. The rest of the frieze is decorated in a swirling foliated design. Above the rectangular marble faced opening is a Tudor arch framed by moldings and foliated ornament.

The oak paneling in the living room is the same as the hall and is only on the fireplace wall. The french doors on either side of the fireplace are set in stone. The rest of the walls are plaster.

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The most distinctive feature of the room is the balcony that runs on all four sides of the room. The balusters are the same as those of the main staircase. Four free-standing square columns support the balcony. These oak columns are decorated in a strapwork design and the capitals are a simple series of moldings with a neck or astragal of dentils. The four arched windows on each side wall are deeply set with an oak surround and diamond panes. Through the leaded french doors on the fireplace wall is a glassed-in sun porch. A hooded fireplace formed out of a composite stone has been added.

Behind the entrance hall is the dining room. This room has more intimate proportions than the other two rooms on the main floor. The paneling is darker and is finished to resemble mahogany. Fluted pilasters flank the fireplace opening. Above the opening is a large horizontal panel with two smaller vertical rectangular panels on each side. The entablature of the columns runs around the whole room and forms the terminating height of the paneling. From floor to entablature the pattern consists of a long vertical rectangle followed by a small square panel and topped with another tall rectangle.

In the frieze above the entablature is a painted pastoral scene in a medieval style. In the 1930 sales catalog of the house, it is described as being by a famous American artist in the style of Benozzo Gozzoli. Gozzoli was a fifteenth century Italian painter and his fresco, "The Arrival of the Three Kings" in the Palazzo Riccardi, Florence, is probably the basis of this statement. The treatment of the noblemen on horseback and the flora and fauna of the landscape is very similar.

The ceiling is done in an exceptionally fine plasterwork design. Five beams separate the ceiling into four large panels. In each panel is an elaborate strapwork design on which are delicately painted flowers and foliage.

The kitchen is off the dining room. Previously an open loggia, the long narrow space was converted into a kitchen in the 1950s when the alterations were made to the house.

On the upper two floors, there are twelve bedrooms and four baths. The detailing of these rooms is very simple and straightforward. Many of the rooms continue the English mode with diamond paned windows and walls divided with timber framing and filled in with plaster. Except for one Greek Revival form mantel on the third floor, all removable mantels have been taken by vandals.

A visitor to Zealandia from downtown Asheville rides under the stone arched bridge which was once used as the entrance to the estate. He then approaches the carriage house which sits split level on the east side of Beaucatcher Mountain. The front facade faces west up the mountain to the home and consists of one major gable flanked by hexagonal turrets. Three massive stone columns in the random ashlar pattern support this gable which forms an entrance portico for the middle level of the three-story building.

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Fifteen foot arched doors on the south facade provide an entrance to the lower level which is stone and forms a visual base for the half timber construction used above. Pigeon holes add character to the uppermost third of the south gable while a stone chimney emerges from the "base" and rises to the left side of the ridge.

The north facade is similar to the south but is not a main entrance. One door is centered as an entrance to the lower level and windows with diamond pattern grilles are centered in a row on the middle level. There is a window in the roof gable on this end as well.

The east facade rises from a sub-basement and basement, both of stone. It continues the half timber construction across the middle level, and the third level is characterized by the six dormers in the timber framed roof.

Heavy oak timber construction is used on the floors and roof of the carriage house and adds a feeling of strength to the interior. The upper level is open and is accented at intervals with tie beams and diagonal bracing. The middle level is divided into two grooming rooms and a servants quarters. Elaborate oak stalls accent the north room and are trimmed in spindles which form an undulating rail across the top. The lower level is divided with stalls and the stone walls are exposed inside. Arches of stone add to the feeling of "base" achieved at this level.

North of the carriage house are handsome, heavy wrought iron gates to the estate hinged on columns formed by stone laid in the random ashlar pattern.

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Henry immediately started making additions and improvements to his estate.⁹ In 1908 he let contracts for a \$50,000 addition.¹⁰ The existing Brown house consisted of 32 small rooms and he added another 30. Work on the house continued through 1920 being suspended in 1914 when Henry returned to England to offer his services during the war, while Zealandia became a refuge for evacuated English children.¹¹ The original Brown castle was a pebble dash stucco over brick but the addition was done in blue granite, quarried from the side of Beaucatcher Mountain.¹² A 1908 postcard shows an artist's sketch of the new house. The whole house is pictured in the crenellated style of the old portion. The major elements of the addition are correct but chimneys, windows, and dormers are different. The artist probably speculated on the final appearance of the unfinished house which was a Tudor structure by 1920. A large stable was also built on the property at this time.¹³ Philip Henry was a great horseman and his grand stable, also in the Tudor style, reflects a great pride for his horses.

In 1928 Zealandia was offered as a summer White House to President and Mrs. Coolidge.¹⁴ There is no record whether they accepted. However, Philip Henry's public spirit did not end there; from 1924 to 1930 he opened his private art collection to the public. The art works were on display at Zealandia with invitation by card or appointment. In time, this proved to be unsuitable and Philip Henry built a separate museum on his estate. It cost him \$70,000 and he filled it with his collection of paintings and curios. These included Remington paintings, armor, weapons, goblets, from the Incas, a lamp from Pompeii, costumes, porcelain and much more. Contemporary accounts are full of praise for the splendor of the museum and its popularity with the public. Thousands were said to have visited the first year--more than 5,000 in the summer of 1931.¹⁵ The museum building is no longer standing, having been razed in October, 1976, by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

Both Philip Henry and his house on the mountain held an important place in Asheville's history. In Look Homeward, Angel, Thomas Wolfe preserves his memory of the Beaucatcher estate and its owner Philip Roseberry. On his death in 1933, the local papers bemoaned the loss of the city's great benefactor. The estate eventually passed to his two daughters, Violet and Lenore Maconochie, who had married brothers in the British Royal Air Force.¹⁶ The property remained in the family until 1961. However, in the 1950s Hartley and Violet Maconochie had decided that the 62-room house was too large. They tore down the old Brown portion of the house and a few rooms of the 1908 addition, leaving the present 28 rooms.¹⁷

The house and 16 acres were bought by Mr. and Mrs. George Dixon in 1961 and are still in the ownership of Mrs. Dixon. During the Dixon's residence Zealandia once again housed one of Asheville's finest private art collections.¹⁸ After her children grew up and she lost her husband, Mrs. Dixon sold the bulk of the art collection and moved out of the house, but she is anxious to see the estate come into sympathetic hands.

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two

FOOTNOTES:

1. Damtoft, Walt, Asheville Citizen, "Zealandia Keeps Quiet, Stately Watch Over Asheville," August 10, 1952.
2. Asheville Citizen-Times, "Memoirs--Man Recall '49 Gold Rush," September 20, 1950.
3. Burton, W. C., Greensboro Daily News, "The Storied 'Cottage' on Top of Beau-catcher," September 2, 1973.
4. Buncombe County Deed Book G3, p. 342. Asheville Citizen-Times, September 20, 1950, loc. cit.
5. Buncombe County Deed Book 119, p. 163, Deed Book 133, p. 144.
6. Marquis, Albert Nelson, ed., Who's Who in America 1932-1933, Chicago, The A. N. Marquis Company, 1932, p. 1104.
7. Asheville Citizen-Times, "Today and Yesterday," November 26, 1939.
8. Asheville Citizen, "Philip S. Henry Taken by Death at London Home," April 11, 1933. Marquis, Albert N., loc. cit.
9. Asheville Gazette News, "Zealandia, " Midwinter Edition, February 1908.
10. Asheville Citizen, "Work Progressing on Zealandia Castle--Big Addition to Castle Being Constructed Now," August 1919.
11. Burton, W. C., September 2, 1973, loc. cit. Burton, W. C., Greensboro Daily News, "More on the Proprietors of Asheville's Zealandia," September 9, 1973.
12. Damtoft, Walt, loc. cit.
13. Asheville Gazette News, loc. cit.
14. Charlotte Observer, "Coolidge's Summer Home," March 15, 1928.
15. Coleman, J. S. Jr., Asheville Citizen, "Institution May Be Visited Three Days Each Week, Art Collection One of City's Major Attractions, Provides Youth of Community Place to Study," May 1930. Asheville Citizen-Times, "Many Flock to Henry Museum, June 1, 1932.
16. Asheville Times, "Executors Petition Permission to Sell P. S. Henry Property," May 4, 1937.

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PAGE

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17. Burton, W.C., September 9, 1973, loc. cit.

18. Burton, W.C., Greensboro Daily News, "A Spectacular Collection Goes Under the Hammer," September 16, 1973.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Buncombe County Deed Books, Register of Deeds, Buncombe County Courthouse, Asheville, N.C.
 Marquis, Albert Nelson, ed., Who's Who in America, 1932-1933, "Philip S. Henry," Chicago, The A. N. Marquis Co., 1932, p. 1104.
 North Carolina Writers Project, Asheville, A Guide to the City and the Mountains, Asheville, N.C., American Guide Series, 1941, pp. 128-129.
 Wolfe, Thomas, Look Homeward, Angel, New York; Charles Scribners Sons, 1957, pp. 375-376.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY See continuation sheet
 UTM REFERENCES 19... 1...

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

Susanne Brendel and Betty Betz; architectural description of stable, Robert Griffin; additional research by Jerry L. Cross, Researcher, Division of Archives and History

ORGANIZATION	DATE
Division of Archives and History	January 12, 1977
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
109 East Jones Street	919/839-4763
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
Raleigh	North Carolina 27611

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Law Edin

TITLE

SHPO

DATE January 13, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

CHIEF

John A. ...

DATE

3/14/89

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

...

DATE

3/14/77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Asheville Citizen, "Gratitude is Expressed for Henry Museum," 1930.

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Asheville Citizen, "Many Flock to Henry Museum," May 1, 1932.

Asheville Citizen-Times, "Vance Brown is Buried in Riverside Cemetery," January 8, 1933.

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Asheville Citizen, "Philip S. Henry," April 12, 1933.

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Asheville Citizen-Times, "Today and Yesterday," November 26, 1939.

Asheville Times, "Funeral is Held for Mrs. Henry," May 18, 1941.

Asheville Citizen Times, "Memoirs--Man Recall '49 Gold Rush; John Evans Brown, Who
Built Zealandia, Was Forty-Niner," September 20, 1950.

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August 10, 1952.

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The nomination is of a 12.67-acre site as shown on the attached map. This includes the present Zealandia property.

The original Zealandia estate named by John Evans Brown in 1889 consisted of five acres atop Beaucatcher Mountain. That tract included the old stone bridge near Beaucatcher Gap and extended northward to include the house site.

In 1904 Philip Henry expanded the original estate to forty acres while retaining the name Zealandia. He also purchased additional contiguous properties to act as a buffer zone for his estate. Improvements to the property included stables and a new gate north of the house for use as an entrance off the newly completed road (1901).

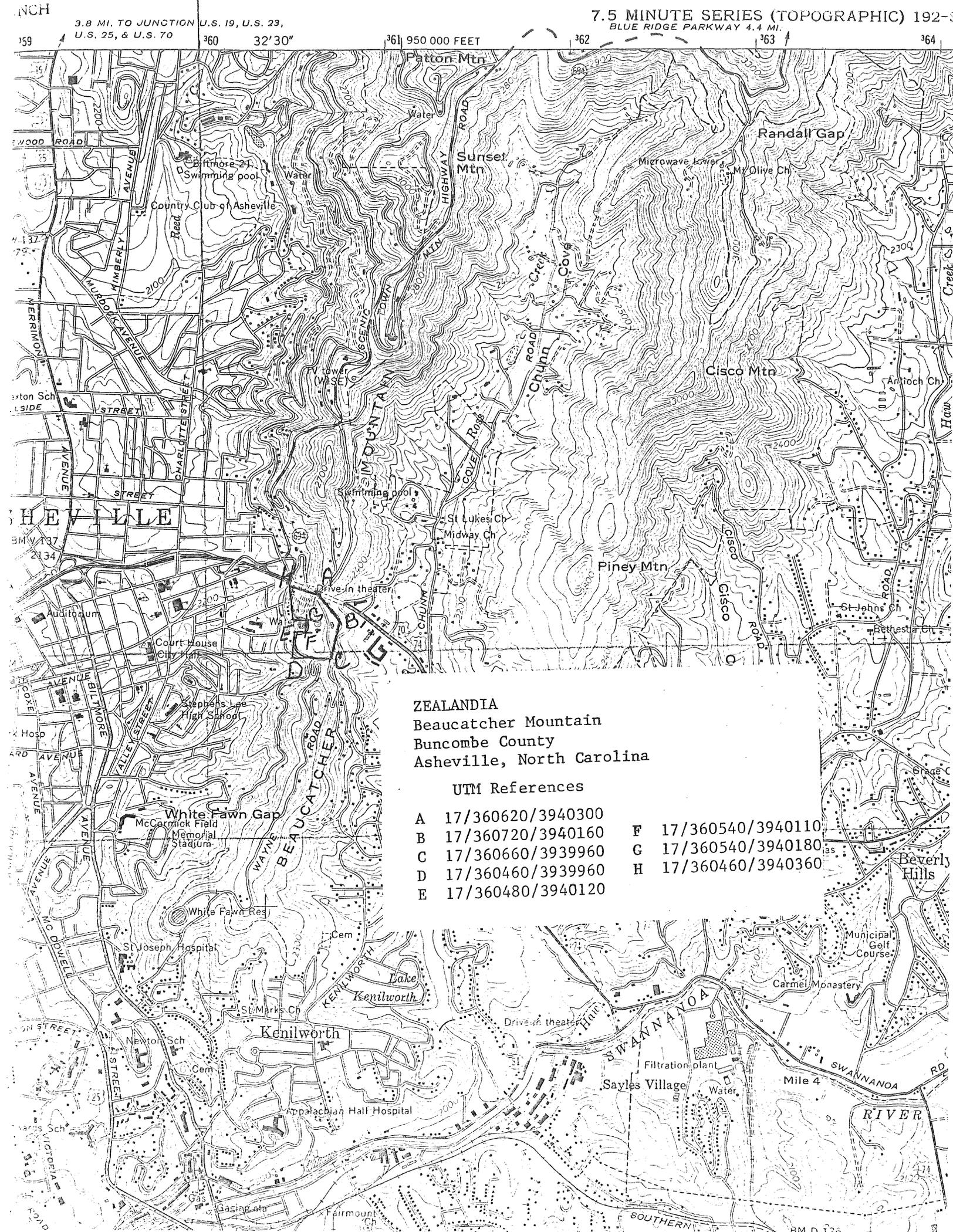
By 1961 when George and Isabelle Dixon purchased the estate, Zealandia had been reduced to sixteen acres. Of that sixteen, 1.61 acres were taken by the Department of Transportation for a new road cut and 1.32 acres were reserved for a water tower owned by the City of Asheville. That left approximately 12.67 acres in the Zealandia tract. Within this tract are all the extant structures associated with the history of Zealandia.

In summation, Zealandia has been both expanded and reduced in size. Historically speaking, the name of an estate has had no geographical bounds. Those bounds are determined by the amount of unbroken acreage of the original tract contained at the time of reference. With this as a historical guideline, Zealandia, as of January, 1977, consists of 12.67 acres.

In an effort to protect the ambiance of the currently defined Zealandia estate, extensive consideration was given to providing an adequate visual buffer zone around the extant structures. The area immediately contiguous to the house and grounds, stable and entrance is heavily wooded. This existing woodland extends sufficiently to the defined boundaries to screen these structures from present and immediately projected visual intrusions. Excluded from the boundaries were any present intrusions including the city water reservoir and modern tract housing.

UTM References

- A. 17/ 360620/ 3940300
- B. 17/ 360720/ 3940160
- C. 17/ 360660/ 3939960
- D. 17/ 360460/ 3939960
- E. 17/ 360480/ 3940120
- F. 17/ 360540/ 3940110
- G. 17/ 360540/ 3940180
- H. 17/ 360460/ 3940360



ZEALANDIA
 Beaucatcher Mountain
 Buncombe County
 Asheville, North Carolina

UTM References

- | | | | |
|---|-------------------|---|-------------------|
| A | 17/360620/3940300 | F | 17/360540/3940110 |
| B | 17/360720/3940160 | G | 17/360540/3940180 |
| C | 17/360660/3939960 | H | 17/360460/3940360 |
| D | 17/360460/3939960 | | |
| E | 17/360480/3940120 | | |

