

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Snowbird Mountain Lodge

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 275 Santeetlah Road N/A not for publication

city or town Robbinsville vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Graham code 075 zip code 28771

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William S. Price, Jr. 7-14-93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Snowbird Mountain Lodge
Name of Property

Graham County, N.C.
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	6	buildings
1	1	sites
	1	structures
		objects
5	8	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/hotel

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone
walls Stone
Wood/weatherboard
roof Asphalt
other Wood/log
Concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

~~Architecture~~
Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1940-1943

Significant Dates

1941

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Greene, Ronald--architect
Moore, Bill--contractor/builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 96.97 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	236640	3914990	3	17	237810	3914240
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	17	237820	3914960	4	17	236630	3914260
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Davyd Foard Hood

organization date 4 May 1993

street & number Isinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Road telephone 704/462-4331

city or town Vale state N.C. zip code 28168

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Architectural Description

The Snowbird Mountain Lodge, occupying a superb hilltop site (2,880 feet above sea level) on a tract of 96.97 acres in northwest Graham County, is a two-story hostelry built of stone, log, and frame construction. The lodge was built with a principal view southward to the range of the Snowbird Mountains which presented a great panorama of unspoiled mountain scenery punctuated by the Santeetlah Lake. The view encompassed thousands of acres in the Nantahala National Forest and a Cherokee Indian Reservation associated with the Snowbird tribe of the Cherokee Indian nation. The lodge is the centerpiece of some eleven buildings and structures dating from 1941 to 1987 erected to serve as a seasonal resort. Because of the dominant, hilltop situation of the lodge and its largely woodland setting, these secondary buildings, including two guest cabins erected in the 1960s and mostly noncontributing in date and manner of construction, do not detract from the presence or importance of the property. They are generally clustered around the lodge and mostly downgrade from its hilltop site. They and the main lodge are nestled in the northwest corner of the lodge property and near the end of a short paved entrance drive off the Santeetlah Road. The lodge property generally follows the shape of a parallelogram with United States Forest Service lands--the Nantahala National Forest--bordering it on its short east and west ends. The northeast top of the property is bounded by the center line of State Road 1127 (Santeetlah Road). On the opposite, southwest side, the lodge property shares a boundary with a reservation tract belonging to the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians.

Although the number of noncontributing buildings, structures, and site (#3) is substantially larger than the number of contributing buildings and the lodge site (#13), the Snowbird Mountain Lodge possesses a strong historical and architectural integrity which these numbers belie. The critical factors which determined the construction of the lodge in 1941 were the natural woodlands forming the proposed site and the view. They remain inviolate to the present. The view from the hilltop on which the lodge would be built was extraordinary. The Wolfe brothers allowed only minimal grading (leveling) of the wooded hilltop to create a small plateau on which to build the lodge (#1). Otherwise, the woodland site (#13) of the lodge property was left undisturbed. The original, necessary caretaker's shed (#9), pump house (#10), and lower pump house (#11) are small buildings and were located down grade from the lodge. The four noncontributing buildings (#2, #6, #7, #8) which are visible from the lodge do not intrude on the historic character of the lodge and its setting because they are also small frame buildings of traditional materials and construction and all are painted "Bison Brown." The owners's residence (#4) is located downgrade and out of view of the lodge; the car shed (#12) is a simple open frame building with a roof and it stands unobtrusively beside the entrance drive. The original shuffle board court (#3) which would have been a contributing resource except that a second, like pad and lighting was added in

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1956, is behind the garage/game room. The observation deck (#5), a simple wood platform, was erected ca. 1985 to provide guests yet another vantage point from which to enjoy the view to the Snowbird Mountain Range which give the lodge its name. In short, the historic relationship of the lodge, woodland site, and the view remains primary and preserved.

1. The Snowbird Mountain Lodge. 1941. Contributing.

The Snowbird Mountain Lodge is a T-shaped building, mostly of frame construction with stone and log blocks. Its appearance, described by its builder and operator as in the "Swiss Chalet" style, has all the hallmarks of resort construction in western North Carolina from the twentieth-century interwar period. Designed by Asheville architect Ronald Greene, the lodge incorporates indigenous stone from a local quarry and chestnut logs from the site (and elsewhere) as well as sawn lumber from the timber felled in the grading and preparation of the building site in the autumn of 1940. Using stone masonry, saddle-notch log construction, and German-sided frame construction together with variety in the size and type of window openings, Greene produced a building of strong visual interest and impressive character. Erected on a T-plan, the lodge consists of two principal blocks. The top of the "T," built on a north/south axis, contains the large lounge (or living room) at its south end, the entrance hall in the near-center of the top, and the dining room, kitchen, and service porch at its north end. Those public and service portions of the building are a tall one-story in height. The hotel block, forming the stem of the "T," is two stories in height, and stands on an east/west axis.

The stone used throughout the building, principally for the dining room and kitchen block, recurs in the chimney and the foundation for the remainder of the building. Its texture and color, ranging from grey to a molten yellow, is one factor which unifies the building. A second is the use of brown paint (Glidden #3608, "Bark") for all exposed wood surfaces except the windows and doors which are painted a handsome soft green (Glidden #1953), "Gloss Revere Green"). The two cottages and other lodge outbuildings are stained with Glidden's "Bison Brown." The combination of stone, the two primary paint colors, and the rusty terra-cotta red color of the asphalt roof shingles form a rich palette of color for the lodge.

Because of the positioning of the lodge and the location of the entrance drive, the east elevation of the top of the "T" serves as the principal facade of the building. It was here that Greene concentrated the major decorative features of the building since it was this side that the tourists and guests would first see on arrival. By the manipulation of materials, set-backs, and projections in the wall plane, and varied window and door openings, Greene created an impressive, welcoming elevation. The dominant feature of the elevation is a

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shallow projecting gable-front bay of saddle-notch log construction with cement chinking. A massive stone chimney is centered on its face and provides a fireplace for the inglenook in the lodge lounge. Immediately beside the log bay, and nestled into the corner of the "T," is the entrance porch supported by two rectangular-in-plan stone piers.

The porch is a few steps above ground level, just as the lodge itself is some six to eight feet above the level of the gravel parking lot to its east. The steps from the parking lot up to the lodge lawn are stone. There they join a flagstone walk which connects to the flagstone steps leading up to the porch which is also flagstone. Stone was also used in the construction of an unobtrusive handicap ramp which rises here, parallel to the lodge elevation, to the porch. This use of stone and flagstone serves to anchor the building to the ground and forms the base from which the stone porch piers rise. The piers, in turn, serve as the link between the frame south end of the "T's" top to the stone masonry of the north end which contains the dining room, kitchen, and service porch.

On the log bay, Greene used six-over-six sash windows; however, in the dining room he used casement windows and doors below four-pane transoms. These three larger openings have poured cement sills and wood lintels. The opening nearest the entrance is fitted with paired ten-pane French doors which suggest that Greene had intended, perhaps, to have them open onto a dining terrace which was never built. The other two openings contain paired eight-pane casement windows.

The kitchen block is set back a foot or so behind the elevation of the dining room. The lower half of the kitchen elevation is stone and topped with a poured cement cap. The cement cap serves as the sill for a grouped quartet of eight-pane casement windows in the center of the kitchen wall. At either end, Greene used vertical half-round logs to frame the window and to sheath the frame upper elevation. The service porch which terminated the north end of the original building is likewise set back behind the plane of the kitchen elevation. The stone apron carrying along the lower half of the kitchen continues here. So, too, do the grouped vertical half-logs which formed piers for the porch roof. Originally, the porch was open; however, the spaces between the log supports have been infilled with frame construction and fitted with aluminum jalousie windows. That work was probably done in the early 1970s when the kitchen was remodeled. It appears likely that the porch/shelter which now forms the north end of this block was added at the same time. It is a simple frame shed with wood lattice at the north end, which covers an open storage area, shelters a flight of steps up to the former porch, and includes a shallow enclosed room at the top of the steps which opens into the former service porch.

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The south end of the top of the "T," which houses the lodge lounge, is surrounded by an open flagstone terrace which wraps around the south face of the gable-front elevation and continues down its east side. The terrace is guarded by low stone piers, spaced at intervals, which hold wood railings of X-shaped timbers. In effect, the terrace functions as an extension of the lounge. Pairs of fifteen-pane French doors with their original screened doors, open from the lounge onto the east and west sides of the terrace while a larger, taller window opening in the center of the south gable end of the lounge provides splendid views of the Snowbird Mountain range. This fixed window is fitted with a trio of six-pane windows below like four-pane transoms. It is fitted with a shallow pent shed hood. The south end of the roof over this window tilts upward--a feature that might be said to be suggestive of the "Swiss Chalet" style. In 1964, the west side of the terrace was covered by a shed roof to make it more comfortable as a sitting area in the summer.

The use of wide German siding to sheath the elevations of the lodge's lounge provides a point of transition from the log bay to the hotel wing in the stem of the "T" which is fully sheathed in wide German siding. The long length of its nine-bay elevation is broken by a shallow off-center projecting bay which, from a distance, forms a counterpoint to the gable-front roof over the lodge lounge. The window openings are single here except for two pairs of windows and identical on both stories. The openings contain mostly six-over-one sash windows in plain board surrounds with narrow fillets across the top.

The west gable end of the hotel wing has a three-bay division on both stories with a large louvered ventilator in the attic end. Here it becomes evident that the south and north faces of the hotel wing have risen above the pitch of the gable roof and take on the appearance of wall dormers. This was another simple architectural device used by Greene to impart architectural interest through an economy of means. The use of simple triangular brackets along the eaves of the roof and exposed rafter ends were other devices which recall the like features of bungalows. There are doors in the center bays, at the ends of the hotel corridors on both levels. The lower door opens onto a shallow stoop while the upper door opens onto a simple wood deck which integrates steps for use by guests as a second exit from the upper level of the hotel and as a fire escape.

The rear, north elevation of the hotel wing is virtually identical to the front, south elevation except that it contains only one set of paired windows here. Where the hotel wing (stem of the "T") joins the dining room's west elevation, there is an open pit with stone retaining walls which provides access to the furnace/boiler room below the east end of the hotel wing. A board-and-batten door and a four-pane window are set in the below-grade face of the pit. The west elevation of the dining room and kitchen wing repeats the

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arrangement of window openings seen on the front (east) elevation except that all three openings in the dining room are fitted with casement windows below transoms. There is a board-and-batten door into the basement below the kitchen and a window that are on ground level here because of a shift in grade. There is also access here to the shed porch/shelter added to the north end of the original service porch.

The use of indigenous material on the exterior of the building was repeated on the interior where the mellow tones of native woods impart a rich warm appearance to the public and private rooms. The lodge's front door, featuring nine panes above two tall panels and fitted with hammered steel-colored hardware, opens into the entrance hall. The finish of the entrance hall and the dining room and lounge which are positioned to the north and south, respectively, is virtually the same. The floors are oak and polished; the hall floor is covered with carpet. The walls of the rooms are fitted with a tall vertically-sheathed wainscot of native woods with a simple top molding. Above the wainscot, the walls are covered with large panels of celotex which impart something of the appearance of scored plaster. The stained heavy-timber framing of the opening from the hall into the lounge is repeated in the smaller opening at the west end of the hall which connects with the first-story corridor of the hotel wing. Above this opening there is a heavy timber balcony which guards the hall overlook at the east end of the second-story hotel corridor. The ceiling in the hall and the adjoining lounge are vaulted and fitted with stained exposed timbers which appear to be structural.

The wide two-part opening connecting the hall with the lounge engages the small registration desk which, in plan, is half in the hall and half in the lounge. Designed to be unobtrusive, it has a perimeter apron of vertical boards rising to a heavy board top. The lounge itself is rectangular in plan except for the shallow inglenook on the east side which is enframed by heavy stained timbers with metal bands. The log construction of this bay is exposed on the interior where the logs are stained a dark color. The stone chimney breast is likewise exposed and fitted with a timber mantel shelf supported by stone brackets. Its firescreen, the two metal chandeliers illuminating the lounge, and a floor lamp, are original fittings as is a table made by the Carver brothers. Otherwise, the informal furniture dates from purchases by the sequential owners of the lodge. There are bookshelves lining the north wall beside the opening into the hall and other shelves on the west wall, between the registration desk and the French doors onto the terrace, which display local crafts and comprise the gift shop.

From the entrance hall, a pair of fifteen-pane French doors open into the dining room. They are on axis with the projecting stone chimney breast and fireplace in the center of the opposite north end of the dining room. The fireplace is fitted with a heavy timber shelf on stone brackets. The oak

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flooring here, refinished and highly polished, runs on axis with the length of the room which features three window openings on each side. There are two metal chandeliers here, each holding six lights, which are identical to those in the lounge; however, the wall sconces are later fixtures. The ceiling in the dining room is flat. The room is finished with eleven maple tables which were made in 1941 for the lodge and have been in use ever since. The chairs are compatible and later. On the west side of the chimney breast there is an opening fitted with paired swinging wood doors which open into the kitchen. They have tall lower panels fitted with X-braces, center panels fitted with diamond-shaped panes of glass, and blind upper panels. The finish of the kitchen and the now enclosed service porch is utilitarian in appearance. The floors of the kitchen are painted wood and the walls are wallboard. The interior walls and the partition enclosing a staff restroom in the southeast corner of the original service porch are sheathed with wide German siding. While some few of the fittings and fixtures in the kitchen may date from the 1940s, most appear to date to the remodeling of the kitchen in the early 1970s by Timmerman and Stone and later. The original stair from the service porch, connecting with the basement storage area for vegetables, etc., is no longer used; however, it remains intact in the basement.

There is a panel displaying the eight species of native woods used in the finishing of the lodge to the right of the opening leading from the entrance hall into the corridor of the hotel wing. The woodwork and wainscot of the fifteen guest rooms and two corridors of the hotel wing is one or another of these native woods. Immediately inside the opening from the entrance hall there is a shallow stairhall at the east end of the hotel wing that forms a transition space between the public spaces of the lodge and the guest rooms in the hotel wing. The stair, with its heavy timber newel and railing, rises on the left (south) to the second story. Originally, the door under the intermediate landing of the stair connected this stairhall with the flagstone terrace; however, a closet had been enclosed here for service storage. At the right (north) end of the stair hall there is open shelving for books and games.

The first story corridor in the hotel wing has a pine floor with a carpet runner and a six-foot wainscot of wormy chestnut. The ceiling and walls above the wainscot here and throughout the hotel wing are covered with large rectangular celotex panels which resemble scored plaster. On the left (south, front) side of the hall there are four guest rooms, each with an adjoining bathroom and closet. These rooms vary in size and are fitted with either twin or double beds, a night stand or table, a chest of drawers, luggage racks, straight or rocking chairs, and wall-hinged writing shelves. The chests of drawers, beds, luggage racks, and nightstands or tables were made by the Carver brothers and follow a variety of simple traditional forms. They have been in use in the lodge since 1941. The floors in the guest rooms are pine and the walls of the rooms have either a woodwainscot or they are fully

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sheathed in a particular species of native wood. The doors for the closets and bathrooms are vertically sheathed while the doors into the corridors have three room-side panels with diagonal bracing. The bathrooms have sheet vinyl floors, pine sheathed walls (for the most part), and white fixtures of varying dates but mostly from the early 1970s. The bathrooms are fitted with tubs which are mostly original; they have each been fitted with showers. On the right (north) side of the corridor there are three guest rooms with adjoining bathrooms and closets, a linen closet, and public men's and women's lavatories at the east end. The guest rooms and lavatories on the first story are finished either in chestnut, basswood, butternut, or cherry.

The wainscot in the stairwell and on the second story feature mixed woods. The arrangement of guest rooms on the second story of the hotel wing is virtually the same as on the first story, except that here there are four guest rooms and a small public guest bathroom on the right (north) side providing a total of fifteen guest rooms in the lodge. The rooms are finished with chestnut, silver bell, basswood, pine, maple, wild cherry, or mixed woods and labeled accordingly.

Dependencies and Outbuildings

2. Garage/Game Room. Noncontributing. Ca. 1941, 1955, 1970

This small frame building stands to the southeast of the lodge and at the east edge of the gravel parking area for guests. It is built on a stone foundation, sheathed with board and batten, and covered with an asphalt shingle gable-front roof. It appears to have been erected about 1941 for use as a two-car garage by the Wolfe brothers. In the newsletter for the 1956 season, Gladys and Elmer Smith announced that they had converted the former garage to a playroom in the fall of 1955. "We installed a new cement floor and some good inside lighting. Five large 'pull-up type' windows, screened were installed in the sides and back of the building. A screened front section was built to replace one of the rolling doors." In 1970 the next owners of the lodge expanded it with a shed addition on the north side which was built on a cement block foundation. A simple pent shed, supported by braces, carries across the front of the original block and protects the door and screened opening beside it, and the one remaining "rolling door." The garage/game room and all the frame outbuildings are stained "Bison Brown."

3. Shuffle Board Courts. Noncontributing Site. Early 1940s, 1955

The 1956 season newsletter also carried news of the improvements for this recreational pursuit. "The new shuffleboard (court) was laid out parallel to the old court on Happy Point trail. The old court was resurfaced and lengthened 5'. Adequate overhead lighting was installed on pipe standards

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between the courts giving much better night visibility than the former lighting which was installed in 1954." The shuffleboard courts consist of two long rectangular parallel cement pads which extend eastward from behind the gameroom. There are two T-shaped pipe light standards positioned between the courts which illuminate the playing area.

4. Owners's Residence. 1973. Noncontributing

This two-story, twelve-sided prefabricated frame house, manufactured by Del-Tec, was erected by Edward H. and Mary E. Williams, the owners of the lodge from 1972 until 1980 as their residence. It has remained the home of the owners/proprietors of the lodge to the present. Erected downgrade and to the southeast of the lodge, it is reached by a curving stretch of informal steps which descend from the front right corner of the gameroom. It is sheathed with manufactured sheet exterior siding and covered with a low conical roof of asphalt shingles. It has a two-level wood deck and a large stone fireplace on two of its southwestward sides. Inside there is a large combination living and dining room, kitchen, and lavatory on the first level, and three bedrooms and two bathrooms on the second level.

5. Observation Deck. Ca. 1985. Noncontributing Structure.

This simple rectangular frame deck, built largely of 2x6 boards with a 4x4 railing, stands downgrade from the parking lot and in a position southeast of the lodge, between it and the owners's residence. It was erected as a sitting area to take advantage of the views to the south to the Snowbird Mountain range.

6. Summer House. 1964. Noncontributing.

This small square frame building was erected in the spring of 1964 for use as a sitting area away from the terrace. It stands slightly downgrade and to the southwest of the lodge. Measuring seven feet and ten inches on each side, it stands on a stone foundation with a poured cement cap. It has a wood floor and a two-foot high perimeter apron on all four sides. The area above is screened. The low-hipped roof has exposed rafter ends and is covered with asphalt shingles.

7. Wolfe Cottage. 1965. Noncontributing.

This small two-room guest cottage, standing slightly upgrade and to the west of the lodge, was erected by Paul T. and Mildred L. Davis who owned the lodge from June, 1964, until February, 1966. It is a rectangular frame building, erected on cement block piers and covered with a side-gable roof which engages the full-facade porch on the south elevation. The cottage is covered with

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sawn-slab boards and is darkly colored with "Bison Brown" stain by Glidden. Short flights of steps are positioned at each end of the porch. Each of the two units has an entrance and a picture window on the south elevation. The interior of each unit is finished with good-grain sheet vinyl floors and manufactured wood-grain paneling. Each has a closet and a bathroom.

8. Smith Cottage. 1970. Noncontributing.

Occupying the site of the oldest building on the lodge property--a frame quarters erected in 1940 to house the workmen erecting the lodge--the Smith Cottage is a two-level frame building. It was erected by William E. Timmerman and Robert H. Stone, who acquired the lodge in 1969 from Gladys Smith, the second owner of the resort. The Smith cottage stands on a cement block foundation and is covered with manufactured exterior sheet siding and an asphalt-shingle side-gable roof. Standing behind (north of) the kitchen it has a one-story porch on the front (south) elevation and a two-level porch/deck on the rear elevation. The main level contains two guest bedrooms with adjoining bathrooms and a two-room suite, also with a bathroom. On the lower basement level there is a two-room suite with a bathroom and closet. The remainder of the basement is given over to work space and storage. There is an overhead garage door on the east elevation and a traditional door on the north elevation.

9. Caretaker's Shed. Ca. 1941. Contributing.

This small stone and frame building, situated in a ravine to the northwest of the lodge, has long been known as the caretaker's shed. It seems likely, however, that it might have been erected to house the electrical generating equipment which provided electricity to the lodge from 1941 until 1949, when Nantahala Power Company ran a commercial line to the lodge. The lower half of the building is stone and the upper half frame. The upper elevation and the roof are covered with copper red asphalt shingles. There is a board and batten door on its west side and small openings holding side-hinged six-pane windows in each of the other elevations. The interior is simply finished and has a wood-on-cement floor.

10. Pump House. 1941. Contributing.

Standing west/northwest of the caretaker's shed, this small rectangular stone building rests on a high poured cement foundation that houses the lodge's water tank. It has a board-and-batten door on the east elevation and six-pane windows in openings on the north and west sides. The building is covered with a side-gable roof of copper red asphalt shingles that appear to be very old (and perhaps original?). It continues to house the principal pump for the lodge.

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11. Lower Pump House. 1941. Contributing.

This small cement block and frame building was erected to house the pump for a dug-well added to the lodge plant to supplement the natural spring water supply. It stands at the east edge of the driveway just south of the Santeetlah Road. The upper frame section of the building is sheathed with German siding. The room has exposed rafter ends and asphalt shingles. There is a board door on the south gable front of the building.

12. Car shelter. 1987. Noncontributing.

This open frame building is covered by a front gable roof of asphalt shingles supported by 6x6 sawn lumber uprights. It stands at the east edge of the entrance drive about mid-way up the ascent.

13. The Grounds. Contributing Site.

The present 96.97-acre tract comprising the lodge property is the remaining portion of the original lodge property of 142.25 acres. It includes the site of the lodge, all its related buildings and improvements, and that portion of the property which forms a part of the principal southward view. The only developed road on the lodge tract is the paved asphalt entrance drive which rises from Santeetlah Road up the hillside to the lodge. There it joins the gravel covered parking lot for lodge guests. There is a short extension of the drive which carries behind the lodge to the Smith Cottage and a secondary parking area, also covered with gravel. The shift in grade around the perimeter of the main gravel parking area is accommodated by low mortared stone walls with openings or steps where necessary.

There are two informally developed trails for hiking which originate on the lodge grounds and then continue into the woodlands to the east and west. The "Happy Point" trail begins at the east edge of the shuffle board court and leads to the east to an overlook. It terminates on the lodge property. The longer "Ridge Top" trail originates at the edge of the woodland just to the west of the summer house and Wolfe Cottage. It extends through the lodge property and beyond to join the United States Forest Service trail in the Nantahala National Forest which leads to Cedar Top mountain. These two lodge trails date to the 1940s and have been renewed as necessary to make them safe and clearly demarcated in woodlands that have otherwise been left in their natural state. Hiking on the lodge property and the adjoining national forest and Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest has always been an important part of the recreational opportunities offered to and enjoyed by lodge guests. Otherwise, the lodge acreage, except for a clearing in front (south) of the lodge is covered with woodlands of poplar, red maple, spanish oaks, chestnut

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oaks, white pine, basswood, hemlocks, silver bell, scarlet oak, black oak, sassafras, white pines, and other species. There are native rhododendrons and mountain laurel on the property. There are native hollies on the property as well as planted hollies in a row behind (north of) the hotel wing.

The 96.97-acre site of the Snowbird Mountain Lodge is important as the location of the lodge and holds significance as an important historic and recreational resource in Graham County. Through careful stewardship of the lodge property and the clustered location of the lodge and its attendant buildings the property possesses historic integrity as an unspoiled natural recreational resource in western North Carolina.

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Snowbird Mountain Lodge: Summary Paragraph

Designed by Asheville architect Ronald Greene and erected in 1940-1941, the Snowbird Mountain Lodge is a handsome stone, frame, and log hostelry occupying a superb hill-top location with extraordinary unspoiled views south to the Snowbird Mountain range. An architectural landmark in Graham County, the lodge was built for brothers Arthur W. and Edwin M. Wolfe of Chicago, who operated it on a seasonal basis, beginning in the spring of 1941, in conjunction with tours of the Great Smoky Mountain Area which they originated in Chicago. As the last major hotel or inn built in western North Carolina prior to World War II, the Snowbird Mountain Lodge is associated with the development of the tourism and resort industry in the western part of the state in the twentieth century interwar period. Bounded on two sides by the Nantahala National Forest and on the south by a reservation of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians, the lodge is also associated with the forces of forest conservation and parkland development that sought to preserve the spectacular scenery and forestlands of western North Carolina and the nation. The lodge was built to accommodate tourists and seasonal travelers who came into the region to savor the national forests and parks including the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest which is located only two miles from the lodge. The use of stone, log, and frame construction on the lodge reflects the then-current architectural practice of using indigenous materials and local craftsmanship in seasonal and regional buildings. Inside the lodge, the use of stone and log construction is visible and joined there by the use of various species of native hardwoods for the paneling and wainscoting in the public and private spaces. This association with local tradition was enhanced through the employment of the Carver brothers, local woodworkers, who made the dining tables, beds, chests of drawers, tables, stands, and luggage racks which have remained in place and in use by lodge guests to the present.

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SNOWBIRD MOUNTAIN LODGE

Historical Background and Entertainment/Recreation Context

The Snowbird Mountain Lodge, opened to guests in the spring of 1941, is a relatively recent building in the history of the resort industry in western North Carolina; however, it has its origins in the same appreciation of climate and mountain scenery which sparked the nineteenth-century development of the industry. Even in the eighteenth century when Bishop Spengenberg visited western North Carolina looking for a site at which to locate the Moravian colony which came to be known as Salem, the dramatic vistas and extraordinary breadth of the mountain ranges in western North Carolina raised awe and wonder in the beholder. While the accounts of travelers enjoying the scenery of the state remain to be compiled and a history of the development of the tourist and resort industry is yet to be written, certain critical stages in the narrative are known.

Charlestonians and other residents of low-country South Carolina were among the first Americans who would come to appreciate the cool salubrious climate and spectacular scenery of the state's western counties. Escaping the humid and mosquito-infested summers of coastal South Carolina in the early nineteenth century and antebellum period they traveled to the northwest through South Carolina to North Carolina. There, but a few miles inside the North Carolina border, in Henderson County, they established the summer colony of upper-class South Carolinians to the present. Large and well-built houses situated on substantial grounds form the core of the area which focuses on a small village and St. John's-in-the-Wilderness. In the post-World War II era, Flat Rock became known nationally as the home of poet and biographer Carl Sandburg who occupied Connemara until his death in 1967.

On a much larger and public scale, like concerns for health, the search for attractive seasonal residences, and an appreciation of the mountain scenery encouraged the development of a large resort industry in Asheville and other cities, towns, and villages in western North Carolina. Linville, Tryon, Roaring Gap, and Lake Toxaway are but a few of the places which come quickly to mind. The mineral waters of places like Hot Springs and other smaller spas also attracted visitors from within and without North Carolina. Seasonal residences and summer cottages were built and families came by railroad to spend the long summer months. The construction of Biltmore House (NHL) by George Vanderbilt in the 1890s is the ultimate example of this phenomenon.

With the development of railroad lines throughout western North Carolina in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the present century, numerous hotels, inns, and lodges were built in Asheville and the smaller cities, towns, and villages in the region. Among the best known of these was the long-lost Battery Park Hotel (1886) in Asheville, a large

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sprawling Shingle Style building. The Nu-Ray Inn at Burnsville is another turn-of-the-century hostelry. Asheville had become the mecca for the seasonal traveler to western North Carolina in the late nineteenth century and another of its great hotels was the Kenilworth Inn, built in 1890, which burned in 1909. Thomas Wadley Raoul's The Manor opened to guests in 1899; however, its position as a leading hotel was usurped in 1913 when E. W. Grove opened his magnificent Grove Park Inn (NR 1973). The Grove Park Inn offered the traveler and tourist a wide range of amenities and recreational opportunities, including golf, and other hotels and inns in western North Carolina followed suit. Concurrently, some of the larger private seasonal residences in the region were expanded, refitted, and opened to the public. Among this group was the High Hampton Inn and Country Club at Cashiers which had formerly been the summer residence of General Wade Hampton of South Carolina.

The invention of the automobile and its increasingly broad use by the upper and middle classes in the opening decades of the century became a second method of transportation for the traveler and tourist. The concurrent development and conservation of the natural resources which formed the critical parts of the mountain landscape also had important effects on the resort industry. The railroads which carried tourists into and out of western North Carolina also brought in capitalists and businessmen who saw the great stands of virgin trees covering hundreds of thousands of acres as an important new source of timber and lumber. The rapid destruction of the nation's great forests by voracious commercial exploitation soon gave rise to the development of conservation forces, headed by men such as John Muir and others. The passage of the Federal Forest Reserve Act of 1891 and the subsequent creation of the United States Forest Service and the passage of the legislation establishing the National Park Service in 1916.

In the period between World War I and World War II, 1918-1941, there was both a rapid increase in the number of hotels, inns, and lodges built to accommodate travelers and seasonal residents and an increasing diversity of hostelrys which accommodated the different aims and interests of travelers. Golf became a passion during the period and several of the new establishments advertised themselves as hotels and country clubs. Other summer places were by the shores of the many lakes created by power companies which dammed the region's rivers to generate electricity. The Tapoco Lodge was built in Graham County following the construction of the Cheoah Dam on the Tennessee/North Carolina border. With the construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway in the 1930s, inns were built at points along its length. The creation of the Pisgah (1916) and Nantahala national forests likewise spurred the construction of hotels and inns as travelers, particularly from out-of-state, came to western North Carolina to admire the scenery and the great forests of the region which were being preserved. The Snowbird Mountain Lodge, flanked by the Nantahala National Forest and the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest, is among the most important of this last group. Built

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of chestnut logs and native stone by local builders, it reflected the use of indigenous materials and craftsmen which characterized the construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway and other government-sponsored projects in the 1930s.

The history of Biltmore House and its use by the Vanderbilt-Cecil Family is a critical part of this larger story of the social, cultural, and economic forces which affected western North Carolina. Beginning in the mid-1880s, George W. Vanderbilt (1862-1914) began amassing tracts of land for his estate, Biltmore, which totaled some 125,000 acres at its height. The enormous expense of building and operating Biltmore had crippled Vanderbilt's finances long before his death in 1914. In the settlement of his estate, the largest part of his Biltmore land holding, some 86,000 acres, was transferred to the United States government and became the core of the Pisgah National Forest in 1916. Other tracts of the estate would subsequently be sold. From the time of its celebrated opening in 1895 the estate achieved legendary status in the popular mind. The concurrent and gradual dismemberment of the estate, seen in part as an act of philanthropy, did nothing to undermine the fascination with the house and its association with one of American's wealthiest families. In 1930, months after the Stock Market Crash of 1929, the house was opened to the public by Vanderbilt's daughter, Cornelia Vanderbilt Cecil.

The opening of the estate, coupled with other attractions and the existing draws of a cool summer climate, handsome scenery, and rich autumn foliage, proved irresistible to tourists and travelers from throughout the United States. Tours, by railroad, automobile, and an early form of motor coach could combine all these pleasures. The tours organized by a Chicago travel agent in the 1930s to take advantage of the attractions listed above were the impetus for the construction of the Snowbird Mountain Lodge.¹ Arthur W. Wolfe operated a travel office in Chicago, beginning in 1924, and in the 1930s he developed a week-long tour into the Great Smoky Mountain region. It began with a train ride to Knoxville, Tennessee, and then motor bus (Gray Line) on a circuit which included Gatlinburg, then into North Carolina to Bryson City, the Cherokee Indian Reservation area, Asheville, Biltmore, and back to Knoxville via Tapoco Lodge on the North Carolina/Tennessee border. For some years this general arrangement proved satisfactory and guests enjoyed the resort at Tapoco developed on the Little Tennessee River by the Aluminum Company of America. However, in the late 1930s, about 1938-1939, the Aluminum Company of America, pressed by increased company use of the Tapoco Lodge, decided against accommodating any further commercial groups. The beautiful scenery of Graham County, particularly the woodlands of the Nantahala National Forest and the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest and the dramatic landscapes of water and mountain created by dams on branches of the Little Tennessee River at Tapoco and just to the east/northeast at Fontana were very important parts of the tour offered by Mr. Wolfe to his clients.

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During discussions with Mr. W. Bridges, president of the Smoky Mountain Tour Company who handled the local stage of the tour, Wolfe was advised to build a lodge of his own. Arthur Wolfe became committed to the idea, provided a suitable location and land could be in the neighborhood of Tapoco and Lake Santeetlah in Graham County, to the northwest of Robbinsville, the county seat. In 1939, Arthur Wolfe met with Bridges and his son Lem Bridges in Robbinsville where they talked with Ed Ingram about a proposed lodge. The obstacles facing Arthur Wolfe were not a few. The first was the matter of obtaining property with panoramic views in an area of the county which was mostly given over to the Nantahala Forest and Cherokee Indian Reservation lands. Available electricity and a good, stable supply of water followed as major concerns.

On a trip out US 129 around Lake Santeetlah, Arthur Wolfe and his local contacts met Wiley Underwood who owned a cabin and lived here with his family. When asked whether they knew of land in the vicinity, he answered that there was a tract of some 140 acres that belonged to his wife's relatives. Wiley Underwood led the party to the property and up to the mountain top that would become the site of the Snowbird Mountain Lodge. In an account of the origins of the Snowbird Mountain Lodge that Arthur Wolfe prepared in 1968 at the request of the second owners of the inn, he recalled that he "was thrilled with the view," and rightly so. Wolfe built the Snowbird Mountain Lodge to take advantage of the spectacular views, to the south, across Cherokee Indian Reservation lands and across the Santeetlah Lake to the Snowbird Mountain range, a view that included a large portion of the Nantahala National Forest. The property also included a spring which could supply the lodge with necessary water.

Arthur Wolfe returned to Chicago and informed his brother Edwin, a real estate entrepreneur, about the project and potential site. During the course of 1939, the brothers returned to Graham County, resolved themselves to the project, formed a partnership, and hired an attorney to proceed with the acquisition of the previously visited acreage for the lodge. Through a deed dated 23 July 1940, Clay Ghormley of Graham County conveyed three apparently contiguous tracts of land which would become the site of the lodge holding to Arthur W. and Edwin M. Wolfe. The three tracts on the waters of West Buffalo Creek consisted, respectively, of 100 acres, twenty-seven acres (more or less), and three-and-a-quarter acres. On 24 May 1941, the brothers expanded their Snowbird holding by the purchase of an additional twelve acres, more or less, from Lina Queen Smith. This 142.25 acres, more or less, would remain the acreage of the Snowbird Mountain Lodge until 1981 when a portion of it, on the east side of the Santeetlah Road, was separated by the then owners and sellers of the lodge, Mary E. and Edward Williams, who erected a residence for themselves on the property.

During the course of his work as head of a travel company, Arthur Wolfe had visited many inns and lodges in the United States. It was his ideas of what appealed to the traveler--including a concept of the Swiss Chalet style--that Wolfe took to Ronald Greene, an Asheville architect. At this point it is

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uncertain what prompted Wolfe to hire Greene to design the lodge. Given Wolfe's travel in Asheville it seems likely that he would have been familiar with Greene's work and at least two prominent buildings designed by him, namely the Jackson Building (1923-1924) and the Longchamps Apartments (1923) which he would have passed driving to and from the Grove Park Inn.

Work began on the construction of the Snowbird Mountain Lodge in September 1940. Wayne Ellis of Robbinsville cut a road from the public road (now Santeetlah Road) up to the mountain-top location where he also cleared the site for the new building. Based on local recommendations, Wolfe engaged Bill Moore, a contractor from Andrews in neighboring Cherokee County, to assemble and supervise a crew of local workmen. Edwin Wolfe came down from Chicago to oversee the project and handle the financial obligations incurred in construction. From the outset, it had been the intention of the Wolfe brothers and Ronald Greene to use local materials throughout the lodge. The trees felled during the grading of the road and site clearance were hauled to Bemis Lumber Company in Robbinsville and sawed into lumber. Other lumber was obtained from nearby mills in Georgia. The stone came from a quarry near Robbinsville. As the site was remote from Robbinsville and the homes of the workmen, the first building erected here was a cabin to house the workmen. It stood behind (north of) the lodge until taken down and replaced by the Smith Cottage in 1969-1970.

Construction on the building moved forward and on 23 February 1941, a photograph of the lodge, under construction, appeared in the ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES. In the paragraph caption accompanying the photograph, the cost of the lodge was cited as \$50,000. The article suggested that the lodge "is expected to become one of Western North Carolina's outstanding resorts. The regular season will be from April 20 to November 1. . . . The lodge will particularly cater to members of organized tours and hunters and other sportsmen." A now-unknown interior decorator from Chicago advised on site on the furnishings and decor of the lodge and met with Clifford Carver and his brother, both local craftsmen, who made the furniture for the bedrooms and dining room of the lodge. Those beds, chests of drawers, and tables--made from local woods--remain in use. Other furniture and furnishings were obtained from Chicago sources. A chef, Louis Haderer of Winter Haven, Florida, was obtained for the opening season. He, his wife, and local people formed the staff when the lodge opened for its first guests in late April 1941. It appears that the first guests were probably some sixty members of the American Society of Travel Agents which was holding its annual convention at Asheville.

When the lodge opened in 1941, its own generators supplied electricity. A commercial electrical line was not run to the lodge until 1949. Neither was there telephone service available at the lodge in 1941; reservations were made with an agent in Robbinsville who handled bookings. It was not until 1960 that commercial telephone service was available to lodge guests. Likewise, it should

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be noted that the roads to Robbinsville and in the vicinity were packed clay for many years, into the 1960s. During the 1940s--and later--a number of hiking trails were developed on the property which would connect with trails on the forest service lands.

When Arthur and Edwin Wolfe built and opened Snowbird Mountain Lodge they were bachelors; however, during the course of years both married and, together with their wives, they managed the lodge. The Wolfe brothers operated Snowbird for thirteen seasons before selling it on 23 October 1953 to Elmer W. and Gladys R. Smith of Cincinnati, Ohio. In addition to the four tracts comprising the hotel property, the deed listed the on-ground assets including ". . . the Snowbird Mountain Lodge, cottage, garage, generator, and pump houses and reservoirs, together with and including all furniture, household and kitchen furnishings, equipments, appariti, and supplies."

Elmer and Gladys Smith operated the Snowbird Mountain Lodge for eleven years without making any real changes to the historic character of the hostelry. In the late winter of 1953-1954, they sent out newsletters to former guests at the lodge informing them of their acquisition of the inn and that they had installed "a television in a separate room for those who enjoy relaxing with a T.V. program." Whether the Wolfes mailed newsletters to guests is not now known; however, it became a yearly tradition by which the Smiths advised former lodgers of the schedule for the coming season, any change in rates, improvements to the property, and other items of news. The newsletter of 1956 announced that the former garage had been refitted as a playroom and that a new shuffleboard court had been erected in the fall of 1955. The inn operated on the American plan with three meals plus lodging until the season of 1957 when they offered a modified plan for those making day trips away from the lodge. Dr. A. J. Sharp, head of the botany department at the University of Tennessee, presided over a wildflower festival in 1955 and continued this practice which has become a lodge tradition. Other special events were noted and the concept of special, theme weekends has continued to the present. Reaching advanced ages in the 1960s, the Smiths considered retirement, and on 29 June 1964 they conveyed the lodge property to Paul T. and Mildred L. Davis of Fort Lauderdale, Florida for \$89,000. There had been no real indication of this event in the newsletter for the 1964 season; instead they had announced that the drive up to the lodge had been paved and that they were planning the construction of a screened summer house to the southwest of the main building. Mr. and Mrs. Davis defaulted on a mortgage on the property and on 8 February 1966 the lodge was put up at public auction at the Graham County Court House. Elmer and Gladys Smith repurchased the lodge for \$81,650 and in the newsletter for the 1966 season announced that they were back and looking forward to being proprietors of the lodge again. The newsletter also informed potential returning guests that the summer house and a roof over the west terrace of the main building had been completed in the spring

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of 1964, and that a two-room cottage, since known as the Wolfe Cottage, had been erected in 1965 to the west of the main building.

The newsletter for the 1969 season opened on a cheerful note and included a brief synopsis of the typescript account of the early history of Snowbird Mountain Lodge which Arthur Wolfe had provided to Mr. and Mrs. Smith in summer 1968. The lodge opened for the 1969 season on 23 May; however, within a few weeks Elmer Smith died unexpectedly in early June. With the help of relatives, Gladys Smith continued to manage the lodge; however, she set about to find new owners. On 28 October 1969, she sold the Snowbird property to William E. Timmerman and Robert H. Stone of West Chester, Pennsylvania. In their newsletter for the 1970 season, they introduced themselves to former lodgers at Snowbird and cited their previous operation of a resort on Lake Erie. In the way of improvements, they informed readers that the old living quarters--the oldest building on the premises--had been taken down and replaced with new staff quarters; the playroom was also expanded to accommodate a pool table. Timmerman and Stone operated the Snowbird Mountain Lodge for the seasons of 1970 and 1971. During their tenure as lodge-keepers, they replaced the kitchen equipment, installed new toilets in the guest bathrooms, and made other general improvements to the lodge and its facilities. Frustrated with problems surrounding the paving of the forest road leading to the entrance drive in 1970, they sold the Snowbird property on 1 June 1972 to Edward H. and Mary E. Williams. The Williamses erected a private residence for themselves downgrade and southeast of the lodge and operated the inn through the season of 1980 before selling it on 1 June 1981 to Robert Cecil Rhudy, Jr. and his wife Constance Mary Rhudy. Prior to the sale, some forty-plus acres were separated from the lodge tract; 99.939 acres remained with the lodge. The Snowbird Mountain Lodge remained in the ownership of Mr. and Mrs. Rhudy until January 1990 when they sold it to James H. Burbank and his wife Eleanor who are now the present owner-proprietors. Prior to this last sale a new plat of the lodge property was prepared by Allen Stevenson. It showed the tract comprising 96.97 acres. The Burbanks had been guests at the inn while living in Knoxville, Tennessee where Mr. Burbank had served for twenty-five years with the Tennessee Valley Authority in a series of natural resource management positions

Architectural Context

The Snowbird Mountain Lodge is important in the architectural history of Graham County and western North Carolina for its role as the last-built of the important hotels erected for tourists prior to World War II and as a distinguished building designed by Asheville architect Ronald Greene. There were buildings erected to serve travelers in western North Carolina in the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century; however, the majority of these have been lost and those few that do survive are engulfed in later additions and/or remodeled. Probably the oldest intact hotel or inn that was

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built to accommodate seasonal tourists who came to enjoy the climate and scenery is the antebellum Woodfield Inn (NR, 1973) at Flat Rock.

In its design the Woodfield Inn reflected the then fashionable Italianate style, and later hotels would follow that pattern of expressing the popular architectural styles of the period in which they were built. Near the end of the nineteenth century, many of the great and popular Victorian hotels were designed and built with a wealth of applied trim. Others, like The Manor in Albemarle Park reflected the Shingle Style which was popular throughout the country for resort buildings at the seaside or in the mountains. In western North Carolina, at the turn of the century, the appreciation for natural scenery--and the cool climate--which brought tourists and seasonal visitors to stay at mountain resorts, coincided with a series of conservation efforts which included the School of Forestry established by George Vanderbilt. As a result, many of the lodges, inns, hotels, and guest cabins for travelers were erected in a variant of the Craftsman or Rustic style. Perhaps the best known resort buildings in this mode are the great Adirondack lodges and hotels and hostelries erected in the national parks.

In western North Carolina there are a number of important Craftsman or Rustic lodges which were erected in the opening decades of the twentieth century. The Snowbird Mountain Lodge is the last-built in this small but architecturally accomplished and significant group. Perhaps the earliest of these lodges built in North Carolina was the Black Forest Hunting Lodge erected about 1895 for George Vanderbilt in the vicinity of the Cradle of Forestry. It was lost in the 1940s. The E. M. Backus Lodge (NR 1988), erected in 1908 at Lake Toxaway, is one of the first of this group which survives. It was a private lodge and was built of chestnut logs. The Pisgah National Forest Inn, erected in 1919, was another important member of this group until its recent demolition. It was a frame building covered with a rustic board and batten and gained distinction through the rustic porches and interior features which ornamented the hotel. Like porches in a two-story form appear on the present Eseeola Inn in Linville which was originally erected in the 1920s as Chestnut Lodge and as an adjunct to the original Eseeola Inn. When the Eseeola Inn burned in 1936, the Chestnut Lodge became the main inn and was expanded the following year to become the resort's largest public accommodation. It, like a number of other buildings in the Linville Historic District (NR 1979) which were designed by Henry Bacon, is covered with chestnut bark. Four years later, in 1940, the architect of the Snowbird Mountain Lodge designed the last-built of this important series of Craftsman style buildings.

The Snowbird Mountain Lodge is also important in the architectural history of western North Carolina as one of the significant buildings designed by Ronald Greene, an architect who practiced in Asheville from about 1922 until 1951 when he relocated to Gastonia, North Carolina. A full list of works by Greene

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remains incomplete and it is family recollections which provide the early accounts of his life, education, and career.

Born in Coldwater, Michigan in 1891, he is said to have studied at the Pratt School of Architecture and Columbia University in New York, and at the Beaux Arts Atelier in Cleveland, Ohio in the early 1910s. During World War I he worked at Hampton Roads Naval Base. It is unclear exactly when he came to Asheville. Family accounts place him in Asheville in 1916; however, the only entry in the Asheville city directories for the period of 1916 through 1921 for a person of his name is in 1917 when Ronald Green is listed as chief engineer of the Carolina Wood Products Company. In the 1922 ASHEVILLE CITY DIRECTORY Ronald Greene is listed as an "architect and structural engineer" with an office in the Oates Building. Whatever the date and circumstances of his education and his arrival in Asheville, he quickly established himself as a talented and skillful architect. His first known commission was for Claxton School which was built in 1922. He provided the design for Asheville's first skyscraper, the Jackson Building on Pack Square, which he encased in rich Gothic Revival terra cotta ornament. Construction began on it in 1923 and shortly thereafter he provided the design for the adjoining Westall Building, also on Pack Square. The Longchamps Apartments, erected at #185 on Macon Avenue--the road leading to the Grove Park Inn--was also designed by Greene, about 1925.

In the mid 1920s he was in partnership with Robert L. Kane in the Asheville Building Securities Company but that concern was short-lived. Greene's professional office remained in the Oates Building into the mid-1930s when he relocated it in the Grove Arcade. The stock market crash of 1929 and the collapse of Asheville's great land and building boom of the 1920s brought an end to the construction of major commercial and civic buildings in Asheville. For a period there was little building of any type; however, in the 1930s residential construction was renewed. Greene's work in the 1930s appears to have been mostly residential and small scale. About 1937 he took in W. Stewart Rogers as a partner and the two practiced under the style of Greene & Rogers until 1942.

The Snowbird Mountain Lodge appears to have been the major building by his hand in this pre-war period. Thereafter, he is said to have been involved in the design of government projects at Kingsport, Tennessee and elsewhere. After the war, he moved his office to the Jackson Building at 22 Pack Square. In 1949-1950, he formed a partnership with Milton P. Robelot and the two practiced as Greene & Robelot with offices in the Jackson Building until 1951 when Greene relocated to Gastonia. During his ten-year career in Gastonia, Greene designed a number of prominent public and institutional buildings including the Gaston County YMCA, the Gaston County Center for Handicapped Children, the First Union National Bank, and the Gaston County Nature Museum. He also undertook small commercial projects and residential work. He died in Gastonia on 11 October 1961 and was buried in Gaston Memorial Park.

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FOOTNOTE

1. The principal primary source for the history of the Snowbird Mountain Lodge is the series of transactions recorded in the Deed Books in the office of the Graham County Register of Deeds in Robbinsville. These entries document the purchase of the lodge site in 1940 and 1941 by Arthur W. and Edwin M. Wolfe, their sale of the property to Elmer W. and Gladys R. Smith, and the subsequent sales of the property down to the present owners. In 1968 Arthur Wolfe compiled a typescript account of the building and early history of the lodge which he presented to Mr. and Mrs. Smith. A photocopy of that account and some others in typescript form are in the possession of the present owners and were made available to this author. The present owners also retain the most complete file of the series of annual newsletters issued by the sequential owners beginning with the 1954 newsletter written by Gladys and Elmer Smith. These, too, were made available to the author together with other miscellaneous materials and documentary photographs.

The most comprehensive account of the career of Ronald Greene appears in the National Register nomination for Claxton School (Asheville, Buncombe County) which was compiled in 1991 by Andrea Austin. This was based on a number of sources including correspondence with Greene's surviving son and daughter. This appears at certain points--and particularly in the 1910s and 1920s--to contradict information which appears in the sequential city directories published for Asheville. Discrepancies in dates, education, and his status as a trained and certified engineer and/or architect remain to be resolved for the period before 1922. It appears likely that his primary training was as an engineer and like many other professionals in that field he easily moved to architectural design in the 1920s. He is listed under the heading of "Architects" in the city directories from 1922 until 1951. In 1951, the initials "ASCE" for American Society of Civil Engineers follow his name. Whatever the nature of his education and professional training, there is no question of his ability and skill as an architect.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Snowbird Mountain Lodge
Graham, N.C.

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Bibliography

Graham County Records, Office of the Register of Deeds, Graham County Court House, Robbinsville, North Carolina (Sub-group: Deeds).

Arthur W. Wolfe, "The Saga of Snowbird Mountain Lodge," an unpublished account of the construction and operation of the lodge prepared in 1968. A photocopy is in the possession of the lodge owners.

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National Park Service

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Snowbird Mountain Lodge
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Verbal Boundary Description

The property included in this nomination consists of the 96.97-acre tract identified on a plat of the property entitled "Snowbird Mountain Lodge, Cheoah Township, Graham County, North Carolina," which was prepared by Kenneth O. Pankon in January 1990. A copy of the plat is included with this nomination.

Boundary Justification

The property included with this nomination consists of 96.97 acres which has formed the core of the lodge property since acquisition of the original owner/builder in 1940 and 1941.

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Snowbird Mountain Lodge, Graham Co., NC

Section number _____ Photographs _____ Page 1

Snowbird Mountain Lodge: Schedule of Photographs

The following numbered list of photographs is a schedule of those photographs included in this nomination. The following information applies to all photographs.

Name of Property: Snowbird Mountain Lodge
275 Santeetlah Road
Robbinsville
Graham County
North Carolina

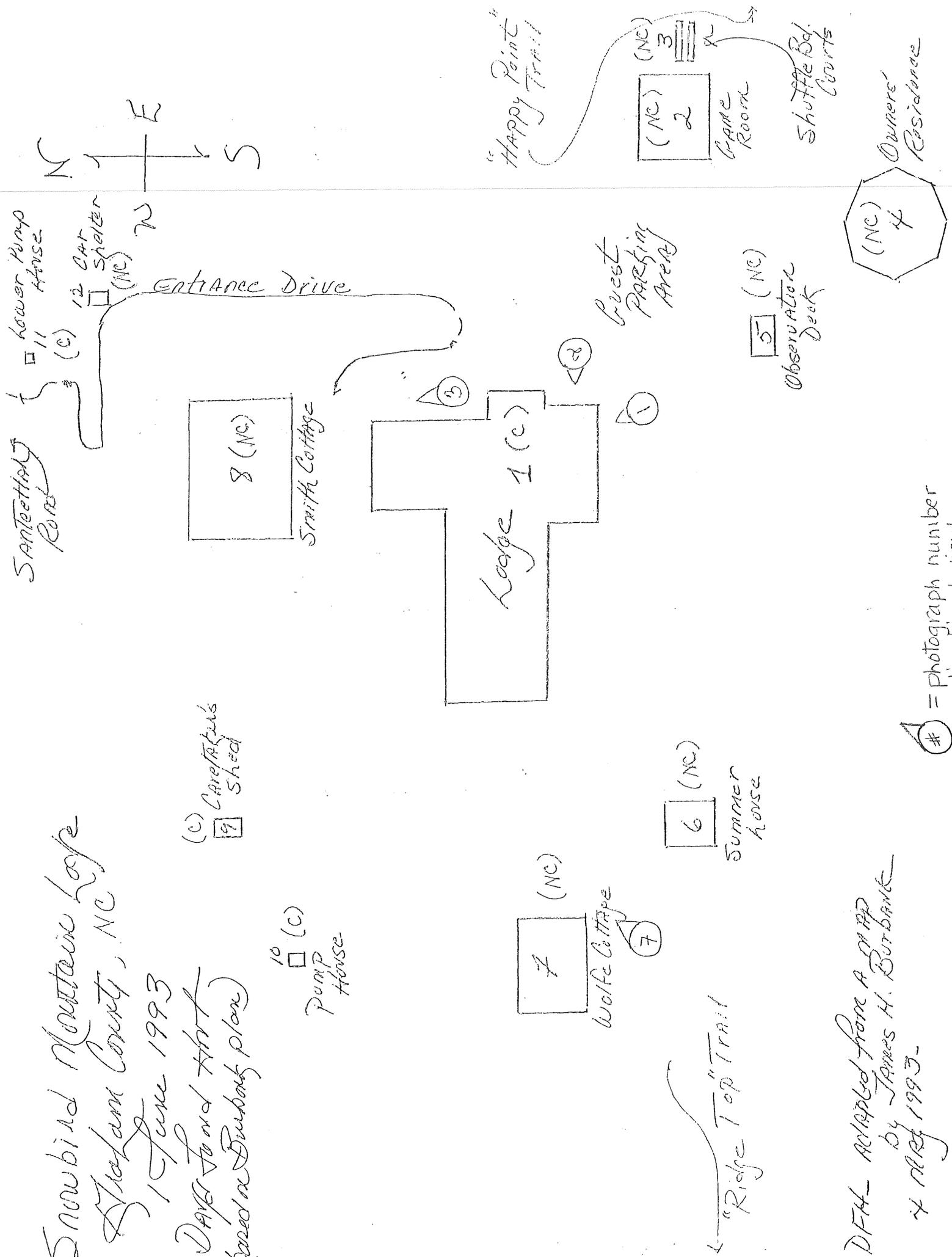
Photographer: Davyd Foard Hood

Date of Photographs: 25 March 1993

Location of Original Negatives: NC Division of Archives and History
109 East Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27601

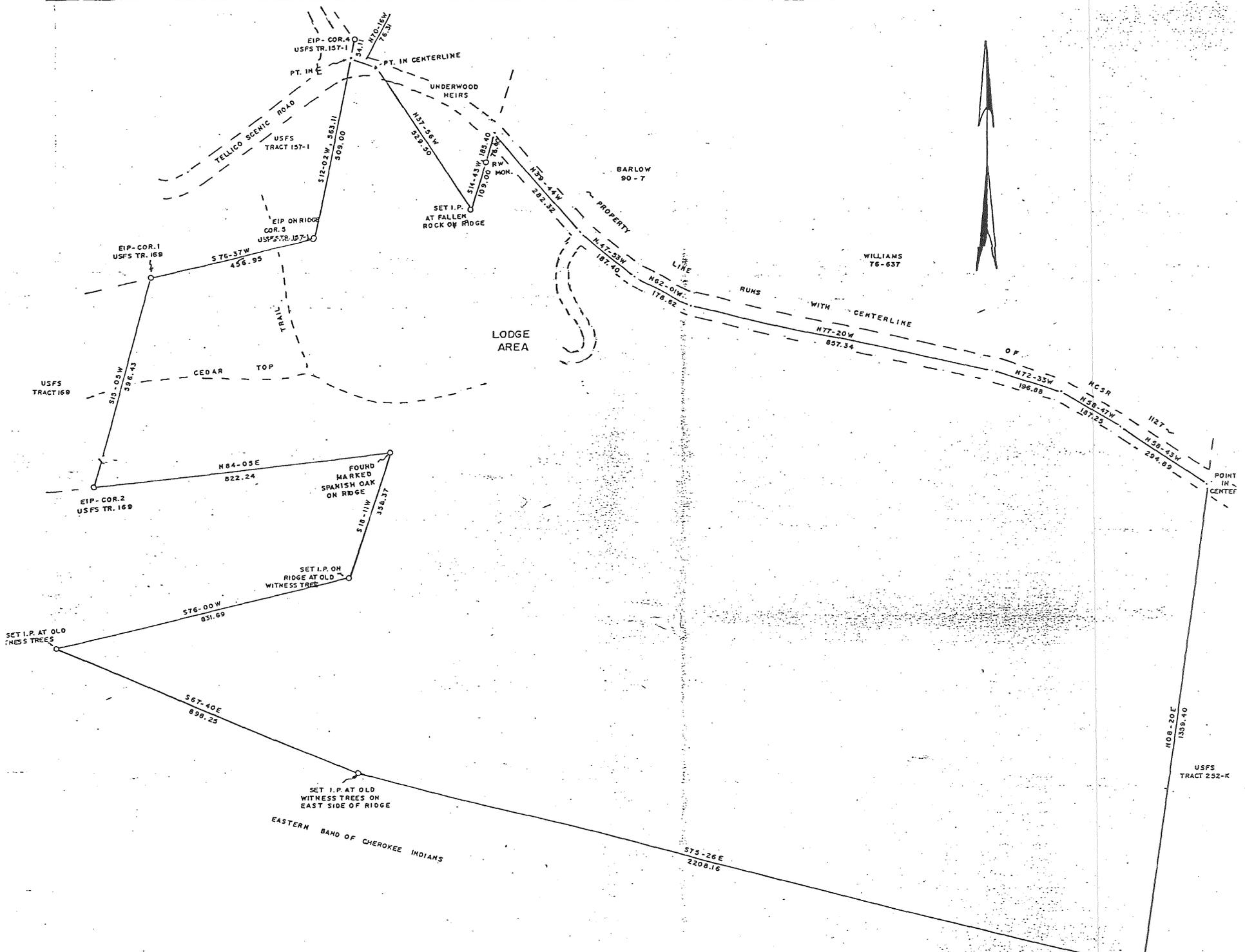
1. Snowbird Mountain Lodge, overall view, looking northwest
2. Snowbird Mountain Lodge, landscape view, looking west/northwest
3. Snowbird Mountain Lodge, view along east elevation of the lodge toward Smith Cottage, looking north
4. Snowbird Mountain Lodge, the lounge, looking northeast
5. Snowbird Mountain Lodge, the dining room, looking north
6. Snowbird Mountain Lodge, first-story guestroom in northwest corner, looking southeast
7. Snowbird Mountain Lodge, Wolfe Cottage, looking east/northeast

Snowbird Mountain Lodge
 Graham County, NC
 10 June 1993
 Days to and from
 based on Burbank plan



DFH - Adapted from A MAP
 by James H. Burbank
 4 May 1993

= Photograph number
 directional view



**SNOWBIRD MOUNTAIN
LODGE**

Area: 96.97 acres

COR. 3
TR. 252-K POINT ON N.
SIDE OF MCSR 1127
FROM WHICH:
EIP BEARS N04-46E, 61.07 FT.
EIP BEARS N03-07E, 100.63 FT.
R W MON BEARS N04-98E, 62.41 FT.



3917
 620,000 FEET
 3916
 3915
 3914
 20'
 3912
 (Robbinsville 149-SE) 4254 IV SE
 ROBBINSVILLE 129

Snowbird Mountain Lodge
 Robbinsville vic.
 Graham Co., NC

Quad:
 Santeetlah West, NC
 Scale: 1:24,000
 UTM References:
 A-17/236640
 3914990
 B-17/237820
 3914960
 C-17/237810
 3914240
 D-17/236630
 3914260

Elev 1940

Funnel Top

Farley Cove

Santeetlah Gap

Teeotlah

Cedar Cliff Ch

Robbinsville 10
 Hard Slate Gap

Mt. Nebo Ch

Fom

RATTLE FORD

LANKS

R E E K

SANTEETLAH

SANTEETLAH

Palo

