

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 any 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 Howell, Alden and Thomasene; House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 129 Woolsey Heights not for publication N/A

city or town Waynesville vicinity N/A

state North Carolina code NC county Haywood code 087 zip code 28786

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide X locally. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey Crow SHPO 2/25/03
Signature of certifying official, Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or 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 commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

_____ 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 (explain): _____	_____	_____

Howell, Alden and Thomasene, House
Name of Property

Haywood, 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	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	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
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: single dwelling
Domestic secondary structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Work in progress Sub: _____
Domestic single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)
Shingle Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
roof asphalt
walls shingle
other wood

Narrative Description

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

Howell, Alden and Thomasene, House
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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.)

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a 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

Period of Significance

ca. 1905

Significant Dates

ca. 1905

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

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: Western Office, Archives and History

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Howell, Alden and Thomasene, House
name of property
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Summary

The nominated property consists of 1.391 acres and contains two contributing resources, the main house and the former carriage house, now a garage and an apartment. The house is located in Woolsey Heights, on a hill overlooking the north end of Main Street, approximately one-half mile north from the center of the commercial core of downtown Waynesville, North Carolina. A winding road leads up the hill from Main Street, with a large expanse of lawn located to the west side of the road. Mature deciduous and hardwood trees line the road and are interspersed within the lawn of the house. The Shingle Style house and carriage house are highly intact examples of the style.

1. Alden and Thomasene Howell House. Contributing. ca. 1905.

Set high on a hill overlooking Main Street, the massive Alden and Thomasene Howell House is a highly intact example of the Shingle Style. Two-and-one-half stories, the building exhibits many of the features of the style, including asymmetrical massing, a cross gambrel roof, wraparound porch with square stone piers and balustrade, a stone porte-cochere on the north, single and double one-over-one windows, a corner turret, and shingle (second story) and German siding (first story). The German siding has a particularly wide profile, and all soffits are gently curved. The foundation of the building is stone, some with beaded mortar joints. Chimneys are brick.

Beginning with the west or front elevation, the porte cochere extends to the north from the stone wraparound porch. Details of the porch include solid stone balustrade and piers. There are three bays on the second floor, double windows on either side of what was originally a balcony with an oval-shaped opening. The front door of the house is a single light over multiple panels, framed by round wood pilasters. The corner turret is two stories in height, with a conical, flared roof and German siding on the first floor with shingles on the second, like the remainder of the house. Moving around to the side, or south elevation, the house continues much of the same form as the front, and includes a wing at the southeast corner which, according to the 1924 Sanborn map, was added sometime between 1905 and 1924. Documentary photos confirm this, indicating this was not an original part of the house. However, the detailing on this southeast wing is so similar to the rest of the house, that it seems likely this was added quite soon after 1905. Walls of this addition are beaded board and German siding, and there is a narrow brick chimney on the south elevation. Probably originally on piers, the wing is now enclosed with foundation stone that does not match the original building.

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The east or rear elevation features three shed-roof dormers at the second story and one at the attic level. The original kitchen wing, at the northeast corner, projects to the east.¹ The eastern third of this wing was added in the 1960s when the house was in use as a boarding house. The kitchen wing consists of a gable roof one-story-plus-basement portion and a screened porch at the first story which is set on posts and is covered by a shed roof. This is an enlargement of an original smaller porch in the same location. The north elevation has a large, single shoulder brick chimney located approximately in the center of the elevation. The porte cochere extends from the northwest corner. The stone piers on the porte-cochere have been repointed.

The first floor consists of a large living room/entry hall, grand staircase, dining room, master suite, and kitchen.² The original floor plan has been minimally altered, with the removal of the walls dividing the original master bath and sitting area from the bedroom being the only change on the first floor. Existing floor plans, which show current conditions except for the recent removal of walls in the master suite, were drawn in 1970 by the architectural firm of Foy and Lee (see Exhibit A). A massive, cut granite fireplace with granite overmantel is located in the living room, with high raised-panel wainscot on all walls, and a boxed beam ceiling and cove ceiling molding which continues into the dining room. Wainscot continues into the corner turret room and the dining room. The walnut u-shaped staircase in the corner of the living room consists of turned balusters, a molded handrail, paneled newel post, and paneled sidewalls. The newel posts feature recessed panels with bullseye molding above, and molded cap and base. Finishes in the kitchen and master suite include plain plaster walls and ceilings. Floors on the first floor are a combination of narrow-board walnut, oak, and pine, with oak on the second floor. Doors throughout the house are typically horizontal five-panel.

The second floor contains five bedrooms, and a storage/sitting room, with two baths and additional storage rooms located at the rear. The second floor retains its original plan except for the enclosure of the original front balcony and creation of two small rooms in this space. Walls and ceilings are plaster, with wide corner guards in the main stair hall. The stair balustrade is the

¹Physical evidence in the building indicates that the easternmost portion of the kitchen wing was added, probably by 1924, because the footprint of the house has not changed since that time. Documentary photos of the northeast corner appear to indicate this section was smaller when the house was built.

²The master suite was always used as a first floor bedroom.

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same as on the lower level. Newel posts are simpler, with beveled edges and a molded cap topped by round finials. Rooms are relatively plain, with simple mantels and pilasters surrounding the fireplace opening. Some have mirrored overmantels. Rear stairs lead to the attic, which is currently unfinished space (see Exhibit A).

2. Carriage House. Contributing. ca. 1905.

One-story garage with apartment above. Like the main house, the building has a gambrel roof, shingle and German siding. On the first floor, the original single bay opening has been changed to double garage doors, and a new door has been added on the south side. On the second floor, two original window openings, with replacement sash remain, but the center loft opening has been replaced by a doorway. Wooden stairs and a bracketed deck were added to provide access to the apartment. Roof is covered by asphalt shingles, and the foundation is stacked stone. Originally this was a carriage house and barn associated with the house, but was later converted to its present use as a garage with an apartment upstairs.

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Summary

The Alden and Thomasene Howell House, built ca. 1905, is the best-preserved of three Shingle Style houses constructed as a family compound by the Woolseys, a wealthy Alabama family on a hill north of downtown Waynesville known as "Woolsey Heights." Minthorne Woolsey, a cotton broker from Alabama who originally was a summer visitor to Waynesville, built a permanent home for himself and each of his two daughters in Woolsey Heights. Daughter Thomasene Woolsey married Alden Howell, of the wealthy and prominent Howell family who were involved in all aspects of the economic and social development of Waynesville. The Alden and Thomasene Howell House is a rare example of a Shingle Style residence built in the North Carolina mountains, and it is illustrative of the introduction of high style architecture into the small, picturesque mountain community. The Howell House meets Criterion C for its local architectural significance as a highly intact example of the Shingle Style, a style uncommon in the South. In a regional context, the Howell House reflects the architectural impact of wealthy out-of-state summer visitors who came to the North Carolina mountains in the late nineteenth to early twentieth-century era and built summer houses and permanent residences.

Historic Background

Like many western North Carolina towns, Waynesville, North Carolina remained as a small village through much of the nineteenth century. Once the railroad arrived in 1883 the town began to thrive, as access to the west was opened up to tourists and new residents. The tourism economy thrived in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Waynesville, as evidenced by the number of hotels located all along Main Street.³ By the 1890s, Waynesville had become a tourist destination for wealthy families from other parts of the South and had begun to take on a more "urban" character, with a public library, electric lights, schools, water, and paved streets and sidewalks. The rail not only brought tourists, but also made the supply of architectural construction materials more readily available to the community. The timber industry in the county boomed, along with sawmills. The use of more sophisticated architectural designs more in keeping with national trends began to appear all over town. Some of the wealthy tourists settled permanently in Waynesville, due to the climate and overall prosperity of the town. This in turn brought additional wealth to the town of Waynesville and new opportunities for the building of grand architectural showpieces.

³Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1896, 1908, 1913, 1924, 1931, and 1937.

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Minthorne Woolsey of Selma, Alabama, son of Benjamin Minthorne Woolsey and Lucinda Swift Woolsey, was an example of one of the wealthy summer tourists who later settled in Waynesville.⁴ He began visiting Waynesville, North Carolina as a summer visitor beginning in 1900, often staying at the Gordon Hotel on Main Street.⁵ Minthorne Woolsey worked with his father in their business in Selma, "Woolsey & Sons, Cotton Factors and General Agents".⁶ Minthorne Woolsey owned a large home in Selma, but decided to move on a permanent basis to Waynesville and soon became part of the wealthy Waynesville society.⁷ Minthorne Woolsey and wife Thomasene Harper Rigby (of New York City) had two daughters, Thomasene Rigby Woolsey and Mary Ella Woolsey, who came with their parents when they moved permanently to Waynesville. On November 27, 1901, daughter Thomasene married Alden Howell, Jr. of Waynesville, and on October 29, 1903, daughter Mary Ella married James Wood Reed of Waynesville. Since the family was originally from Selma, Alabama, both weddings took place there.⁸

The Alden Howell, Sr. family, into which Thomasene Woolsey married, was one of the most prominent in Haywood County. Captain Alden Howell, a long-time Waynesville resident, owned thousands of acres in the county, including land along Richland Creek. He purchased land in Waynesville from 1873 to 1929, and sold some of it to his son, Alden Howell, Jr.⁹ Alden Howell also owned the Gordon Hotel on Main Street, was a founder of the Bank of Waynesville, and owned Waynesville Furniture Company.¹⁰ The land for the Alden and Thomasene Howell

⁴Benjamin Minthorne Woolsey was born near Athens, Georgia in 1823, but his family soon moved to Mobile, Alabama. He was educated there and at Emory College (now Emory University), in Georgia. He studied law and practiced for a short time, but poor health forced him to look at alternate professions. In 1846 he moved to Selma, Alabama and owned a large cotton plantation and slaves. Near the end of the Civil War he moved his family to Summerfield, Alabama. After the war the Woolseys returned to Selma and began operating the Woolsey & Sons business. In 1875, Benjamin Woolsey was elected mayor of Selma. Woolsey was also involved in the development of the railroad in Alabama and was a founder of the Selma Building and Loan Association. In addition, he served as a representative from Dallas County, Alabama (Selma) to the state legislature from 1855 to 1856 (Owen, Thomas. Dictionary of Alabama Biography, v. IV, p. 1807; Hardy, John. Selma: Her Institutions and Her Men. Selma, Alabama: Times Book and Job Office, 1879; Jackson, Walter M. The Story of Selma, pp. 151, 259, and 521).

⁵Breese, Bob. Long-time Waynesville resident. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 25 September 2001.

⁶Selma, Alabama City Directory 1880-81.

⁷The Benjamin Minthorne Woolsey House stands in Selma, at 413 Tremont Street. It is a notable Italianate structure with a prominent central turret. See working file. Minthorne Woolsey's home was two-story, and apparently is no longer in existence (Grayson, C.C. Yesterday and Today: Memories of Selma and its People, p. 115).

⁸Dallas County, Alabama Marriage Records 1818-1918, p. 238.

⁹Haywood County Grantor Index 1808-1930.

¹⁰Breese, Bob. Interview 25 September 2001.

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House was deeded from Captain Alden Howell and his wife Fannie D. Howell to their son Alden Howell, Jr., on October 1, 1901. This deed included six and one-fourth acres in north Waynesville, at the top of a hill which came to be known as "Woolsey Heights". This included the current lot and the land to the north of the property which extended along North Main Street.

Alden Howell, Jr. paid \$925 for the property, which he deeded to his wife Thomasene on June 25, 1904, for a reason that is not known.¹¹ It appears that the house was built soon after this time, ca. 1905. The Howells had three children, a son and two daughters. The son died at an early age, but the two daughters inherited the property soon after their mother died in 1923. Their father, Alden Howell, Jr., was given a life estate in the property under Thomasene Woolsey Howell's will and continued to live in the house until 1934. He died ca. 1955.¹² Alden Howell Dent and Thomasene Howell Hughes, daughters of Thomasene Woolsey Howell and Alden Howell, Jr., each received a half interest in the property. Alden Howell, Jr. married a second time, on October 21, 1924, to Bess Ray.¹³ Bess Ray Howell died on February 10, 1936.¹⁴ In 1955, Alden H. Dent and Gordon H. Dent, apparently full owners of the property by this time after the death of their father, deeded the land to Felix Stovall.

The property at this time still contained just over six acres, noted in the deed as ". . . the eastern corner of land belonging to the Alden Howell, Jr. homeplace. . ."¹⁵ Felix and Margaret Stovall sold the land to Pauline P. Bryan in 1958. This deed noted the land as being ". . . Lot Number 2, Block C, in the North Waynesville Addition to the Town of Waynesville. . ."¹⁶ Pauline B. Bryan sold the property to Henry B. Foy and Tai Y. Lee, both architects, in 1974. The land at this time had been reduced to the current 1.392 acres.¹⁷ Foy and Lee sold the property in 1980 to Nancy Benton Dodd. The property at this time contained only .55 acres, containing the house only.¹⁸ The estate of Nancy Dodd sold the property to the current owners, Stephanie Welch Strickland and Stephen Strickland in June 2000. The Stricklands bought back the additional acreage, to bring the current property back to 1.392 acres.¹⁹ To the south of the Howell House, also at the top of the hill known as "Woolsey Heights" are two additional houses, the center one being

¹¹Haywood County Deed Book 15, p. 393 and 20, p. 38.

¹²Breese, Bob. Interview 25 September 2001.

¹³Haywood County Marriage Records 1922-1938.

¹⁴Haywood County Death Records.

¹⁵Haywood County Deed Book 164, p. 341.

¹⁶Haywood County Deed Book 176, p. 106. This plat is not in the Haywood County records.

¹⁷Haywood County Deed Book 270, p. 693.

¹⁸Haywood County Deed Book 313, p. 944.

¹⁹Haywood County Deed Book 479, p. 2348.

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where Minthorne and Thomasene Rigby Woolsey lived, and the one furthest to the south being where daughter Mary Ella and husband James Reed lived.

Architecture Context

The Alden and Thomasene Howell House was built ca. 1905, and is an excellent example of the Shingle Style. The Shingle Style (1880-1900), common in both urban and rural settings, is a style that is generally complex and asymmetrical in its massing, but is simplified through the use of a uniform, unornamented exterior surface, generally shingles or a combination of shingles and weatherboard. Roof types can range from hip with cross gables to side-gable, front-gable, cross-gable, or gambrel. Corner towers are typical features, as are massive, prominent porches, often of stone, simple window surrounds, dormer windows, and massive chimneys. Shingle Style houses are relatively uncommon in the south, where the Queen Anne was the more popular style of the same time period. The Shingle Style generally was a style used in architect-designed houses. Builder-designed houses in North Carolina and throughout the South during this period tended to be vernacular interpretations of the Queen Anne style.²⁰

The architect for the Howell House is unknown, but it may have been a Northeastern designer since Mrs. Woolsey was from New York City. The Howell House is an impressive example of the Shingle Style, including many typical features such as the building's cross-gambrel roof and corner turret, use of stone on the porch and porte-cochere, an original second story porch, the double windows, and dormers.

The only comparable Shingle Style houses built in Waynesville are the other two houses in the family compound of Woolsey Heights, and the Charles Ray House. The other two Woolsey Heights houses, contemporaneous with the Howell House, exhibit elements of the Shingle Style and display some similar detailing to the adjacent Howell House. The two-and-one-half-story Minthorne Woolsey House to the south (153 Woolsey Heights) features a cross-gambrel roof, gambrel-roof dormers, stone foundation and porch piers with beaded mortar joints, shingles on the second floor and German siding on the first. There is a porte cochere with stone posts to the south side. There is a gambrel roof carriage house with this property also. The two-and-one-half-story James Reed House, to the south of the Woolsey House, (189 Woolsey Heights) is the most altered of the three, and is presently covered with aluminum siding. With its cross-gable roof, stone porch posts and porte cochere, it strongly resembles the Woolsey House. The Reed and Woolsey Houses, like the Howell House, retain most of their original interior Shingle Style features, including large living halls with paneled walls and ceilings, built-in inglenooks, ornate

²⁰McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984, pp. 288-299.

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mantels, and large staircases. The Howell House is the most distinguished and intact house of the three Woolsey family residences.

The Charles Ray House (449 S. Main Street), ca. 1898, exhibits many of the features of the Shingle Style, including a gambrel roof, shingle siding, arcaded wraparound porch, and triple windows. There is an octagonal bay at the northeast corner, a porte cochere with arched entry, and two gambrel roof outbuildings. The interior exhibits fine detailing, including a large, open living hall (much like the Howell House), a large stairway with spindle balusters, and a brick fireplace with terra-cotta egg-and-dart moldings. Ray, like the Woolseys, was a cotton broker.

Most Waynesville houses of the late 1890s to the early 1900s were built in the Queen Anne and Colonial Revival styles. The Smathers House (420 Daisey Avenue), ca. 1895, is an exuberant example of the Queen Anne style with a round turret and extensive scrollwork. The Colonel James H. Howell House (618 Old Hickory), ca. 1900, is a good example of the Colonial Revival style with an octagonal veranda, wraparound porch, multi-gable roof, and interior paneled oak wainscot, oak and walnut mantels and large living hall.

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Major Bibliographical References

Breese, Bob. Long-time Waynesville resident and friend of Howell family. Interview by Sybil A. Bowers, 25 September 2001.

Dallas County, Alabama Marriage Records 1818-1918, Dallas County Courthouse, Selma, Alabama.

Documentary photographs, ca. 1905, in possession of current owner.

Farlow, Betsy, and Dan Lane and Duane Oliver. Haywood Homes and History. Hazelwood, North Carolina: Oliver Scriptorium, 1993.

Hardy, John. Selma: Her Institutions and Her Men. Selma, Alabama: Times Book and Job Office, 1879.

Haywood County Death Records, Haywood County Courthouse, Waynesville, North Carolina.

Haywood County Deed Books, Haywood County Courthouse, Waynesville, North Carolina.

Haywood County Marriage Records, Haywood County Courthouse, Waynesville, North Carolina, 1922-1938.

McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984.

Sanborn Maps 1896, 1908, 1913, 1924, 1931, and 1937.

Selma City Directory 1880-81. Dallas County Public Library, Selma, Alabama.

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Howell, Alden and Thomasene, House
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Boundary Description

The boundaries of the 1.391 acres included in this nomination are indicated on the accompanying survey map. Tax number 8615-58-6726.

Boundary Justification

The original 6 ¼ acre homeplace tract was reduced to 1.392 acres by 1974. This acreage is the entire remaining parcel historically associated with the Howell House. It contains the house, carriage house, and a large front yard.

Alden and Thomasene Howell House Photographs

The following information applies to all of the photographs, except where noted.

Name of property: Alden and Thomasene Howell House
129 Woolsey Heights
Waynesville
Haywood County
North Carolina

Photographer: Sybil Argintar Bowers
Date of photos: September 2001
Location of original negatives: Division of Archives and History
One Village Lane
Asheville, North Carolina 28803

1. Front of house, view southeast.
2. Corner turret, view east.
3. Rear of house, view northwest.
4. Carriage house, view northeast.
5. Living room mantel and wainscot.

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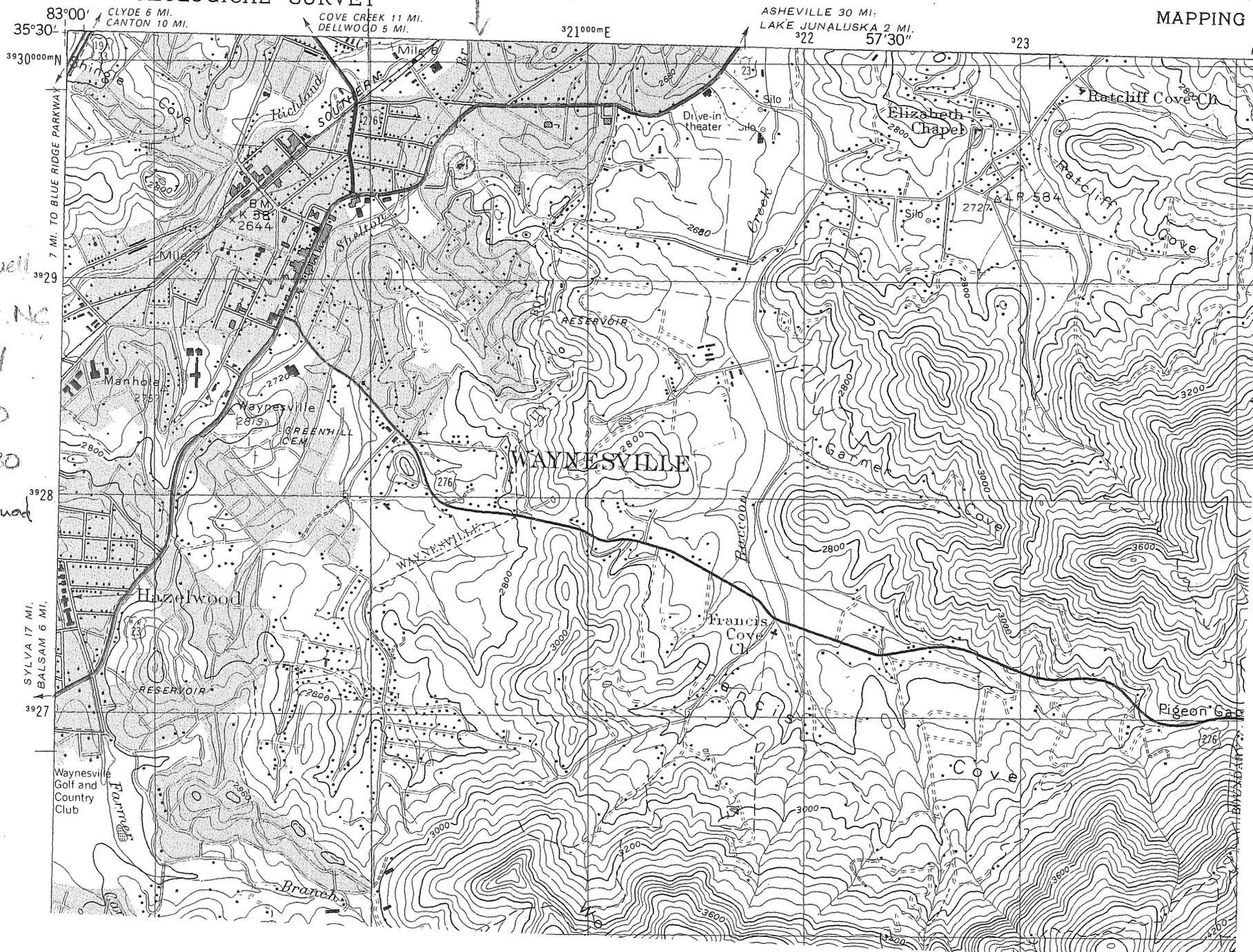
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6. Newel post, balustrade, first floor, view northwest.
7. Dining room, view northeast.
8. Second floor hall, view southwest.
9. Second floor, typical mantel.
10. Second floor, turret room, view southwest.
11. Second floor bedroom, view southwest.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

UNITED STATES
TENNESSEE
MAPPING SERVICE



Alden and
Thomas Howell
House
Waynesville, NC
Zone 17
E 320420
N 3929530
Waynesville Quad

455 II SE
DELLWOOD 17A-SE

83°00'
35°30'
3930000N
7 MI. TO BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
3929
3928
3927
SYLVIA 17 MI.
BALSAM 6 MI.

ASHEVILLE 30 MI.
LAKE JUNALUSKA 2 MI.
322 57'30"
323

Waynesville
Hazelwood
Francis Cove
Pigeon Gap
Cove
Branch

3200

