

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 Bryn Avon

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number Both sides of SR 1191 (River Road) and both sides of SR 1200 (Mallett Road) at their junction  N/A  not for publication

city or town Etowah  vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Henderson code 089 zip code 28729

### 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.)

Allen Stron SAPO 3/2/99  
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

entered in the National Register  See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other certification \_\_\_\_\_

Bryn Avon

Name of Property

Henderson County, North Carolina

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	
5	3	buildings
2	1	sites
2		structures
		objects
10	4	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/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

LANDSCAPE/garden

OTHER/art studio

Current Functions

Enter categories from instructions:

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

RELIGION/religious facility

FUNERARY/cemetery

AGRICULTURE/animal facility

LANDSCAPE/garden

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Enter categories from instructions:

Tudor Revival

OTHER/Rustic

Materials

Enter categories from instructions:

foundation Stone

walls Wood

Stone

roof Metal

other Log

Asphalt

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheet

Bryn Avon  
Name of Property

Henderson County, North Carolina  
County and State

**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
- Landscape Architecture
- Social History
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

Ca. 1910-1947

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Bell, Jesse W.--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:

North Carolina Division of Archives and History

Bryn Avon  
Name of Property

Henderson County, North Carolina  
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 127.86 acres

UTM References  
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	L 7	3 5 6 6 5 0	3 9 0 7 0 4 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	L 7	3 5 7 3 3 0	3 9 0 7 3 3 0

3	L 7	3 5 7 7 7 0	3 9 0 7 1 3 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	L 7	3 5 7 6 1 0	3 9 0 6 5 2 0

See continuation sheet

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

5 L 7 3 5 6 6 3 0 3 9 0 6 5 0 0

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Davyd Foard Hood

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 24 June 1998

street & number Isinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Road telephone 704/462-1347

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 See continuation sheet

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 Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet

Bryn Avon, Henderson County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 1Bryn Avon

Bryn Avon is an estate of approximately 127.86 acres on the south side of the French Broad River at the intersection of River Road (SR 1191) and Mallett Road (SR 1200). It is located southeast of Etowah in western Henderson County, a short distance inside the county's border with Transylvania County, and ten and one-half miles west/southwest of Hendersonville, the county seat. The rolling topography of the area lies to the south of the Pisgah National Forest, and there are scenic views of Mt. Pisgah from the main house. As a Mallett family estate, Bryn Avon consists of the main house, also known as Bryn Avon (#2), its tea house (#3), the terraced garden on its east side (#4), the family chapel and cemetery (#5), a stable (#6), and four smaller family cottages: the Mallett Cottage (#7), Penne Bryn—the Brown cottage (#8) and its adjoining playhouse (#9); Yon Way—the Conrow cottage (#10), its tea house (#11), and Mr. Conrow's studio (#12); and the Bellamy Cottage (#13).

Inventory List

1. The Estate Landscape and Grounds  
Ca. 1910 to the present  
Contributing site

As can be seen on the accompanying USGS Quadrangle Map, the landscape of Bryn Avon is influenced by its proximity to the mountainous terrain of the lands comprising the Pisgah National Forest and the path of the French Broad River which forms its north boundary. The northern quarter of the estate is a crescent-shaped tract of fertile bottom lands lying between the French Broad River and River Road (SR 1191) which carries on a generally east/west axis through Bryn Avon. About midway on its course through the property River Road intersects with Mallett Road (SR 1200), a gravel on clay road, which carries in a curving fashion to the south and up the hill. Bryn Avon (the house) and all of family-related buildings except for the stable (#6) are located in the southwest corner of this intersection on domestic grounds which are linked by informal paths and a vestige of the earlier private road which preceded Mallett Road. The bulk of the nominated acreage is the pasture and woodland tract on the east side of Mallett Road where there is also a small pond created by the impoundment of a creek which then flows northward and into the French Broad River.

Each of these three areas has its own unique character. The bottom lands along the south bank of the French Broad River are now fenced and used for pasture. They are enframed on the north by a shallow mostly deciduous tree line along the edge of the river. During the Evans ownership (1884-1903) and during periods of the Mallett ownership, these bottom lands constituted the most fertile acreages on the farm and were cultivated for crops or sown for hay. The path of River Road follows along the north edge of a low hill which gently rises southward in elevation from the bottoms. The original estate driveway departed from River Road and followed a curving eastward path, somewhat parallel to River Road, up to the main house. The path of this road remains intact and its entrance is marked by a stone pier in a wall bearing the inscription "BRYN AVON." The house, the chapel and cemetery, and the family cottages are all located on the rise of the hill in the southwest corner of the junction of River and Mallett Roads. A

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pair of stone columns flank another old lane off the west side of Mallett Road which then winds southwesterly up to the main house; the chapel and cemetery are here on its immediate east side. A third entrance drive, situated further south on Mallett Road, is now used for Bryn Avon; it carries west, between a second set of stone piers with iron gates, to the house, crossing an older, abandoned inter-estate private road which linked the main house with the Mallett, Brown, and Conrow cottages. Today the Mallett Cottage is reached by a lane off this third house drive while the Brown and Conrow Cottages are accessible off Mallett Road. The entrance to the Bellamy Cottage is off River Road. The landscape of these contiguous houses ranges from the large garden and expansive lawn of Bryn Avon (the house) to a small lawn at the Mallett Cottage and simple small house yards at the Brown and Conrow Cottages. The "long lawn," on the east side of the current drive and south side of the garden, merges with the grass-covered surface of the old grass tennis court, located off the southeast corner of the garden; it is partially enclosed with Lombardy poplars. The grounds of Bryn Avon are the most developed and feature ornamental trees and flowering shrubs in specimen, grouped, and hedge-like plantings, some of which are accentuated with low stone retaining walls. There are fewer ornamental plantings at the cottages; however, the general character of the overall landscape is formed by the native, volunteer, and planted deciduous and evergreen trees which form a woodland enclosure around the cottages and a canopy over the mass groupings of rhododendron. Except for the ordered symmetry of the garden (#4), this domestic landscape has an informal, casual air where function and necessity are gently marked by stone or plant materials. Across Mallett Road, the larger part of the estate acreage is composed of woodlands except for the sliver of mostly open fenced pasture land, incorporating the pond, which lies on the immediate east side of the road, and a field.

2. Bryn Avon  
(Ca. 1884-1886); 1910-1920s  
Contributing Building

Bryn Avon is a stone and half-timbered manor house of unusual character and charm whose appearance and elevations are enlivened by varied fenestration and a sprawling roof with multiple gables and jerkin-heads. While the combination of native warm grey local stone and black-and-white half-timbering provide a certain expected color contrast, it is the added use of a rich red paint for the metal shingles and tin roofing, spread across the house's many roof planes, that contribute so much to the bold picturesque appearance of Bryn Avon. Although Bryn Avon suggests an air of antiquity, the combination of features in an organic fashion, and the additions of many generations, over centuries, the house was built and largely arrived at its present appearance in a relatively brief period from the mid-1880s to the 1920s, with a modern faux half-timbered garage having been added to the south end of the house's kitchen ell in the late 1960s.

The actual fabric of the house dates to the ownerships of both Morgan J. Evans (1884-1903) and the Mallett family. Mr. Evans's residence, as seen in surviving nineteenth century documentary photographs, was a one-and-a-half-story house with a stone first story and a frame upper story; the paired gable ends of the upper story, prominent on both the front (north) and rear elevations, were sheathed with wood shingles which also covered the roof. The front entrance with its stained glass transom and sidelights is original to Mr. Evans's period, and some of the sash windows probably also date from his ownership. The frame upper story of the house was

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remodeled, enlarged, and reconfigured early in the Mallett ownership, probably beginning in the 1910s; the roofline was much altered, made more picturesque with jerkin heads, and covered with pressed metal shingles. The wood shingle faces of the gable fronts were covered with half-timbering during this renovation and the casement windows added. The old frame kitchen, probably erected by the Malletts shortly after they bought the property, was sheathed with half-timbering as well. (At one time it was linked to the house by an enclosed covered passage which was taken down and the area made into the stone terrace which now links the old kitchen with the house; then, in the first decades of the century, the present kitchen was used as a pantry and servants hall.)

Despite the house's striking appearance, the plan of Bryn Avon is essentially quite simple. The main block of the house is rectangular in shape and has stone first-story elevations. The upper story of the main block, covered by a sprawling system of gable-front and jerkin-head roofs, has half-timbered gable ends paired on its front (north) and rear (south) elevations. The stone massing of this block is distinguished by the use of an inset entrance porch on its north front and two bays of differing shapes on its west side. On the south there are two one-story ells offset from each other, and the elevations of both are half-timbered. The ell, immediately abutting the main block and positioned at the west edge of the rear elevation, contains the present kitchen. It is flanked on the east by an open stone terrace which is enclosed on the north by the main block and on the south by the north wall of the old kitchen. In plan the northwest corner of the old kitchen abuts the southeast corner of the present-day kitchen but they do not communicate internally. The old kitchen has a service porch along its east elevation and its south gable end is now concealed by the two-car garage which was added in the 1960s. The windows throughout the house vary in size and type; however, most of the openings contain either one-over-one double-hung sash or diamond-pane casements.

The north, front elevation of Bryn Avon is four bays wide and marked by the paired half-timbered gables on the second level. Looking from left (east) to right (west), the first bay has paired diamond-pane casement windows which illuminate the sitting room in the northeast corner of the house. The opening in the next bay holds one-over-one sash which provides sunlight to the large living hall in the front center of the interior. The next bay, containing the inset entrance, is preceded by an open stoop, the width of the inset, with stone steps descending on its west side along the face of the house. The porch has a cement floor and an iron railing, and is covered by a shallow gable-front hood supported by triangular brackets. The double-leaf front door and its complementing screen doors are enframed by a stained glass transom and sidelights. The westernmost window on the front elevation is fitted with one-over-one sash that illuminate the living room. The paired gable fronts and a gable-roof dormer, offset over the entrance, provide sunlight to the three bedrooms ranged across the front of the house on the second story. The dormer window is fitted with two-leaf diamond-pane casements; the flanking gable-front wall dormers have larger openings fitted with three eight-pane casements.

The appearance of the main block's east elevation, overlooking the garden, is dominated by the jerkin-head roof whose wall face is sheathed with embossed metal shingles. Three openings are set in its stone walls. What appears to have been a conventional window opening in the house's northeast corner sitting room was lengthened and fitted with narrow multi-pane French doors

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which opened onto a now-lost stoop with steps down to the garden; the opening is protected by a gable-front hood supported by triangular brackets. The south half of the east elevation has two openings. The older, original opening is fitted with one-over-one sash which illuminates the southeast corner bedroom; immediately north of it is a smaller opening, probably dating to the 1920s or 1930s, whose multi-pane casement window provides light to a small bathroom. A shallow three-part bay window, fitted with eight-pane casements, is positioned in the center of the metal-sheathed second-story wall; its roof is a continuation of the jerkin-head roof.

The west side of Bryn Avon has a general three-part division reflecting the fact that three rooms occupy this side of the house; the living room in the house's northwest corner, the dining room in the west center, and the present kitchen in the ell abutting the main block's southwest corner. The west end of the living room has the shape of a splayed three-sided bay with a door in the center and one-over-one sash windows to either side. The door opens onto a simple flight of steps. The bay is shaded by a pent roof supported by triangular brackets. A documentary photograph from the turn of the century shows a shallow porch here with a roof similar to the present pent. This roof continues to the south to cover the projecting bay window in the dining room which is fitted with three eight-pane casement windows on its west face and narrow windows on the north and south ends.

The one-story ell does not appear in the early documentary photographs and it was probably added in the 1910s or 1920s and first used as a pantry and servants hall; in the early 1950s it was refitted as the principal kitchen by Anne Mallett. Its three visible elevations are finished with half-timbering. An off-center stone chimney on its west side is flanked by window openings holding diamond-pane sash. A door at its extreme south edge is protected by a small gable-front porch with simple pole supports. In the south gable end of the ell a window opening, positioned above the interior sink, is fitted with three diamond-pane casements. The only opening in the ell's east wall is a door giving onto the stone terrace.

As noted, the ell occupies the west third of the main block's first-story rear, south elevation. In its half-timbered center bay a door and two unequal-sized windows, fitted with diamond-pane casements, give onto and overlook, respectively, the stone terrace. A single window is positioned in the east "third" of this elevation and illuminates the southeast corner bedroom. At the second-story level, the stone walls of the main block support two large gable-front, half-timbered room-size wall dormers which project forward of a recessed wall holding a small two-leaf casement window illuminating the hall. The south side of the stone terrace is enclosed by the weatherboarded north gable end of the old kitchen; its other elevations are half-timbered. Here a screened door gives onto the service porch carrying the length of its east wall, which is also served by a door opening into the kitchen. On the opposite west side, a near-center door is flanked by horizontal window openings filled with top-hung diamond-pane windows. The five-panel turn-of-the-century wood door opens onto a mill-stone, used as a stoop, and is protected by a simple shed hood supported by triangular brackets.

The south gable end of the old kitchen and its stone chimney is concealed by the two-car garage of faux half-timbering which was added by Miss Mallett, probably in the late 1960s. It has paired sliding doors on its west side and single, overscaled window openings on its south and

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east sides which are fitted with large single panes reused from Miss Mallett's brother's house on Beaucatcher Mountain, Asheville. The garage has an off-center gable end roof which merges with the shed roof over the service porch on the east side of the kitchen.

### The Interior of Bryn Avon

The interior of Bryn Avon displays much of the same idiosyncrasy and antique feeling as the exterior; however, it is finished with less color and vibrancy. The Conrow portraits of family members and other early-twentieth century art works are displayed throughout the house. The interior woodwork and decoration of Bryn Avon also dates from both the Evans and Mallett family periods. The staircase and the finish of the first story, except for the drinks room, the adjoining winter kitchen, and the bathroom, are believed to date almost entirely from the Evans period. The finish of the house's second-story rooms dates from the early decades of the Mallett occupancy as does the first-story bathroom. Anne Mallett fitted up the drinks room and the winter kitchen after she acquired ownership of the house. The floors are pine or other woods which have darkened through repeated waxing. The walls are plaster and finished with a soft white skim coat or paint. The baseboards, door and window surrounds and enframements, the doors, and other woodwork are pine, chestnut, or other native woods, and these, too, have taken on a dark mellow appearance.

The paired doors in the recessed front porch open into a large living hall whose proportions were achieved by the early removal of the east partition wall which separated the hall from a small parlor; a beam carrying at ceiling level marks its original position. The character of the hall is formed by its cathedral ceiling, paneled wainscot on the west partition wall with the living room, and the stained glass and red and clear glass panes, respectively, in the entrance transom and sidelights, all dating from the Evans period. Four-panel doors open into the living and dining rooms on the west side of the hall. Double-leaf doors, at the west foot of the stairs open into one of two small rooms between the dining room and the southeast corner bedroom that might have originally been an open porch. The stair rises eastward to the second story along the living hall's south wall. It has a robust octagonal turned newel, shaped handrail, and turned balusters. The fireplace on the living hall's east wall is fitted with a retarditaire Greek Revival-style post-and-lintel mantel and flanked by bookshelves. Above the mantel hangs Wilford Conrow's 1920 portrait of Henry Van Haagen. His portrait of Dr. Eugene Pierre Mallett hangs on the room's west wall. A door in the southeast corner of the hall, under the stair, opens into a small passage connecting with the sitting room and southeast bedroom.

The living room, in the northwest corner of the house, also has pine floors and plaster walls; the door and window surrounds here are somewhat more elaborately finished with a heavily molded backband. Double-leaf four-pane French doors are set in the center of the bay on the west wall while a four-panel door in the south wall, to the west of the chimney breast, connects with the dining room. The original oak post and lintel mantel has a Craftsman-style design which is enhanced by floral Minton tiles surrounding the firebox. Wilford Conrow's portrait of Anne Gibbs Mallett hangs over the fireplace; within the portrait is a small vertical sketch of the house. Mr. Conrow's portrait of Charles Edward Mallett hangs on the north wall opposite the door into the dining room.

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The dining room, in the main block's southwest corner, is perhaps the most handsome room in the house and conveys the hospitality that has been a hallmark of Bryn Avon. The plaster walls are enhanced with the original vertical board wainscot of mixed woods which has mellowed to a dark finish along with the room's other architectural fittings. The bay window on the west wall is fitted with a window seat that also appears to be original to the house as built by Mr. Evans. In the center of the room's north wall, the fully-paneled chimney breast incorporates a mantel of unusual design. Round columns, on bases, rise to a projecting shelf which serves as the base of an arcaded tabernacle with round columns and a molded cornice which carries across the face of the chimney breast. Presumably, the "niches" between the columns were for the display of favorite pieces of porcelain or china. Flat paneling finishes the upper face of the chimney breast. The firebox is enframed with colorful tiles with a geometric foliate design. The wood cornice in this room has darkened to near black.

Two-panel double-leaf doors, of recent decades, open into the present kitchen which is finished with white pine paneling dating to the 1950s or 1960s. The post-and-lintel mantel is enhanced with Mexican tiles around the firebox. A "Dutch" door opens onto the west porch and a conventional four-pane above two-panel door opens onto the stone terrace on the east. The cabinetry, also of white pine, is finished with red formica tops.

As noted above, double-leaf doors at the foot of the staircase open into one (the west) of two small rooms between the dining room and the first-story bedroom. The area now containing these paired narrow rectangular rooms was perhaps an open porch or enclosed service porch when the house was built, and a part of the passage linking the old kitchen to the dining room in the first decades of Mallett occupancy. The west room, with the door into the front hall and a second door onto the stone terrace, has wide oak floors and plaster walls. Beginning in the 1950s, Ann Mallett used this small room as the drinks room. An open cupboard for display of chinaware is in the west wall and a door in the east wall opens into the pendant east room. The east room of the pair was filled up as a winter kitchen by Miss Mallett, who sometimes did not live in the entire house when alone at Bryn Avon; a door in its east wall opens into the passage, also accessible from the living hall, which connects with the sitting room, the first-story bedroom, and an old-fashioned telephone alcove.

The pair of rooms on the house's east side, both overlooking the garden, were probably originally bedrooms; however, only the southeast corner room, with its replacement pine flooring, has been continuously used for that purpose. It has a fireplace, fitted with a post-and-lintel mantel and shelf and Mexican tiles around the firebox, in the center of its west wall where a closet is enclosed on the south side of the chimney breast. A door in the room's north wall opens into a bathroom which was partitioned off the southeast corner of the adjoining sitting room; the bathroom has a ceramic tile floor and wainscot and white fixtures including a claw foot tub. The sitting room, in the northeast corner of the main block, has waist-high built-in bookshelves flanking the fireplace in the center of its west wall. The mantel has fluted-face pilasters and like brackets supporting a stepped two-part shelf; Mexican floral tiles enframe the firebox. A genre scene, signed "W. H. Snyder 83" hangs over the fireplace; Mr. Conrow's copy of the portrait of Dr. Gustavus Eissen, the Swedish scientist and archaeologist, hangs above the northernmost tier of bookshelves.

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The staircase rises to the second story of Bryn Avon which contains a long hall, four bedrooms, and one bathroom. The finish of the rooms is generally consistent with pine floors, plaster walls—most of which are wallpapered, and mellow woodwork. Bryn Avon's picturesque rooflines with its series of gable and jerkin-head roofs provide for unusual ceiling lines, wall heights, and other quirkily interesting features in these rooms which add to their personality and charm. None of the rooms has a conventional rectangular shape; each has one or more alcoves. The hall has a generally rectangular shape, oak flooring, and four-panel doors enframed by plain-board surrounds with bull's-eye corner blocks into the bedrooms. The northeast corner bedroom, with its elevated view overlooking the garden, has a post-and-lintel mantel embellished with applied foliate decoration. The bathroom, occupying the space above the first-story bedroom, has wide pine floors and white fixtures including a claw-foot tub. Mrs. Mallett's bedroom, positioned above the living hall, has two alcoves on its north (front) side which provide views to Mount Pisgah. To accommodate the cathedral-style ceiling of the hall, a series of steps here rise to closets built across the west side of the room. Wilford Conrow's portrait of Ida Beach Mallett hangs in this room as does his Christmas 1913 sketch of Lyra Beach Mallett Conrow. The northwest corner bedroom has pendant steps up to closets on its east wall over the hall's cathedral ceiling. The mantel in this room has a symmetrical four-panel frieze flanked by cutwork brackets supporting the shelf. The south bedroom, over the dining room, has no fireplace; however, a bracketed shelf is positioned on the projecting chimney breast and bookshelves are sunk into the wall above it.

3. The Tea House  
Ca. 1920-1930  
Contributing structure

The rustic tea house, situated at the north end of the upper terrace in the garden, is a twelve-sided pavilion, fifteen feet in diameter; it is covered with a conical-like wood shingle roof whose planes repeat its twelve sides. The uprights are whole tree trunks, most of which have now lost their bark; they are linked by a simple railing. The interior has a dry-laid stone floor with an octagonal table at its center built around the central upright support. The exposed 2 x 4 rafters are overlaid with flush sheathing under the wood shingles. In the years since its construction some of the uprights have been replaced, when necessary due to rot, with in-kind bark-covered members.

4. The Garden  
Ca. 1920-1930  
Contributing Site

The earliest documentary photographs of Bryn Avon show the area of the garden as a grass-covered meadow; however, beginning in the 1920s, Ida Beach Mallett, with the help of her daughter Anne, undertook the development of this substantial garden which she nurtured until her death in 1950. The garden is a near square in plan, measuring approximately 115 feet in width (north to south) and approximately 135 feet long (west to east). It consists of three terraces of increasing (west to east) length linked by stone steps and lengths of stone walls, where needed, which follow the descending grade on the east side of the house. The character of

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the garden is formed through the extensive use of *Buxus sempervirens* "*Suffruticosa*," which is used to punctuate the steps and axial walks linking the three terraces, to line cross-axial walks on the second terrace, and to form the low maze-like paterre on the lower terrace. Periwinkle, ferns, and moss appear here as ground cover. The upper terrace, nearest the house, is essentially a flat rectangular lawn anchored by the tea house on its north end. The lawn was used for croquet. (A fir hedge which earlier defined this terrace became overgrown and has been cut down.) The rectangular center terrace is anchored at its center by a granite millstone on which a bronze sundial is mounted; ivy is grown and trimmed on its sides so that only the face of the millstone is visible. Cross-axial grass paths, lined with boxwood, extend to the north to a lych-gate, opening into the perimeter woodland, and to the south where it splays to the east and west around a large clump of forsythia that terminates this south end of the terrace as a pendant to the lych gate. Perennials are planted in the long rectangular beds which flank the boxwood-lined walks. The east, lower, edge of the center terrace is defined by a quince hedge with vertical junipers at the top of the steps which descend to the lower terrace. The foot of the steps is flanked by clump plantings of nandina.

The lower terrace, essentially a large half circle in shape with its arched outer (east) edge enclosed by a rhododendron hedge backed by towering firs, is defined on the west by long single rows of peonies extending to the north and south. The west-to-east axial walk from the house is terminated by a large specimen boxwood shrub, encircled by a low circlet of boxwood, set in the center of the lower terrace. The grass-covered walk around the center planting, is flanked by three low sequential "enclosures," on each side, defined by low box borders with globe-shape corners. These "enclosures" were probably originally planted with perennials or annuals. The borders have openings allowing access to the upper (west) pair of enclosures whose fields are planted with specimen boxwoods. The center pair of enclosures are fronted with stone settees which face onto the walk encircling the large center specimen boxwood. The lower (east) pair of enclosures have curved outer (east) edges which echo the half-circle of the rhododendron/fir hedge. The boxwood plantings in the garden are in good condition and the borders complete.

5. Mallett Chapel and Cemetery  
Cemetery established in 1957; chapel built in 1976  
One non-contributing building and one non-contributing site

The chapel and cemetery are located in a small shaded area at the edge of a meadow and on the immediate east side of an old little used drive to the house off Mallett Road. A stone wall, erected by David Saltonstall Mallett and workmen, carries along the east side of the drive for a short distance. A lych-gate in the wall provides access from the lane to the burying ground and chapel. The grounds of the chapel and cemetery are mostly moss-covered, and there are ornamental plantings of rhododendron and azalea. As a group the grave markers are modest in character and serve their memorial purpose, but they are not intrusive in the natural setting.

The designation of this place as a family cemetery dates to 1957, the year in which Wilford S. Conrow agreed in April to pay for the planting of a beech tree; his ashes were interred here after his death on 24 November and the site marked by a simple metal marker. Eleven years later, in 1968, Dorothy Mallett Brown (1894-1968) was buried here in April and on 14 June the bodies of

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Ida Beach Mallett (1864-1950) and William Beardsley Beach (1867-1952) were disinterred from Oakdale Cemetery, Hendersonville, and reinterred here. The graves of Mrs. Mallett and Mrs. Brown are marked by simple stones and that pattern has been followed for subsequent burials including: Pierre Mallett (1893-1969); Allen Eugene Brown (1896-1972); Florence Griffith Miller Mallett (1896-1992); Allene Curtis Brown Fleming (1926-1993); Charles Stuart Todd Mallett (1924-1994); and Anne Gibbs Mallett (1901-1995). The body of Pierre Mallett (1921-1929) was reinterred here from Riverside Cemetery, Asheville. A white marble tablet, once marking the grave of Thaddeus Henry, the son of nineteenth century owners of the property, was moved here from its abandoned location in the "O'Henry field" on the east side of the estate.

The chapel was erected in 1976 by Jesse W. Bell (ca. 1902-1991), a self-employed carpenter of Henderson County, and his two brothers; in fact, he helped the Mallett family with its design. It is a small rectangular gable-front frame building with a shallow narthex on its south front. The walls of the chapel are covered with stucco with wood corner boards, window and door frames, and other wood features; the roof is covered with wood shingles. Double-leaf board-and-batten wood doors open into the narthex which has a single stained glass window on its west side. The side elevations of the chapel each have a trio of tall stained leaded glass windows, with diamond panes and pointed tops, flanked by shorter, like windows, also containing pale yellow glass, which have red borders. The back side of the chapel has a trio of leaded glass windows that are taller than those on the side elevations. The center-aisle plan interior of the chapel has a wood floor, paneled wainscot, plaster walls, and sheathed ceiling spanned by molded beams. The aisle is flanked by three pews on each side. The slightly elevated chancel has a communion rail of corded design which also appears on the chair rail. The three windows in the liturgical "east" end have trefoil stained glass medallions in their upper faces. The west "Alpha" window and the east "Omega" window, each with blue borders, flank the red-bordered center window bearing the inscription "God is Love." These windows, originally installed in the Church of Gethsemane at Bowman's Bluff, were brought here from the abandoned Church of St. John the Baptist at Upward. Mrs. Patton wrote about the windows in THE STORY OF HENDERSON COUNTY.

The beautiful stained glass windows were brought from his ancestral home in Wales by Mr. Morgan Evans, one of the group who formed its congregation. When the chapel (Church of Gethsemane) was no longer used, these windows and much of its material were removed to Upward to become a part of the structure of St. John the Baptist (Patton, 235).

6. Stable  
Late 1950s-early 1960s  
Noncontributing building

Erected by David Saltonstall Mallett the stable is a rectangular gambrel-roof building with paired cement block stables flanking a center passage. The gambrel ends of the stable are sheathed with vertical board and batten and painted red. The gambrel roof is covered with standard sheet metal. Paired board and batten doors in its east end provide access to the loft for hay. The north stable block has wood partitions creating four stalls; the south stable block is a large single space and the feed room. A shed on the north side of the stable is used for truck storage. The large

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four-part shed on the south side, built in two stages and literally larger than the stable itself, is used for equipment storage. The stable stands in the fenced pasture on the south side of Mallett Road.

7. Mallett Cottage  
Ca. 1925; by 1933  
Contributing building

The Mallett Cottage is one of three family cottages that appear on the subdivision plat prepared in July 1933 for Ida Beach Mallett; it stood on lot #4 and occupied grounds of one acre. The one-and-a-half-story frame summer cottage was erected by Brigadier General Pierre Mallett and his wife and is said to incorporate elements of an older building which stood on the grounds of Bryn Avon and was pulled uphill to this location. Whatever its precise origins, it clearly contains elements of older buildings, including its main entrance and the turned posts on its north side porch, which are reused. In 1952 General Mallett and his wife sold the cottage and its one-acre lot to Mrs. Ginevra L. Williams (Henderson County Deeds: 318, 611-612). On 23 May 1960, Mrs. Williams and her husband sold the cottage, its lot and related easements, etc., to David and Sarah Mallett (Henderson County Deeds: 385, 357-358). The cottage's present appearance reflects both the original building program of General Mallett and that of his son, David Saltonstall Mallett, who used it as a summer place until 1969 when he added a two-story block on the rear, west side and occupied it year around with his family. David and Sarah Mallett vacated the cottage on Labor Day weekend 1997 to occupy the main house at Bryn Avon; it remains furnished and is used as a guest house.

The house stands on a low mortared stone foundation, is sheathed with wide German siding, and is covered with an asphalt shingle gable roof. The east front of the house has two principal bays with a third north "bay" in the form of a shed-roof screened porch over the stone foundation walls which incorporate a garage with access to the full basement under the house. A broad gable front, nearly half the width of the façade, enframes the entrance which is protected by a shallow stoop-like porch supported by Tuscan columns. The entranceway is comprised of a door, with a large pane of glass above a molded panel, surmounted by a single pane transom and flanked by traceried sidelights above molded panels. A circular window appears in the gable above the porch. To the south, paired six-over-one sash windows, illuminating the dining room, appear below an overscaled (later) dormer window. The large two-story shed-roof addition by David Mallett in 1969 is especially visible on the south side of the house where it forms the rear, west half of the elevation. A brick flue stack rises at its east edge. The original gable-end east block has a second set of paired windows illuminating the dining room and a single window in what was originally the kitchen. An enlarged opening in the second story holds aluminum jalousie windows. The rear two-story block/bay has paired six-over-one windows on each level. The rear west elevation of the Mallett Cottage has a rather complicated appearance consisting mainly of the original gable-end wing on the north and the larger, more dominant face of the two-story addition in its south half which incorporates a basement stairway illuminated by a trio of six-pane windows. The cottage's north elevation is occupied by the shed roof porch; its front, east half is supported by turned posts and screened while the rear, west half is glazed as a sunroom (and was used as a nursery).

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The first-story interior of the Mallett Cottage is sheathed in wormy chestnut paneling and has oak flooring. The front door opens into the living room which is finished with a cathedral ceiling and the exposed stone face of its fireplace chimney. Eight-pane French doors open onto the north screened porch which has a painted wood floor. Inset bookcases flank the board-and-batten door in the west wall opening into the first-story bedroom. This door and the others in the house have good decorative wrought-iron hardware. The bedroom has fifteen-pane double-leaf French doors opening into the glazed sunroom/nursery and a board-and-batten door in its south wall opening into a bathroom. The dining room, on the south side of the living room, has a china cupboard built into its southeast corner. W. S. Conrow's artist's proof of the engraving of the head of George Washington from his 1921 full-length portrait, inscribed as a wedding present to David and Sarah Mallett in 1948, hangs in the dining room. The finish of the kitchen is conventional and of the period. The stair to the second story is enclosed off the southeast corner of the living room. It rises to a small room over the dining room which is sheathed in horizontal wormy chestnut boards with wallpaper on the room's sloping ceiling planes. It communicates with the large bedroom to the north, also sheathed with wormy chestnut, and the conventionally-finished bedroom and bathroom which were added here in 1969.

8. Penne Bryn (Brown Cottage)  
Ca. 1930 with later additions  
Noncontributing building

Penne Bryn, held outside the family from 1952 until 1993, reflects a series of changes and minor additions that, cumulatively, have adversely affected the appearance and integrity of the house. Exactly when the summer cottage was built for Dorothy Curtis Mallett Brown and her family is not known; however, it was standing here in the summer of 1933 when Howard B. Miller prepared the subdivision plat (for the sequence of family cottages) for Ida Beach Mallett. It stands on the parcel of 1.17 acres which Mrs. Mallett conveyed to her daughter on 9 December 1935 (Henderson County Deeds: 213, 54). On 30 July 1952 Mrs. Brown and her husband, Allen Eugene Brown, sold the property to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Ostborg of Greenville County, South Carolina (Henderson County Deeds: 317, 321-322). Less than two years later, on 23 March 1954, the Ostborgs sold the cottage and lot to Miss Margaret Howard Ott who owned it for thirty-nine years (Henderson County Deeds: 331, 249-250). On 18 May 1993 Miss Ott sold the cottage to David and Sarah Mallett (Henderson County Deeds: 821, 545-546). Their son, David Saltonstall Mallett, Jr., now occupies Penne Bryn.

Penne Bryn is a rectangular frame house on a cement block basement; it is covered by an asphalt shingle side-gable roof. The front (south) and east gable ends of the house are covered with sawn slab board siding while the rear and west gable end are covered with manufactured siding. The front of the house is concealed behind a full-façade screened porch with a poured cement floor and cement block apron. A frame garage, probably added by Miss Ott, is located at the west end of the porch. French doors open from the front porch into the large living room, sheathed with white pine paneling, in which a fireplace flanked by bookshelves occupies the east wall and a lavatory and staircase to the basement are positioned along the west wall. Wilford

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Conrow's portrait of architect Electus D. Litchfield, F.A.I.A, painted in 1948, hangs above the mantel. A door at the west edge of the north wall opens into a small kitchen; it and an adjoining enclosed porch occupy an area across the house's north side nearly equal to the dimensions of the front porch. The steps at the west end of the living room descend to the basement where two bedrooms and a bathroom are partitioned with wallboard and have an otherwise conventional finish.

9. Brown Playhouse  
Ca. 1932  
Contributing building

Standing to the west of the family cottage, this small rectangular frame building was erected as a playhouse for the two daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Brown: Dorothy Mallett Brown (b. 1924), and Allene Curtis Brown (1926-1993). The building is sheathed with bark-covered slab siding and covered with a sheet tin gable-front roof. A board-and-batten door is set in its east gable front and side-by-side six-pane sash occupy horizontal rectangular openings on the north and south side elevations. The interior of the playhouse is finished with wall board.

10. Yon Way  
Ca. 1920-1925  
Contributing building

Yon Way survives today as the most intact and impressive of the four summer cottages built by members of the family on the grounds of Bryn Avon. In fact, the four-room cottage is virtually as built. The long rectangular residence, standing close to present-day Mallett Road, is a saddle-notch log building with cement chinking standing on a dry-laid stone foundation and covered with an asphalt shingle hip roof. The room partitions are also log and their ends punctuate the cottage's elevations, indicating its interior plan; the kitchen occupies the southwest end of the house, and in its center are the living/dining room, while the bedroom and the bathroom are in the cottage's northeast end. Yon Way's northwest elevation, addressing Mount Pisgah, is considered the front of the house and has a terrace, enclosed by a low stone wall, in front of the cottage's living room which is accessed by a board-and-batten door. Varied-size window openings into each of the four rooms are fitted with eight-pane casement windows. The window frames and their simple surrounds are painted yellow. On the southwest end, a window in the kitchen is fitted with six-over-six sash. The opposite northeast gable end is blind. The long southeast side, along Mallett Road, has a door under a simple shed roof porch opening into the kitchen, paired eight-pane casement windows in the living room and bedroom, and a small six-pane window in the bathroom.

The interior of the cottage has a rustic feeling imparted by the log walls and a dark pine floor. Doorways linking the rooms are arranged *enfilade* along the southeast wall and fitted with board-and-batten doors with cast iron strap hinges. The ceilings of the rooms are open to the rafters. A sleeping loft has been built above the southwest end of the living room. The kitchen retains an old enamel on cast iron wall-hung sink that appears to be an original fitting. A stone chimney is set in the partition wall between the living room and bedroom and its faces are exposed in each

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room; it provides fireplaces to both rooms. The bathroom walls have been covered with reused vertical flush boards and a ceiling has been added at a conventional height. It has white fixtures.

Yon Way was the summer home of Lyra Beach Mallett Conrow (1870-1956) and her second husband, Wilford Seymour Conrow (1880-1957), for about thirty years, and it was probably the only home they owned since they occupied apartments in New York. On 26 July 1952, at advanced ages, they sold the cottage, its 1.53-acre lot, and "all furniture, fixtures and furnishings in the building located on the premises" to Theodora Melanie Gack of Harrison County, Mississippi (Henderson County Deeds: 317, 243-244). She died within a few years, and on 5 June 1956, Mrs. Sarah Tatum Smith, to whom she had bequeathed the cottage, sold it to Raymon S. and Mary E. Drexler of Henderson County (Henderson County Deeds: 351, 495-496). The property passed through two other owners until it was acquired on 2 August 1967 by James Hardy Lee, a cousin of the Malletts (Henderson County Deeds: 451, 275-276). Five years later, on 17 July 1972, he sold it to Mrs. Elizabeth Rumbough Donaldson (1896-1993), the mother of Sarah Donaldson Mallett (Henderson County Deeds: 498, 386). On 30 December 1976, Mrs. Donaldson gave the cottage to her daughter, the present owner (Henderson County Deeds: 549, 167-168). During Mrs. Donaldson's and Mrs. Mallett's ownership Yon Way has been occupied by members of the family, their friends, or used as an overflow guest house. Mrs. Donaldson occupied the remodeled Conrow Studio (#12).

11. Tea House  
Ca. 1930-1935  
Contributing structure

The Conrow tea house is a small octagonal pavilion with bark-covered tree-trunk supports linked by twig railings carrying X-brace members. The roof, with radial 2 x 4s from its apex, is flush sheathed and covered with asphalt shingles. The floor of the tea house is dry laid stone. The tea house stands just to the northeast of the Conrow cottage and enjoys lovely views to Mount Pisgah and its mountain range.

12. Conrow Studio  
Ca. 1925-1935; interior converted to residence in 1972  
Contributing building

The Conrow Studio, used by Wilford Seymour Conrow during the years he and Mrs. Conrow summered at Bryn Avon, is a substantial rectangular frame building sheathed with sawn slab board siding. The siding appears to have originally been painted red, and the corner boards, window frames, and other architectural woodwork painted white. The building stands on mortared stone piers with grapevine joints. It is covered with a low hip asphalt shingle roof with the exposed ends of its 2 x 4 rafters visible around the eaves. A shed on the studio's south side includes a small porch on its east end protecting the entrance and an enclosure on the west end for the bathroom. An exterior flue stack rises in the center of the two-bay east elevation which has paired leaded glass diamond-pane casement windows in the west half and an eight-pane top-hung window to the east. A large three-part window, surmounted by a transom, in the center of

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the north elevation, provided the critical north light for the portraitist. The west elevation has varied window openings.

The interior of the studio is one large space with wood beams across the ceiling. The original wood flooring is now overlaid with asbestos/rubber tiles. After Mrs. Donaldson (1896-1993) acquired the studio and cottage property in 1972, she added simple wallboard partitions to the exposed beam height to define an entrance hall, bedroom, and kitchen. She occupied this open-plan apartment until the early 1980s when she moved into the Mallett Cottage with Mr. and Mrs. Mallett. Since then the studio has been occupied by family members and is now used for household storage.

13. Bellamy Cottage  
Ca. 1933-1938  
Contributing building

Although the exterior of this one-and-a-half-story frame cottage suggests a fairly conventional summer place, the interior is a beautiful exercise in rustic craftsmanship. It was built for Caroline Louise Mallett (1891-1978) and her husband Chesley Calhoun Bellamy, the son of Marsden Bellamy and Harriet Harllee. It stands on lot #1 on the 1933 plat, a tract of 1.82 acres, which Mrs. Bellamy received from her mother on 9 December 1935 (Henderson County Deeds: 213, 63). As events proved, the Bellamys briefly enjoyed the cottage which on 3 June 1944 was sold by their son, Robert Harllee Bellamy (b. 1915) to Paul C. and Helen B. Treadwell (Henderson County Deeds: 252, 108-109). Two years later, in 1946, Ida Beach Mallett sold an adjoining tract of 3.61 acres to the Treadwells (Henderson County Deeds: 268, 72). Mrs. Treadwell, as a widow, subsequently sold the tracts to Ramon S. and Mary Elizabeth Drexler. The Drexlers, in turn, sold the property in 1972 to Charles A. Richey of Donna Anna County, New Mexico (Henderson County Deeds: 498, 495-496). Mr. Richey and his wife sold the property in two deeds in 1985 and 1986 to John Huntington Mallett (b. 1955) and his wife Carol Pyle Kelly (Henderson County Deeds: 670, 711; 671, 551-552). The couple are now divorced, and Mr. Mallett is the owner of the Bellamy Cottage which is occupied by a renter.

The one-and-a-half-story L-plan frame house stands on a cement block foundation, is sheathed with sawn slab board siding (with asbestos shingles in the gable ends), and is covered with a side-gable asphalt shingle roof. The three-bay front elevation has a trio of windows on the first story and two dormers symmetrically positioned in the roof. The window openings contain a range of multi-pane sash and casements. The cottage's front door is actually on the west side under a shed roof porch at its north end. In the center bay on the west elevation there is a bay window illuminating the dining room, and paired windows in the southernmost bay illuminating the kitchen. The opposite east gable end of the cottage is dominated by a stone chimney; this side has windows illuminating the bedroom behind (south of) the living room and in the upper gable. The rear, south elevation has a somewhat complex appearance caused by the addition of a half-story to the ell and a shed addition on its east side. A large open-sided garage and shop stands to the rear of the house; the garage/shop and the covered walkway connecting it with the house's ell were erected by the Drexlers in the 1950s or early 1960s. The shop is built of cement

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blocks and the building's gable ends are sheathed with sawn slab board siding. It is covered with an asphalt shingle gable roof.

The interior of the Bellamy Cottage has four principal rooms on the first story. The living room is the largest of these and carries across the full north side of the house. The original walls are sheathed with bark-covered hickory, oak, and locust slab-like boards with cement chinking. Exposed hewn beams carry across the ceiling. The floor here and in the dining room and bedroom are covered with oak flooring which was added by the Malletts who refitted the kitchen, covered its floor with Mexican tiles, and made the other recent improvements to the house's fabric. The stair in the center of the living room's south wall rises southward, between the bedroom on the east and the dining room on the west, to the second story which is finished with four bedrooms and one bathroom. Those rooms have new flooring and wallboard partitions.

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Bryn Avon, being both a house and an estate whose name, translated from the Welsh, means "hill above a river," holds an important place in the history of Henderson County and North Carolina. While its origins lie in the farm established here on the French Broad River by Morgan J. Evans in 1884, its significance is associated with the Mallett family. Ida Beach Mallett (1864-1950) acquired the property and Mr. Evans' stone cottage in 1903, and with her sister and children, she remade it in the early twentieth century into a family estate where the existence of the Tudor Revival-style family seat is enhanced by an equally important garden and related family cottages and other resources which remain within the family. Bryn Avon satisfies National Register Criteria A and C, holds local significance in the area of social history, and possesses statewide significance in the areas of architecture and landscape architecture. The period of significance begins ca. 1910 and concludes in 1947 when Mrs. Mallett conveyed ownership of the estate to her youngest daughter, Anne Gibbs Mallett (1901-1995).

While others of foreign birth and wave after wave of Charlestonians came to Henderson County and the area around Flat Rock as a summer refuge beginning in the 1830s, the area also proved attractive to others of means and ambition who sought to make a permanent home in its scenic landscape and salubrious climate. At present relatively little is known of Morgan J. Evans, a Welshman, who came to western Henderson County in the early 1880s with George H. Holmes, and others, who established an English colony along the French Broad River at Bowman's Bluff. In 1882 Mr. Evans and Mr. Holmes began buying up the Davis family lands here, and in January 1884 they divided it between themselves. Morgan J. Evans erected a stone cottage on the south side of the river, on the rise of a hill overlooking his fertile bottomlands. Mr. Evans departed Bowman's Bluff by 1896 and was a resident of Toronto, Ontario, in 1903 when he sold his property on the south side of the French Broad River to Ida Beach Mallett. Mrs. Mallett, her husband Charles Edward Mallett (1851-1924), and their four children came and occupied the Evans house.

Beginning ca. 1910, and continuing through the 1910s and 1920s, Mrs. Mallett set about making improvements to the house and grounds. Influenced by the half-timbered elevations of The Meadows, the nearby, now lost Jeudwine-Chenoweth house, and the buildings of Richard Sharp Smith at Biltmore Village and in Asheville, she recast the shingle-clad upper story of the stone cottage in half-timbering and created a Tudor Revival-style seat at Bryn Avon whose picturesque appearance is further enhanced by a lively roofline with multiple gables, jerkin-heads, and a red metal shingle roof. Bryn Avon, a country house with a bold, organic character, and an important example of the Tudor Revival style in North Carolina, contrasts with the more urbane examples of the style which stand handsomely in suburban developments across the state. In the 1920s Mrs. Mallett and Miss Mallett began developing the terraced garden on the east side of the house which represents an important example of the renaissance of gardening in the South and in North Carolina in the opening decades of this century. While many of its contemporary gardens, designed by landscape architects Thomas Warren Sears and Earle Sumner Draper and others, have been lost or severely compromised through changing fortunes and ownership, this garden, like the more elaborate Reynolda House gardens, has survived, intact and well-preserved.

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While the house and the garden at Bryn Avon are the primary features of the property, the estate includes four smaller family cottages which were erected as summer places by Mrs. Beach's sister and three of her four children. The most significant of these is the rustic log cottage built by Lyra Wells (Beach) Mallett Conrow (1870-1956) and her second husband, Wilford Seymour Conrow (1880-1957). Mr. Conrow, a nationally known portraitist, erected a studio at Bryn Avon where he and his wife summered from their marriage here in 1911 until their deaths. Conrow's portraits of family members and others continue to hang at Bryn Avon, a legacy left by an artist who was also influential in the establishment of the Hickory Museum of Art.

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### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SOCIAL HISTORY SIGNIFICANCE

Bryn Avon, being both a house and an estate which have been a seat of the Mallett family since 1903, enjoys a rich, distinguished history in an area marked by fertile soils, a picturesque rolling topography, a pleasant climate, and special circumstances. Even before Henderson County was created out of Buncombe County in 1838, this area had been attracting wealthy South Carolinians who sought summer refuge in its salubrious climate. Here, in the larger area surrounding the village that became Flat Rock, the South Carolinians established notable estates to which they returned year after year—and to the present. Charles Baring (1772-1865), the first of this group, came here in 1830, acquired land, and set about the creation of a place aptly named Mountain Lodge where he retreated with his wife Susan Heyward (1763-1845). Charles and Susan Baring were among the many men and women of foreign birth, connections to Charleston and Lowcountry South Carolina, and a cosmopolitan outlook who retreated to Henderson County, and particularly the area around Flat Rock, in the summer and established a community which has remained exceptional to this day. As events have proved, many of the qualities that attracted Charles Baring to Henderson County in 1830, and countless others, as summer residents, would also attract men and their families who would make the area their permanent residence. Morgan J. Evans, a Welshman, came here in 1882. Mr. Evans built the stone house, subsequently known as Bryn Avon, occupied it for about a decade, and owned the farm estate until 1903 when he sold the house and its 120 acres to Mrs. Ida Beach Mallett.

#### Morgan J. Evans and the Initial Development of Bryn Avon

Also like Mr. Baring, Morgan J. Evans came to Henderson County with friends, and they developed a close-knit colony at Bowman's Bluff, on the French Broad River, about ten and a half miles west/southwest of Hendersonville, the county seat, and eight miles west/northwest of Flat Rock. The historian Sadie Smathers Patton (1886-1975) made note of the settlement in *THE STORY OF HENDERSON COUNTY*.<sup>2</sup>

About 1880 a few English families only recently come to America from their native land began settling in the French Broad Valley of Henderson County, where a community, known by the name of an old landmark located near its central area—Bowman's Bluff—gradually developed. Among them was an English clergyman, Mr. Joseph Wainwright, who had formerly been a missionary to Labrador, Honolulu and other foreign fields . . .

During the time Mr. Frank Valentine lived at Bowman's Bluff, he gave land on a knoll in the center of the settlement where its members erected an attractive little chapel, the Church of Gethsemane, and services of the Episcopal Church were held for ten or twelve years. The beautiful stained glass windows were brought from his ancestral home in Wales by Mr. Morgan Evans, one of the group who formed its congregation. When the chapel was no longer used, these windows and much of its materials were removed to Upward to become a part of the structure of St. John the Baptist (Patton, 234-235).

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Unfortunately, relatively little is known of the life of Morgan J. Evans. Miss Patton wrote that he had earlier lived in Tennessee, but the matter of when he came from Wales to the United States and on to western North Carolina remains to be confirmed. Nor does she expand upon the means by which the members of the "English colony" at Bowman's Bluff formed the friendships which encouraged the development of the community here on the French Broad River. Also unclear, are the particular circumstances by which Mr. Evans came to know George H. Holmes with whom he became a partner in land purchases here early in 1882.<sup>3</sup>

Through the autumn of 1881 Mr. Holmes and Mr. Evans traveled in western North Carolina looking over property for purchase. Mr. Holmes concluded in his diary "During the whole of our journey's, I did not see any country as inviting for settlement as this part near Bowman's Bluff for quality of land and beauty of scenery, which of course is not to be despised." He recorded overnight visits here with Mr. James Davis and the decision to acquire the Davis property.<sup>4</sup> A part (or all) of this property had earlier been owned by Elijah Williamson (1754-1837), one of the earliest eighteenth-century settlers in this area, who bequeathed it to his daughter Malinda Henry, then the widow of John Henry (Buncombe County Wills, A, 50-52).<sup>5</sup>

On 14 January 1882, Mr. Evans and Mr. Holmes began a series of purchases by which they acquired all (or a substantial portion thereof) of the 690-acre Davis family holding at Bowman's Bluff; on that day they entered into an agreement to purchase a one-fourth undivided interest in the property for \$1,675 from Frances A. Waldrop and her husband J. M. Waldrop (Henderson County Deeds: 14, 397-399). The property, "lying on the waters of the French Broad River at the Mouth of Willow Creek, adjoining the lands of J. J. \_\_\_\_\_, J. Jones, W. Blythe, Jason Orr et al, a part of which is occupied by J. M. Davis, as tenant by the courtesy of Mary Davis, deceased, the balance by consent of heirs, . . ." was described as "desirable land." In the deed Mr. Evans and Mr. Holmes are identified as residents of Buncombe County and that description appertained in another deed, ten days later by which James M. Davis surrendered his interest in the property for \$1,500 (Henderson County Deeds: 14, 409-410). On 8 February 1882, J. M. and Florence A. Waldrop sold their interest in the Davis lands for \$1,520 (Henderson County Deeds: 14, 423-425). By late summer 1882, both Evans and Holmes were "of" Henderson County when, on 1 September, they acquired an additional one-fourth undivided interest in the Davis family lands from C. C. Davis (Henderson County Deeds: 15, 192-193). It was not until a year later, on 26 September 1883, that Mr. Evans and Mr. Holmes acquired the final remaining interest in the property from W. B. and Mary Goodwin of Greenville County, South Carolina, for \$1,450 (Henderson County Deeds: 16, 166-167). Meanwhile, on 6 March 1883, Mr. Evans and Mr. Holmes had purchased a tract of ninety-six, apparently adjoining, acres for \$674 from William T. Davis (Henderson County Deeds: 15, 453-456).

Having acquired the property lying on both sides of the French Broad River in partnership, Morgan J. Evans and George Holmes soon undertook a division of the holding; the division was made on 24 January 1884. The deed does not specify the acreage to which Mr. Evans received title from George and Georgiana B. Holmes (Henderson County Deeds: 23, 49-51); however, it was probably about one-half of the total 786 acres purchased in 1882 and 1883. According to local tradition, Morgan J. Evans then set about erecting the stone house on a rise on the south side of the French Broad River overlooking the fertile bottom lands of his agricultural estate.

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George Holmes and his wife either remodeled and enlarged the old Davis family house or built anew a handsome house in an elevated position on their portion of the Davis lands on the north side of the French Broad River. A third important contemporary house was built on a nearby tract by the Jeudwine family: that unusual half-timbered house, recorded in a documentary photograph, was subsequently owned by the Chenoweth family and is now lost. In 1886 the "English" colony erected a chapel, the Church of Gethsemane (no longer standing), which the Reverend Theodore Lyman, Episcopal Bishop of North Carolina, described as "a model of neatness and good taste" when he consecrated it on Thursday, the eighth of September 1887.

The British-born society at Bowman's Bluff prospered through the 1880s and 1890s, but by the turn of the century certain change was occurring, and members of the community, including Morgan J. Evans, were departing. A principal record of the life enjoyed here in the 1880s is the Holmes diary. In the entries for the summer of 1887, beginning on 20 June, he provides detailed insight into the operation of his farm and the activities of his family among their community of friends. The surviving Holmes family papers also include a diary kept by John Simcox Holmes (1868-1958), the son of George H. Holmes, from October 1895 until 1902. During this period John Simcox Holmes was farming his father's acreage and also attending to business affairs for Morgan J. Evans who had apparently departed Bowman's Bluff in 1896. In this capacity the younger Mr. Holmes sold livestock, gathered crops, and rented the fields on the Evans farm.<sup>6</sup>

The diary came to an end in 1902, when John Simcox Holmes entered the United States Bureau of Forestry, and so, too, did this stage in the history of Bryn Avon. On 30 August 1903, Morgan J. Evans and his wife, then resident in Toronto, Ontario, sold "A part of the land deeded by George Holmes and wife to said Morgan J. Evans in the division of the Davis land . . . Being all that part of said land which lies on the South Side of the French Broad River, . . . Containing by estimation 120 Acres, More or Less" for \$1,700.00 to Mrs. Ida Beach Mallett (Henderson County Deeds: 46, 596-597).<sup>7</sup> Except for minor adjustments, that parcel is the nominated acreage.

#### The Mallett Family Comes to Bryn Avon

Ida Bellini Beach Mallett (1864-1950), the daughter of William Beardsley Beach and Caroline Louisa Prueffer of Columbus, Georgia, was the wife of Charles Edward Mallett and the mother of four children when she purchased this property from Morgan J. Evans in 1903. Her father owned a large and prosperous hardware company in Columbus which had been established as Hall and Moses in 1837, became Beach and Schuessler in 1870, and was operated solely by Mr. Beach until it was incorporated as the William Beach Hardware Company in 1904. She had grown up in the family's imposing antebellum house, ornamented with Italianate brackets and a two-story Doric portico, which stood in the southwest corner of Twelfth Street and Fifth Avenue in Columbus; the house is now lost. On 11 June 1890 she married Charles Edward Mallett.

Charles Edward Mallett (1851-1924) was the second of eight known children born to Colonel Peter Mallett (1825-1907), a Civil War veteran and wealthy businessman with investments in Wilmington and Fayetteville, North Carolina, and Brooklyn, New York, where he had a cotton warehouse company. He married Anna Belle Gibbs (1824-1895) in 1848, and Charles Edward Mallett was born on 22 August 1851. According to family tradition, Charles Edward Mallett

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was a sales representative for a family hardware concern, located in Brooklyn, and traveled in the South where he called on hardware merchants and dealers including William Beach. That connection is said to have led to the marriage of Beach's daughter Ida to Mr. Mallett in 1890. That marriage preceded the wedding of Mr. Mallett's younger brother James Fleming Mallett (1856-1906) to Miss Beach's younger sister Lyra Beach in 1896. Charles Edward and Ida Mallett established themselves in New York where their first child, Caroline Louisa Mallett, was born on 11 April 1891. The couple's only son, Pierre Mallett (1893-1969), was born in Brooklyn on 14 March 1893. A second daughter, Dorothy Curtis Mallett, was born in New York City on 21 July 1894. The couple's fourth, last child, Anne Gibbs Mallett (1901-1995), was born on 13 November 1901 in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Anne Gibbs Mallett, who remained unmarried, would live longer at Bryn Avon than any other member of the family and, with her mother, is chiefly responsible for the terraced boxwood garden which remains the principal landscape feature of the estate grounds.

Affected with breathing problems, Charles Edward Mallett was advised to move south and to the mountains at the turn of the century; he came to Henderson County and looked as far afield as Lake Toxaway before he and his wife settled on the Evans property which was then being leased by Mr. Evans. Family tradition suggests that the family of six moved here in 1904. As events proved, the relocation did not permanently improve Mr. Mallett's health which continued to deteriorate while at Bryn Avon. During this period he was attended by his younger bachelor brother, Dr. Eugene Pierre Mallett (1862-1945), who left his practice in New York and relocated in Hendersonville. Charles Edward Mallett would die on 1 July 1924 and was buried in Oakdale Cemetery, Wilmington, where other members of the family are interred.

### Making the Place their Own: The Mallett Family and Improvements at Bryn Avon

The death of Mr. Mallett in the summer of 1924 gave rise to a certain financial discomfort at Bryn Avon, and on 24 November 1924 the property was placed under mortgage to secure a loan of \$4,000 from the Federal Land Bank of Columbia, South Carolina (Henderson County Deeds: 62, 126). That loan may have had some connection with major improvements to the house at Bryn Avon, which probably began in the 1910s and continued in the 1920s and even later in Mrs. Mallett's lifetime. A series of family photographs show certain improvements; however, their precise chronological sequence is difficult to state.

Meanwhile, in the 1910s, Mrs. Mallett's sister and three of the Malletts' four children were married, and in time they would all erect summer cottages which survive on the estate. The first of these marriages occurred on 2 November 1911 at Bryn Avon when Mrs. Lyra Beach Mallett (1870-1956), having been a widow for five years, was married to an artist, Wilford Seymour Conrow (1880-1957), who would later become a well-known American portraitist. Caroline Louisa Mallett was married in 1912 in Asheville to Chesley Calhoun Bellamy (1886-1956), the son of Marsden Bellamy of Wilmington. In November 1918, Lieutenant Pierre Mallett was married in Coblenz, Germany, to Florence Griffith Miller (1896-1992). Eight months later, in July 1919, Dorothy Curtis Mallett was married to Allen Eugene Brown (1896-1972). The three Mallett children and their spouses established themselves beyond Bryn Avon; however, they would return and stay with their (parents and) mother until building their own small summer

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cottages uphill and to the west of the main house. While investments provided income to the Mallett family, Mrs. Mallett also welcomed family friends and relatives as paying guests at Bryn Avon and this practice provided much appreciated income, particularly after Mr. Mallett's death. At some point during this period, Mrs. Mallett's bachelor brother, William Beardsly Beach (1867-1952), came here to live with his sister.

On the basis of appearance, it appears likely that the Conrows erected their log cottage, named Yon Way (#10), in the early 1920s. Within a few years, the Browns had also erected a small cabin (#8), now expanded by additions, and Pierre and Florence Mallett had also erected a small one-and-a-half-story frame cottage (#7) on the rise immediately west of the Bryn Avon seat. These three houses (on lots #2 through #4, respectively) were standing by 17 July 1933 when Howard B. Miller, a surveyor, prepared a "Division of Lots" for Ida Beach Mallett (Henderson County Deeds: 319, 423). On the plat Miller located four contiguous lots on a tract bounded by Mrs. Mallett's driveway, off the River Road, on the north, the family residence on the east, a private inter-estate road on the south, and the neighboring Fletcher tract on the west. Only lot #1, the largest at 1.83 acres and designated for Caroline Mallett Bellamy, was then unbuilt upon. It would be another two years before the deeds to these four lots were executed in December 1935 to respective family members (Henderson County Deeds: 202, 186; 213, 54, 63; and 215, 25). During the 1930s Caroline and Chesley Bellamy built a cottage (#13) on their lot and during this period Mrs. Bellamy operated a small girl scout camp, Glen Carol, on the estate.

Despite somewhat straitened circumstances at times, life at Bryn Avon, a haven for family and friends, was well enjoyed with the help of servants. The oldest family retainer was Jason Bell who came to Bryn Avon as a lad of fourteen or fifteen, and was taught to read and write by Mrs. Mallett. He occupied the "dark room" in the house (a room off the old passage linking the kitchen with the dining room) for many years, undertook any job on the estate, and served as Mrs. Mallett's driver. In 1947 Mrs. Mallett conveyed a tract of five acres on the estate to him as a place for retirement (Henderson County Deeds: 276, 287). (In 1958, after his death, his heirs conveyed the tract back into the estate and into the ownership of the three sons of General Pierre Mallett (Henderson County Deeds, 369, 215-217).) Another long-time servant at Bryn Avon was Arthur Logan, said to be one of seventeen children of a local black family, who was the butler and lived on the estate as did his kinswoman, Cannie, the principal cook at Bryn Avon. Artie Lynch, another member of the extended Logan family, also worked for many years here, principally in the garden and at outside work. These servants concerned themselves largely with the domestic side of the estate. Its fields were rented, and at least one of the lease arrangements, for 1946-1947, was recorded (Henderson County Deeds: 247, 586-588).

Riding, tennis, canoeing, swimming, and other sports were enjoyed at Bryn Avon, and another important, pleasurable part of life on the estate was the development of the terraced boxwood garden on the east side of the house. It was the collaborative undertaking of Mrs. Mallett and her youngest daughter, Anne Gibbs, who of all the children had an extraordinary love for Bryn Avon. The garden grew under their nurturing.

In 1947, the year in which Mrs. Mallett made provision for her aged retainer Jason Bell, she also made arrangements for the future of Bryn Avon. On 26 September 1947 she conveyed the

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estate, minus the four lots deeded to family in 1935 and the five acres to Mr. Bell six days earlier, to her daughter Anne (Henderson County Deeds: 281, 64-65). Ida Beach Mallett lived on at Bryn Avon into her eighty-sixth year, dying on 31 December 1950. She was buried in Hendersonville, rather than in Wilmington with her husband, and in 1968 her body was returned to the estate for burial in the family cemetery (#5).

### Wilford Seymour Conrow at Bryn Avon, 1911-1957

Life at Bryn Avon in the first half century of Mallett ownership was also influenced by the presence of Wilford Seymour Conrow (1880-1957), who was married at Bryn Avon on 2 November 1911 to Lyra Beach Mallett, the sister of Mrs. Mallett and the widow of her husband's younger brother, James. Mr. Conrow, then an art student, would become a nationally known portrait painter, and he and Mrs. Conrow had a summer cottage (#10) and a studio (#12) on the estate which they used until 1952. Yon Way, the Conrow cottage, dating from the early 1920s together with his studio here are the single pair of buildings in the United States which are best associated with his life and career. He and his wife made their home in a series of rented apartments in New York, where he also had a studio in Carnegie Hall for periods of time.

Wilford Seymour Conrow was born in South Orange, New Jersey, on 14 June 1880; he was the son of William Edward Conrow and Anna Malcolm Hanford. He was educated at the Polytechnic Institute in Brooklyn in 1895 and 1896, and he was graduated from Princeton University in 1901. He studied briefly at the New York School of Art in 1901-1902; however, family obligations called him back to Conrow Brothers, Inc., a wholesale paper company, where he remained until 1910. The circumstances of his meeting Lyra Beach Mallett are not known. After marriage the couple resided in Paris until 1914 while Mr. Conrow was studying at the Academie Julien and the Ecole des Beaux Arts.

During an active career which extended over three decades or more, Mr. Conrow painted portraits of many men and women distinguished in the fields of art, religion, education, and business, as well as family members and friends. The subjects of these portraits include: Dr. Gustavus Eissen, the Swedish scientist and archaeologist; Dr. Charles R. Gillett, dean of the Union Theological Seminary, New York; Dr. Mather A. Abbot, headmaster of the Lawrenceville School; Dr. William Healey Dall of the Smithsonian Institution; William Henry Goodyear, curator of fine arts at the Brooklyn Museum; George Myers Stephens, the developer of Charlotte's Myers Park, and Mrs. Myers; and a full-length portrait of George Washington, first exhibited at the National Gallery of Art and later reproduced in prints, which was painted in 1919 for the George Washington Life Insurance Company of Charleston, West Virginia, whose president, Harrison Brooks Smith, was also the subject of a portrait.

A number of family portraits continue to hang at Bryn Avon. Probably the most important and accomplished of the group is his portrait of Anne Gibbs Mallett which hangs above the mantel in the living room and was exhibited in one-man shows in 1928, 1951, and 1952 and published in 1929 in Cuthbert Lee's CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PORTRAIT PAINTERS. Also hanging in Bryn Avon are his portraits of Charles Edward Mallett, his brother Dr. Eugene Pierre Mallett (1862-1945), Ida Beach Mallett, a Christmas 1913 sketch of his wife Lyra which he

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inscribed to Mrs. Mallett at Easter 1944, a portrait of Henry Van Haagen, and some smaller works. A portrait of the Connecticut architect Electus Litchfield, apparently painted on his election as a fellow of the American Institute of Architects, hangs over the mantel in the Brown Cottage (#8).

It was at an exhibition in Asheville in 1940 that Mr. Conrow met Paul W. Whitener (1911-1959), a gifted portraitist and landscape artist who founded the Hickory Museum of Art; he soon took him as a student, and this mentor/student relationship would continue until about 1954. Mr. Whitener and his wife stayed at Bryn Avon during these years, while the artists worked in the studio. Conrow was also influential in securing gifts to the Hickory museum which opened in 1944. On 29 November 1957, shortly after Mr. Conrow's death, the HICKORY DAILY RECORD printed an editorial on his role in nurturing the museum.

The fact that the Hickory Museum of Art owns a collection of some of Mr. Conrow's finest portrait paintings is fortunate—for these will continue to be a reminder of the genial man of extraordinary talent who worked so unselfishly with Mr. Whitener to make the Museum of Art what it is today. A large part of the Museum's permanent collection was acquired under his influence.<sup>10</sup>

#### Bryn Avon in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century

From the winter of 1950-1951 until 1967, Bryn Avon, the house, would be a temporary home and seasonal residence of various members of the family, including Miss Mallett, until she retired in 1967 and returned here permanently to spend the final twenty-eight years of her life as chatelaine of the family estate. Early in this period, on 25 June 1955, she conveyed the principal lands of the holding, totaling about 110 acres, to three nephews, the sons of her only brother, Brigadier General Pierre Mallett: Charles Stuart Todd Mallett (1924-1994); David Saltonstall Mallett (b. 1925); and Peter Mallett (b. 1927). It was also during this period that three of the four summer cottages erected by members of the family on the estate would be sold out of the Mallett family. This process had actually been set in motion during World War II when, in June 1944, Robert Harllee Bellamy (b. 1915) sold his parents' cottage (#13) to Paul C. Treadwell (Henderson County Deeds: 252, 108-109); the Bellamy cottage was bought back into the family in 1985. The three sales occurred within the space of two months in 1952. On 26 July, Wilford and Lyra Conrow sold Yon Way (#10) and Mr. Conrow's studio (#12) to Theodora Melanie Gack of Harrison County, Mississippi (Henderson County Deeds: 317, 243-244); it was brought back into the family in 1972. On 30 July 1952, Allen and Dorothy Mallett Brown sold their cottage (#8) and its playhouse (#9) to Paul and Marjorie Ostborg of Greenville, South Carolina (Henderson County Deeds: 317, 321-322); it was bought back into the family in 1993. On 25 September 1952, Pierre Mallett and his wife sold the Mallett Cottage (#7) to Mrs. Ginevra L. Williams of Henderson County, North Carolina (Henderson County Deeds: 318, 611-612); less than eight years later, in May 1960, Mrs. Williams and her husband sold the cottage to David Saltonstall Mallett and his wife, Sarah, who have owned it to the present (Henderson County Deeds: 384, 357-358). As events have proved, Anne Gibbs Mallett's conveyance of a one-third undivided interest in the Bryn Avon lands to David Saltonstall Mallett in 1955 and David and Sarah Mallett's purchase of the Mallett cottage in 1960 were important steps which have led to

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their eventual ownership of most of the estate, except the Bellamy cottage property which is owned by their son John Huntington Mallett (b. 1955), and the farm acreage which is held by a family corporation.

From 1960 onward David Mallett and his family summered in the Mallett cottage, and beginning in the later 1960s a series of events renewed the Mallett family's life at Bryn Avon. In 1967 Anne Gibbs Mallett retired from a life-long career with the American Red Cross and returned to live the year around at the family place. Her permanent return represented a commitment to Bryn Avon that continued to her death here on 13 August 1995. On 23 April 1968 Dorothy Mallett Brown died in Hendersonville; her body was brought back to Bryn Avon and its burial here became the first interment in the family cemetery (#5). A year later, on 2 April 1969, Brigadier General Pierre Mallett died at the Veterans Administration Hospital at Oteen. His body was brought back to Bryn Avon for burial in the family cemetery (#5). That same year David and Sarah Mallett sold their Edgemont Road house in Asheville and came to live the year around in the Mallett cottage (#7) which they occupied until moving into Bryn Avon on Labor Day weekend 1997. The family circle widened at Bryn Avon in 1972 when Elizabeth Rumbough Donaldson, Mrs. Mallett's mother, purchased the Conrow cottage and studio #10-12 from James Hardy Lee (Henderson County Deeds: 498, 386). She refitted the studio as a residence and occupied it until the early 1980s when she moved into the Mallett Cottage with her daughter and son-in-law; however, in 1976 she had conveyed the property to Mrs. Mallett.

While the construction of the stable (#6), the pond, and fencing for pastures in the late 1950s and 1960s constitute improvements at Bryn Avon, the most significant effort of recent years has been the erection of a family chapel and enhancements to its grounds which form the family burying ground. The small frame chapel, illuminated with windows which survive from the long-lost Church of Gethsemane, reaffirmed the estate's earlier associations with the English colony at Bowman's Bluff. According to tradition, the windows in the church consecrated by Bishop Lyman in 1887 had been donated by Morgan J. Evans and are said to have been brought by him from Wales. After the church at Bowman's Bluff closed the windows were removed and installed at the Church of St. John the Baptist at Upward whence they were brought to Bryn Avon. Florence Griffith Miller Mallett and her bachelor son Peter Mallett underwrote the construction of the chapel; following her death in the summer of 1992 she was buried here beside her husband.

The death of Anne Gibbs Mallett on 13 August 1995, at the age of ninety-three, closed a long chapter in the history of Bryn Avon: she had come here as a two-year-old girl with her parents and siblings, and her association with this place extended over nine decades. She was buried in the family cemetery on Saturday morning, 19 August 1995. Her estate included the house at Bryn Avon, its furnishings and the group of Conrow portraits. She devised her real estate in undivided shares to the three sons of her brother: David Mallett; Charles Stuart Todd Mallett who had predeceased her on 4 May 1994 and was also buried in the Bryn Avon cemetery; and Peter Mallett (Henderson County Wills: 95 E 524). In a series of deeds executed between 15 December 1995 and 15 January 1997, Peter Mallett and the heirs of Charles Stuart Todd Mallett conveyed their interests in the house tract and related properties to David S. Mallett or Sarah Donaldson Mallett, whereby they became the owners of Bryn Avon (Henderson County Deeds:

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885, 656-661; 887, 663-666; 891, 137-140; 914, 518-521). On 15 January 1997 David S. Mallett conveyed all his interest in the house tract and related parcels to his wife (Henderson County Deeds: 915, 113). The next month, on 26 February 1997, Mr. and Mrs. Mallett conveyed the property to Mrs. Mallett, trustee of the Sarah Donaldson Mallett Revocable Living Trust, the present owner of the Bryn Avon house (Henderson County Deeds: 918, 551-552). David Saltonstall and Sarah Donaldson Mallett now live in Bryn Avon. They are the principal owners of the estate first acquired by his grandmother in 1903, except for the tract comprising the site of the Bellamy Cottage (=13) which is held by their son, John Huntington Mallett, and the farm acreage which is held by a family corporation, Bryn Avon, Incorporated.

Architectural Significance

The statewide architectural significance of Bryn Avon derives from the special circumstances of the house's architectural history and its position as an important example of the Tudor Revival style, which embraces a small group of buildings in North Carolina whose design, and more particularly their detailing, reflects an appreciation for the black and white half-timbering and stone construction of Tudor and Elizabethan England. Here, the Tudor Revival, English Manorial, or "Stockbroker Tudor" styles form a small subset of mainly residential buildings erected from ca. 1890 and examples of the period can be found in the suburban residential developments of the state's larger cities. A group of important Tudor Revival-style buildings stands at Duke University where the Davidson Building and the former president's house are imposing, costly buildings by Philadelphia architect Horace Trumbauer, and a fine group of faculty residences includes the J. Deryl Hart house (1934) by Raleigh architect Murray Nelson.<sup>12</sup> However, the principal group of these buildings came to be erected in Asheville and the surrounding region where the English-born architect Richard Sharp Smith (1862-1924) practiced from the 1890s until his death.

Through his own talents and his association with the construction of George W. Vanderbilt's Biltmore and its estate village, Mr. Smith exercised a strong influence on architectural design throughout western North Carolina from the turn of the century through the 1920s; Bryn Avon reflects that influence and the appreciation for the Tudor Revival that existed among a small, mostly affluent group of house builders in early-twentieth century North Carolina. Richard Sharp Smith joined Richard Morris Hunt's architectural firm in 1886, and some four years later Mr. Hunt sent the young architect to Asheville to supervise construction of Biltmore. At Biltmore Mr. Smith had an extraordinary opportunity to exercise his skills as a builder and as architect for Mr. Vanderbilt for whom he designed half-timbered and manorial buildings on the private estate and at Biltmore Village into the 1900s; he also gained a wide appreciation of American materials, their sources, and craftsmanship. During this period, on 22 June 1897, Richard Sharp Smith joined the English colony here at Bowman's Bluff for a celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee (John Simcox Holmes diary).

Short discussions on Richard Sharp Smith's career and influence, together with photographs of his buildings, appear in both CABINS AND CASTLES (1981) by Douglas Swaim, an architectural history of Buncombe County, and in John M. Bryan's monograph BILTMORE ESTATE: THE MOST DISTINGUISHED PRIVATE PLACE (1994). Smith carried the use of

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picturesque massing and rooflines, real and applied half timbering, and a creative use of materials from the work for Mr. Vanderbilt to a series of private commissions for other clients which continued up to his death. Richard Sharp Smith's influence on Asheville architecture continued through the practice of Charles N. Parker who had worked for him before opening his own office in Asheville. The "Old English" qualities that distinguish Smith's Sunnycrest at Biltmore reappear in Charles Parker's early-1920s Tudor Revival houses for Thomas Wadley Raoul and Judge Junius Adams in Biltmore Forest and in the house built for Burnham S. Colburn, whose architect remains unconfirmed (Swaim, 83, 89, 182-183). Messrs. Raoul, Adams, and Colburn were directors of the Biltmore Estate Company which developed Biltmore Forest on the former Vanderbilt estate lands.

In the 1910s when Mrs. Mallett and her husband undertook improvements to their stone house, they were cognizant of its own history, the half-timbering which distinguished The Meadows, the now-lost Jeudwine (later Chenoweth) house at Bowman's Bluff, and the Hunt- and Smith-designed buildings which stood in Biltmore Village and Asheville. Having a house built by a Welshman, they elaborated upon its "Englishness" by adding half-timbering to its elevations and enriching its roofline with new gables and jerkin-heads. So doing, they created an attractive, comfortable Tudor Revival-style house as the seat of their rural estate that shares the associations and aspirations of those built in that style in Asheville and elsewhere in North Carolina. The fact that Bryn Avon is not as polished and urbane a residence as the houses designed by Messrs. Smith and Parker, the contemporary brick and half-timber house built by landscape architect Earle Sumner Draper in Charlotte's Myers Park, or the former President's House at Duke University designed by Horace Trumbauer, in no way diminishes its importance. Instead, Bryn Avon, with an appearance that suggests additions over many generations, represents an organic strain of the Tudor Revival style that might be described as "vernacular" if the Tudor style was indigenous. The house is both a reflection of the Tudor Revival style and the possibility within the English manorial tradition to create an unconventional "period house" of unusual charm and personality.

#### Landscape Architecture Significance

In the early 1920s when Ida Beach Mallett and her daughter began developing the terraced garden on the east side of Bryn Avon, they were participants in a renaissance of gardening that occurred throughout the American South in the first decades of the twentieth century. In the South, and in North Carolina, affluent house builders laid out gardens of varying size and sophistication to enhance the settings of substantial houses in suburban developments or on country estates; owners of older eighteenth and nineteenth century places repaired and embellished gardens that survived in whole or in part from those periods; and writers produced accounts of these gardens in a series of garden histories that included CAROLINA GARDENS (1937) and HOMES AND GARDENS OF NORTH CAROLINA (1939).<sup>13</sup>

In creating a terraced garden on the east side of Bryn Avon and making "English" boxwood, *Buxus sempervirens* "Suffruticosa," the principal planting in the garden, using it to both outline beds and walks, and as specimen plantings, the Malletts followed Southern tradition and the example of other interwar-period garden makers. Terraced gardens, including those at the Paca

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House in Annapolis, Montpelier and Gunston Hall in Virginia, and others in Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, were among the most important known or to survive, in whole or in part, from the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century. While the restoration of the Paca Garden has occurred in recent years, George Mason's garden at Gunston Hall, Mount Vernon, the gardens at Berkeley on the James River, and other old Virginia plantation gardens were publicized and visited by garden makers in the period who returned to their homes, followed their example, and developed gardens, usually on a smaller scale. English boxwood, together with Magnolia and crape myrtle, was a principal plant of these older gardens, including the antebellum plantation garden at The Boxwoods (NR, 1980) in Rockingham County, North Carolina, to which the plant gave its name and which was illustrated in both of the 1930s books. Boxwood became a principal plant of the gardens created, enlarged, or restored in the first half of the twentieth century in North Carolina, including the Bryn Avon garden, the landscape improvements at Boxwood Lodge (NR, 1995) in Davie County, and the important series of garden and estate designs by Thomas Warren Sears (1880-1966) in Winston-Salem, the most elaborate of which is Reynolda (NR, 1980).

The garden at Bryn Avon was laid out and nurtured in a period which also saw the first major flowering of high-quality work by landscape architects in North Carolina, and it is important within that context as a garden which was well planned and remains intact and well-maintained to the present. Except for the stewardship lavished on Reynolda's grounds, the gardens designed by Sears have survived more often in part than *in toto*. Important hedges, allees, and specimen plantings have survived in a number of instances; however, the boxwood edged parterres and perennial plantings in beds and other labor-intensive features have been lost at properties which have undergone a more or less rapid series of ownership changes. The same situation applies to the gardens and private grounds designed by Warren Manning in Pinehurst from the 1900s to the 1920s. Many, if not most of the gardens designed for Charlotte, Piedmont, and western North Carolina clients by Earle Sumner Draper (1893-1994) have also largely perished through changing tides of fortune; however, the Wall garden in Rockingham, one of the most important of Draper's private gardens, is now undergoing a partial restoration. The preservation of the garden at Bryn Avon, like the grounds of Reynolda, occurred in large part because they remained within their original family.

Although there are perhaps other gardens in North Carolina from the interwar period that survive intact or in part, and that remain unknown, the terraced garden at Bryn Avon, intact, well-maintained, and replanted when necessary with in-kind plant material, survives among the important small estate gardens of its era in North Carolina. Within this context it is also significant as one of the few rural or country place gardens of an era when most of the garden making occurred in the suburban residential parks of the state's larger cities. Its terraces, increasing in size as they descend to the east, the extensive use of boxwood, the use of traditional flowering shrubs as borders and specimens, the inclusion of perennials (tall phlox, peonies, and small bulbs) favored by garden designers of the period, its stone seats, and the incorporation of an old millstone as the base of a sundial, are all representative features of this significant period in garden design. Unknown to scholars before this author's visit in July 1997, the Bryn Avon garden reflects an important aspect of place-making in early twentieth century North Carolina and the character of gardening in this state between the wars, a practice that was continued, with

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the same traditional plants, by Lola Anderson Dennis at Gunston Hall (NR, 1991) at the end of World War II.

Endnotes

1. The sources used in the preparation of this nomination are listed in the Bibliography. Genealogical information on members of the Mallett family was provided to me by Sarah Donaldson Mallett, an owner of the estate, from the papers of the Mallett family which have accumulated at Bryn Avon.
2. Patton, THE STORY OF HENDERSON COUNTY, 234-235. "Bowman's Bluff had received its name from the immense cliff or rock from which water falls in a sheer descent." Mrs. Patton noted the Mallett family as being among the early "English colony"; however, they did not arrive until 1903/1904; the Holmes, Evans, Jeudwine, and Valentine families were members of the English colony. The Jeudwine and Mr. Wainwright's family would leave Bowman's Bluff as did Morgan J. Evans.
3. Insight may well be gained from a diary kept by Mr. Holmes which, in the winter of 1962, remained in the possession of his granddaughter Ellen Alston Eversman of Flat Rock; however, only small transcribed, typed, photocopied portions of it were made available to this author. George H. Holmes (ca. 1833-19\_\_), his wife Georgiana Beatrice Simcox, six children, and a servant boarded the "Caspian" at Liverpool, England, on 13 September 1881 and arrived in Baltimore, Maryland, on 1 October. They took a smaller boat to West Point, Virginia, and made their way by train to Asheville where they put up at the Eagle Hotel. In the later 1860s George Holmes and his family had lived in Ontario, Canada, but they had returned to Great Britain in the early 1870s where they remained until 1881. It is possible that the Holmes and Evans families might have known each other in Canada.
4. "Holmes Diary." The diary is believed to remain with the heirs of Ellen Alston Eversman.
5. Patton, 38. "The family of Malinda and John Henry continued to live at Bowman's Bluff for many years, where during the Civil War, one son was killed by freed or manumitted slaves. He is buried on the place, which is now owned by the Malletts."
6. On 3 June 1896 Mr. Holmes "Sold Evans' mules" and on the 29<sup>th</sup> of the month he was "Seeing about Evans taxes." On 17 August he went "To see Fayette Scott about Evans Business" and on 26 October he "Measured corn for Evans." On 2 January 1897 he was again "Seeing men on Evans' business." His entry for 22 June records the community's celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee which was attended by Richard Sharp Smith (1852-1924), the English-born architect who had supervised the construction of Biltmore House for the office of Richard Morris Hunt and stayed on in Asheville to work for George Washington Vanderbilt. A few days later Mr. Holmes "Listed Evans taxes at John Maces." His entry for 1 October 1897 records his efforts "about renting Evans house"; however, he does not record his success in that regard or who might have rented the place. A year later on 23 November 1898, Mr. Holmes "Gathered russet apples at

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Evans barn" and he sold them in January 1899 for \$1.00. On 20 January 1899, he "Paid Evans taxes for 1898--\$40.85." On 5 September 1899 Morgan J. Evans "came unexpectedly" to Bowman's Bluff and the next day Mr. Holmes "Went with Evans over to his place." On 9 September 1899 John S. Holmes recorded that he "Drove Evans to town on his way to Norfolk." That entry was his last concerning Morgan J. Evans and this place; however, in September 1900 he made record of attending the Jeurwine sale with his father, and on the 16<sup>th</sup> he noted "The Jeurwines left today for Raleigh." John Simox Holmes graduated from the Yale School of Forestry in 1905 and later became State Forester of North Carolina, a post he held until 1945.

7. Where Morgan J. Evans and his wife, Mary Emily, lived from 1896 until 1902 is not known. On 20 October 1902 Mr. Evans bought land on Brunswick Avenue, Toronto, for \$1,500 and built a house which he and his family occupied and owned until 31 October 1908 when they sold it for \$3,200. He is listed in the Toronto city directories from 1904 until 1909 as a resident at 371 (now 407) Brunswick Avenue. In the city of Toronto assessment roll in 1904 he is listed as a merchant. Mr. Evans disappears from the Toronto records with the sale of the Brunswick Avenue property in 1908, and nothing else is known of him and his family. Stephen Otto, letter to the author, 22 November 1998.
8. Colonel Mallett was the son of Charles Peter Mallett (1792-1874), the owner of Rockfish Manufacturing Company in Cumberland County, and the grandson of Revolutionary patriot General Peter Mallett (1744-1804). Charles Edward Mallett was the great-great grandson of Peter Mallett (1712-ca. 1760), a commissary for British troops in New York and Canada. That first Peter Mallett was, in turn, the son of John Mallett (1673-1745), the founder of New Rochelle, New York, and the first of the family in America; his grandfather was David Mallet (16 ?-1691) of La Rochelle, France, a commissary for the French army under Louis XIV who left France for England with other Huguenots at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685.
9. These portraits and others are held by a large number of museums, universities, institutions, and corporations as well as private owners; the public collections are cited in the entry on Mr. Conrow in WHO WAS WHO IN AMERICA, VOLUME 3 and WHO'S WHO IN AMERICAN ART. Wilford Conrow's work was the subject of several one-man shows. The first (known) and largest of these was held at Loeser Galleries in New York in the winter of 1928. A show was held at the Asheville Art Museum in the summer of 1951 and a valedictory show was held by the Hendersonville Woman's Club at the Bowen Hotel in the summer of 1952. On 26 July, during the run of that show he and Mrs. Conrow sold Yon Way and the studio to Mrs. Gack; however, they would continue to spend summers here.
10. Whitener was struck by a fatal illness in 1955 and died in 1959. (For additional information on the Conrow-Whitener relationship, see "The Legacy of Paul W. Whitener" in AMERICAN ART REVIEW, April 1998, pp. 100-107.) At his death Wilford S. Conrow willed a personal collection of paintings and other works of art to the Hickory

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Museum of Art; that collection, including his portrait of Miss Clara J. Gordon painted in 1915, was exhibited in a special show in 1967 at the museum.

11. David Saltonstall Mallett, born on 24 November 1925 in Champaign, Illinois, was the third son born to Brigadier General Pierre Mallett and his wife Florence. Growing up in an Army family he and his brothers were educated at a series of schools, as his father moved about his various postings in this country and abroad. He and his two surviving brothers were all graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point. He graduated in the class of 1948 and was assigned to Fort Riley, Kansas. That autumn, on 24 November, he was married there to Sarah Elizabeth Donaldson (b. 1925), the daughter of Colonel Thomas Quinton Donaldson III (1897-1954) and Elizabeth Rumbough (1896-1993). He was posted to Austria with the 350<sup>th</sup> Infantry in 1949; the couple's two daughters were born there before their return to the United States in 1951. A series of postings, including Korea where he earned a bronze star, culminated in service as a tactical officer at West Point. He resigned from the United States Army in 1955 and returned to Asheville where he served as an engineer with the American Enka Company and for eleven years as an account executive with Merrill Lynch. Three sons were born to the couple between 1954 and 1963. In the 1970s Mr. Mallett opened a wine shop, The Weinhaus, in Asheville which he continues to manage.
12. Claudia P. Roberts, Diane E. Lea, and Robert M. Leary, *THE DURHAM ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC INVENTORY* (Durham, N.C.: City of Durham, 1982), 183-184. Durham architect George Watts Carr, also a skilled practitioner in the Tudor Revival style, was the architect of the Parks Alexander and Jesse Harper Erwin, Jr., houses in Durham; the Alexander house (ca. 1930) is brick, stone, and applied half-timber (Roberts, 286) while the more elegant Erwin house (1930) is Wake County granite (Roberts, 286).
13. Davyd Foard Hood, "The Renaissance of Southern Gardening in the Early Twentieth Century," *JOURNAL OF GARDEN HISTORY* 16 (April-June 1996): 129-152. E. T. H. Shaffer, a native of South Carolina, gave relatively little attention to the gardens of North Carolina in *CAROLINA GARDENS* except for gardens of the summer colony at Flat Rock, several in Asheville, and those in coastal North Carolina. While Mr. Shaffer was not familiar with the garden at Bryn Avon, he did include a photograph of the handsome garden at Burnham Colburn's Tudor Revival-style house in Biltmore Forest. Except for the highly important gardens at The Boxwoods (Rural Retreat) and Beallmont (NR, 1984), most of the garden features discussed by Archibald Henderson and illustrated by Bayard Wooten's beautiful period photographs in *OLD HOMES AND GARDENS OF NORTH CAROLINA* were the important avenues of boxwood at plantations including The Mills (now lost) at Rocky Mount, Eaton Place in Warrenton, Hill Airy and Woodlawn (now lost) in Granville County, and the Carson Place in McDowell County.

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### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

#### Verbal Boundary Description

The property included in this nomination, 127.86 acres, is outlined in pencil on the enclosed Henderson County Land Record Map.

#### Boundary Justification

The property included in this nomination is the tract "Containing by estimation 120 acres more or less" that was acquired by Ida Beach Mallett in 1903 from Morgan J. Evans and wife, together with a tract of 2.72 acres acquired in 1935 by Lyra Beach Mallett Conrow and her husband as a source for spring water for Yon Way.

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Section number Photographs Page 36Photograph Schedule (the following information applies to all photographs)

1. Name of property: Bryn Avon
2. Location of property: Henderson County, North Carolina
3. Photographer: Davyd Foard Hood
4. Dates of photographs: 4-5 November 1997
5. Location of original negatives: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina

Photographs

- A. View of Bryn Avon (#2), looking west from the garden (#4), with the tea house (#3) visible in the middle ground.
- B. The estate grounds (#1) looking north to the house (#2) along the present entrance off Mallett Road.
- C. The north elevation of Bryn Avon (#2), looking southwest.
- D. The living room mantel of Bryn Avon, with Wilford Conrow's portrait of Anne Gibbs Mallett, looking southeast.
- E. The dining room of Bryn Avon, looking north.
- F. The garden (#4), looking southeast from the north end of the center terrace.
- G. The garden (#4), looking east to the center planting of the lower terrace from the top of the steps descending to it.
- H. The chapel (#5), looking north/northwest.
- I. The stable (#6), looking west.
- J. Mallett Cottage (#7), looking northwest.
- K. Yon Way (#10), looking southeast.
- L. Bellamy Cottage (#13), looking southeast.

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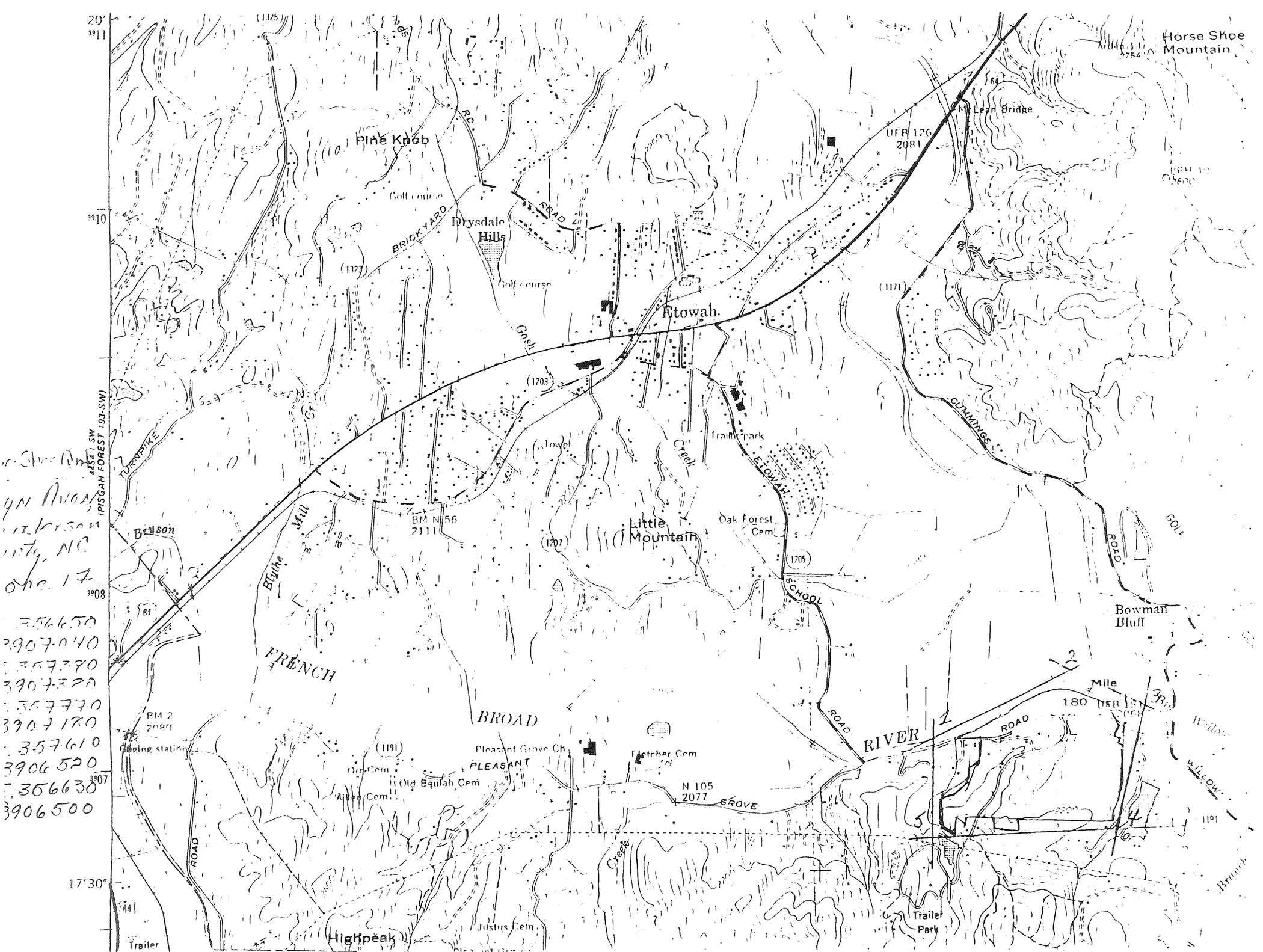
Property Owner

Mr. and Mrs. David Saltonstall Mallett  
Bryn Avon  
Post Office Box 182  
Etowah, NC 28729

Mrs. David Saltonstall Mallett, Trustee  
Sarah Donaldson Mallett Revocable Living Trust  
Post Office Box 182  
Etowah, NC 28729

Bryn Avon, Incorporated  
c/o Mr. David S. Mallett  
Post Office Box 182  
Etowah, NC 28729

Mr. John Huntington Mallett  
204 Vehorn Road  
Fairview, NC 28730



48547 SW  
IPISGAH FOREST 193-SW  
Bryson  
Etowah  
Little Mountain  
Pleasant Grove  
Highpeak  
356650  
3907040  
357380  
3907320  
357770  
3907180  
357610  
3906520  
356630  
3906500

Horse Shoe Mountain

Pine Knob

Drysdale Hills

Etowah

Little Mountain

BROAD

Pleasant Grove Ch  
PLEASANT

Highpeak

UFR 176  
2081

McLean Bridge

CUMMINGS

Franklin Park

Oak Forest Cem

SCHOOL

Bowman Bluff

RIVER

ROAD

N 105  
2077 GROVE

Trailer Park

20'  
3911  
3910  
3908  
3907  
17'30"

