

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See Instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic The Frye-Randolph House and the Fryemont Inn

and/or common The Randolph House and the Fryemont Inn

2. Location

street & number Fryemont Road _____ not for publication

city, town Bryson City _____ vicinity of _____ Congressional District: Eleventh

state North Carolina code 037 county Swain code 173

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name House: Mr. and Mrs. William L. Adams Inn: Ms. Catherine Dillard Collins

street & number Randolph House Fryemont Inn

P.O. Box 816 P.O. Box 459

city, town Bryson City, N.C. 28713 Bryson City, N.C. 28713

_____ vicinity of _____ state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Swain County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Bryson City state N.C. 28713

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town _____ state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Prominently sited atop a steep hill above the Tuckasegee River, the Frye-Randolph House and the Fryemont Inn overlook the Swain County seat of Bryson City in the Great Smoky Mountains of western North Carolina. Now under separate ownership, the adjacent properties are inseparable historically and survive as two of the best known landmarks in the county. The house was built for landowner and attorney Amos Frye about 1895 and was probably expanded by him in the early twentieth century; it is representative of the better class of dwelling for the period deep in the Great Smokies area. The bark and board-and-batten clad inn, built for the Fryes in 1923, is one of the best examples of the rustic mountain inns still standing in the region.

In its present form, the house is a frame structure of two stories, built roughly on an L plan and distinguished by a complex roof system of intersecting and projecting gables and gable dormers. It was apparently built in two or more stages. The original (ca.1895) portion of the house appears to have been a one-and-one-half story weather-boarded dwelling of two rooms downstairs with a steeply pitched roof and a central chimney, oriented on a north-south axis and possibly facing down the slope to the west. Three gabled wall dormers light the upper story on the west slope of the roof. These are heavily ornamented with deeply overhanging eaves, brackets, and sawnwork gable inserts. Now barely noticed owing to the more recent one-story addition on the west side and the change of the principal orientation of the house to the east and north, the dormers are the most elaborately treated exterior features and perhaps give witness to the character and orientation of the original house.

Frye's early twentieth century expansion repeated the massing and angularity of the original house, but was finished more simply. The two-story addition is set on a north-south axis, longer than the original block, thus creating an L plan overall. The principal (east) elevation features an irregular row of gabled projections and dormers, four in all. A one-story, flat roof porch supported by stone piers shelters the facade. A similar, but smaller porch is set in the elbow between the east and west blocks on the north elevation. Windows are irregularly placed on the elevations, occurring singly, in pairs, or in groups of three or more on the first floor and in the gabled projections and dormers of the second floor. Most are of nine-over-one sash in simple surrounds, though the windows of the oldest block have molded hoods across the top.

The interior follows a modified center hall plan and is simply but handsomely finished, with plastered walls and ceilings and wood floors. A molded baseboard carries throughout. Both paneled doors and glazed French doors connect the rooms. The original fireplaces have molded frames as mantels and tile faces. The most formal interior feature is the open-string stair in the north hall, with molded handrail, turned newel, and square-in-section balusters. A large, comfortable den occupies the southeast corner of the first floor. The house serves as a mountain residence for its owners, with the upstairs rooms offered to summer visitors to the mountains.

The Fryemont Inn is set in the side of the mountain a short distance from the house. Completed in 1923, the inn is an important and now rare example of the small mountain resort hotels built in the rustic mode during the period in the North Carolina mountains. The long, two-story structure is laid out in an L plan with the two principal wings

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DESCRIPTION

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covered by low-pitched hip roofs. A two-story gabled projection extends from the elbow of the adjoining wings and houses the principal entrance and lobby. Most of the west wing, which is raised on a stone foundation, remains covered with poplar bark shingles. The east wing, resting on stone piers with frame infill, is clad in board-and-batten. Twelve-light windows are regularly placed, occurring singly, in pairs, and in triplets along the elevations on both levels. A scalloped bargeboard decorates the eaves around the entire structure.

The interior retains its well-crafted, unpainted wood finish throughout. The main lobby features walls sheathed with vertical boards, an exposed-joist ceiling supported by massive chamfered posts, and a large stone fireplace with an arched fire opening. An especially impressive feature is the main entrance door, square in shape and hung on long strap hinges, and composed of rows of four small square panels above and below a row of long rectangular ones.

In the guest wings, spacious bedrooms are arranged at either side of a narrow central hall, with similar finish including sheathed walls, batten doors on strap hinges, and plastered ceilings.

Attached to the south end of the west wing is the one-story kitchen and dining hall, a long, low building of board and batten under a low-pitched gable roof. The large open hall has an exposed-rafter ceiling supported by tree-trunk size posts, and a massive stone fireplace.

The inn remains in use, and is open to the vacationing public in season.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Recreation

Specific dates House 1895+ Inn 1923 Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Sited on a hill above the town of Bryson City in Swain County, the Frye-Randolph House (known commercially today as the Randolph House) and the Fryemont Inn are two well-known landmarks in the Great Smokies region of western North Carolina. Both properties were built for Amos Frye (1853-1935), a prominent landowner, attorney, and civic leader in western North Carolina who was an active supporter for the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Frye's house was built in 1895, the same year he married Lillian Rowe of Rowan County, who later became an attorney herself and who is believed to have been the first licensed woman attorney in North Carolina in 1911. In 1923 the Fryes completed the Fryemont Inn adjacent to their house to accommodate the growing summer tourist trade in the Great Smokies. Mrs. Frye operated the inn until her death in 1957, when both properties passed to her daughter and son-in-law, John P. Randolph and Lois Frye Randolph. Randolph served in the N.C. General Assembly and was an attorney for the Federal Trade Commission in Washington for 28 years. The multi-gabled house is representative of the more substantial residences of the turn-of-the-century deep in the Smokies region, and the bark-clad inn is an important example of the rustic resort hotels popular in the mountains in the early twentieth century. Now under separate ownership, both properties accommodate summer visitors.

Criteria Assessment:

- A. Associated with the economic expansion and resort development of the Great Smokies region and the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
- B. Associated with the lives of three prominent western North Carolina attorneys and civic leaders: Amos Frye, Lillian Rowe Frye, and John Peyton Randolph.
- C. The multi-gabled house is representative of the better class of residence in the Great Smokies region at the turn of the century; the inn is an important example of the rustic mode in resort hotels in the mountains in the early twentieth century.

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Amos Frye built the Frye-Randolph House in Bryson City in the middle 1890s. Bryson City is the county seat of Swain County, a sparsely populated area located in the heart of North Carolina's Smoky Mountains. Swain County was formed in 1871. Bryson City, originally called Charleston, became the county seat although it was not incorporated until 1887.¹

Amos Frye was one of Swain's most prominent early citizens. He was born in 1853 in Iredell County. Frye was an attorney, a businessman, and perhaps, Swain County's largest landholder. He was the first president of Bryson City's Citizen's Bank, and opened the first motion picture theater in the town. Active in a variety of civic movements he was a Mason and was a member of the Presbyterian Church. He was best known in the area as an attorney, however. Frye owned a considerable amount of land which was included in the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. He was an ardent supporter of the movement to create the park, a project which culminated in the dedication of the park by President Roosevelt in 1940, five years after Frye's death.²

In 1895 Frye married Lillian Rowe of Rowan County. Miss Rowe was the daughter of a Methodist minister. A brother, Dr. Gilbert T. Rowe served for many years as dean of Bible Studies at Duke University.³ She attended the University of North Carolina, from where she graduated in 1913.⁴ In August of 1911 she received her license to practice law. Believed to be the first licensed woman attorney in North Carolina, she joined her husband's law firm.⁵ Like her husband, Mrs. Frye was active in a number of civic affairs, and was an active proponent of the park.⁶

In the early 1920s the Fryes built an inn in Bryson City. The Fryemont Inn was opened in 1923 and was considered "the outstanding hotel west of Asheville."⁷ With the advent of good roads into the county in the 1920s and the creation of the park in the 1930s, Swain County became a leading tourist county, and the Fryemont Inn became one of the mountain's leading tourist facilities. Mrs. Frye was primarily responsible for the operation of the inn.⁸

Amos Frye died in 1935. His wife survived him until 1957. She continued to practice law and operate the inn until shortly before her death. The Fryes had one child, Lois Frye who in 1924 married John Randolph, a young attorney in her father's law firm.⁹

John Peyton Randolph was born in Burnsville November 22, 1895. He was educated in Bryson City and at Wake Forest, and studied law under Mrs. Frye's direction. He served in the Ninth Infantry in the First World War. He was in the North Carolina House of Representatives as a Democrat in 1933. Afterwards he and his wife moved to Washington, D.C. where he was an attorney for the Federal Trade Commission for 28 years.¹⁰

The Randolphs inherited the Frye property upon the death of Mrs. Frye.¹¹ John Randolph retired from the practice of law around 1960 and returned to Bryson City, where he lived in the old Frye House and operated the Fryemont Inn. The Inn was leased for a period in the 1960s to a Mrs. Logan. However, the inn was unsuccessful under her management, and Randolph reacquired control.¹² In 1967 he sold the property to William Dillard,

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a contractor from Sylva.¹³ Dillard continues to own the inn, which is operated by his daughter Catherine Dillard Collins. Mrs. Collins has continued the Inn's reputation for good food with, what one observer calls, "a blend of sawmill and sophisticate, traditional and innovative."¹⁴

In the early 1970s John Randolph sold the Frye House to his niece Ruth Randolph Adams, keeping a life tenacy for himself. Randolph died in March of 1978. Mrs. Adams and her husband Bill Adams continue to live in and own the house.

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FOOTNOTES

¹ Lillian Franklin Thomasson, Swain County: Early History and Educational Development (Bryson City, N.C.: N.p., 1965), 55-60, hereinafter cited as Thomasson, Swain County. Telephone interview with Mrs. Ruth Adams, December 10, 1980, notes in file, hereinafter cited as Adams interview.

² Adams Interview; Asheville Citizen, September 21, 1935; Carlos C. Campbell, Birth of a National Park in the Great Smokey Mountains (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1960), 138-139.

³ Swain County Marriage Index; Asheville Citizen, June 12, 1957.

⁴ University of North Carolina Alumni Directory, compiled and published by the Alumni Office of the General Alumni Association (Chapel Hill: Alumni Office, 1954), 302.

⁵ Records of the Supreme Court of North Carolina, Raleigh, N.C; Thomasson, Swain County, 67; Asheville Citizen, June 12, 1957.

⁶ Adams Interview; Asheville Citizen, June 12, 1957.

⁷ Bill Sharpe, A New Geography of North Carolina (Raleigh: Sharpe Publishing Company, 4 volumes 1954-1966), I, 466, hereinafter cited as Sharpe, New Geography of North Carolina.

⁸ Sharpe, New Geography of North Carolina, I, 466-467; Thomasson, Swain County, 66-67.

⁹ Asheville Citizen, September 21, 1935, June 12, 1957; Adams Interview; Swain County Marriage Index.

¹⁰ Charlotte Observer, December 1, 1968; H. M. London (ed.), North Carolina Manual (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1934), 194-195.

¹¹ Swain County Will Book 2, p. 98.

¹² Adams Interview; Charlotte Observer, December 1, 1968.

¹³ Swain County Deed Book 88, pp. 364, 442.

¹⁴ Charlotte Observer, August 24, 1978.

¹⁵ Adams Interview.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approx. 3.4

Quadrangle name Bryson City, N.C.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

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Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property consists of two separate but adjoining tracts of land of approximately 2.6 and 0.8 acres (approximately 3.4 acres total) containing the house, the inn, and associated landscaping. See attached plat from the Swain County Register of Deeds Office for boundary configuration.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

Property description, significance summary, and criteria assessment by Michael name/title Southern, Restoration Specialist; Historical Research report by Jim Sumner, Researcher organization N.C. Division of Archives and History date July 8, 1982

street & number 109 E. Jones Street telephone 919/733-6545

city or town Raleigh, state North Carolina 27611

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *William S. Phipps*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date Dec. 8, 1982

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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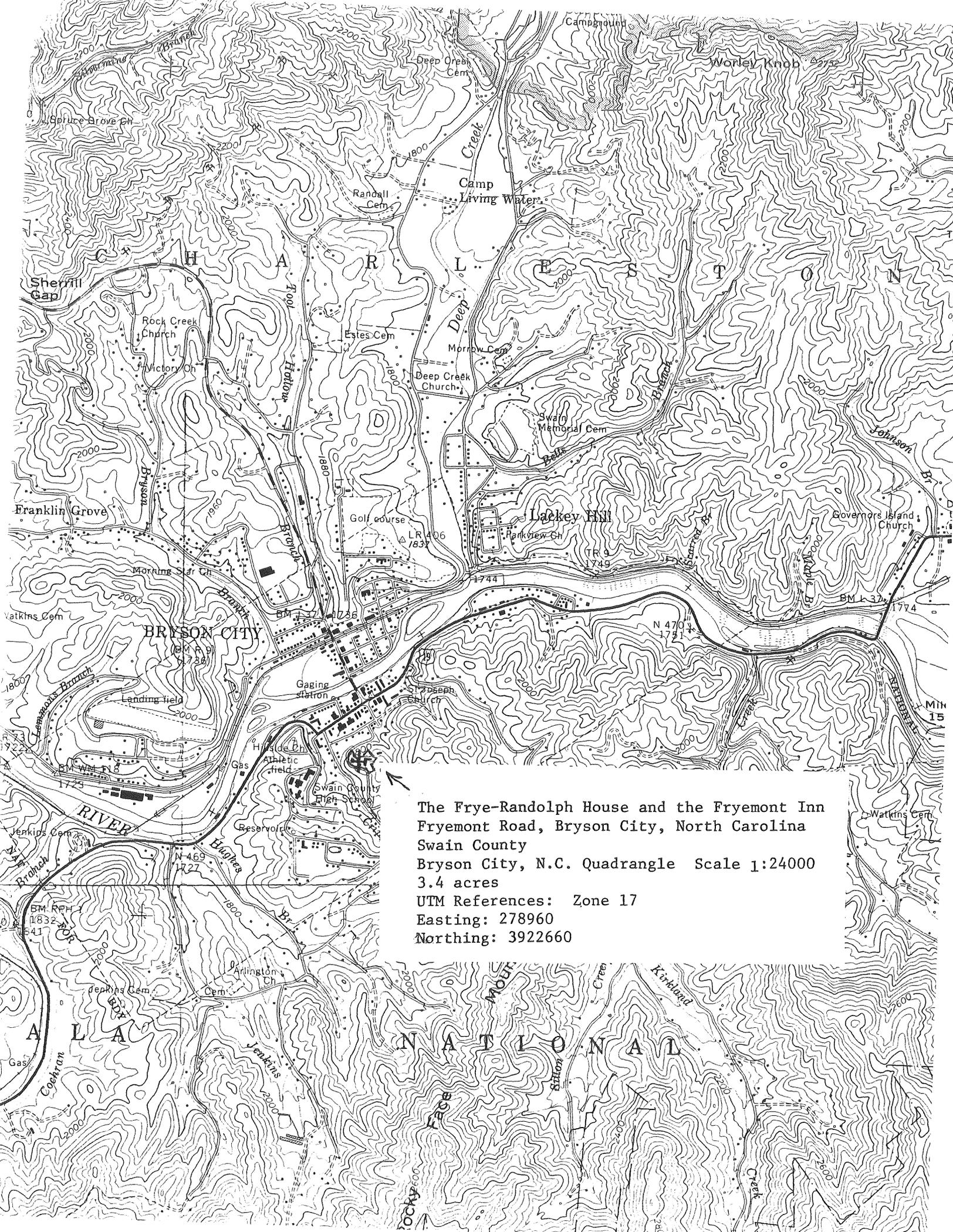
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The Frye-Randolph House and the Fryemont Inn
 Fryemont Road, Bryson City, North Carolina
 Swain County
 Bryson City, N.C. Quadrangle Scale 1:24000
 3.4 acres
 UTM References: Zone 17
 Easting: 278960
 Northing: 3922660



