

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Highlands Inn
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Northeast corner Main St. and Fourth St. N/A not for publication
city, town Highlands N/A vicinity
state North Carolina code NC county Macon code 113 zip code 28741

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

William E. Finley
Signature of certifying official

November 5, 1990
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. 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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: hotel

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Late Victorian Vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls weatherboard

concrete

roof asphalt

other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Continuation Sheet Highlands Inn, Macon County, N.C.Section number 7 Page 1

The Highlands Inn is sited on the northeast corner of Fourth Street and Main Street in the town of Highlands, NC. The building looks to the south across Main Street, which is a broad thoroughfare with parking spaces on sides and down the center. The frame, rectangular building, approximately 130 feet by 85 feet, is three stories high with two- and three-story wings and rear additions of both weatherboard and concrete block, and is distinguished by a two-story porch across the entire facade. The first floor of the porch is the town sidewalk, of concrete, overhung by a second story porch. Both levels are supported by square posts. At the first story they are braced by square half-length posts with tapered tops and at the second story the posts are smaller, resting on wooden plinths. The roof of the second story porch is flat, without a ceiling, and the exposed rafter ends are carved. The second floor railing of horizontal boards recently replaced the original balustrade with turned balusters, which is to be returned to the building after repairs.

The original Inn, built in 1880, comprises the three-story, central section of the building. This section has an asphalt shingled gable roof that is slightly splayed, although the eaves and molded raking boards are not. The foundation is of coursed ashlar piers with rubble infill. The ashlar is visible above the level of the sidewalk on the facade. A two-story and basement ell with gable roof projects to the rear from the central block. It also has an ashlar foundation and carved rafter ends, indicating that it was constructed at or near the time of the central section. On the facade, the first story is covered with German siding; second and third stories and the rear ell are lapped weatherboard. Originally there were two interior end stuccoed brick chimneys. The chimney in the east end has been removed. On the facade, a wide, plain frieze runs under the eaves. It is beaded where it joins the top portion of the third story windows. Windows on the second and third stories, and in the projecting rear ell, are six over six; on the first story they are generally one over one, probably installed during renovations about 1936. A triple window that is two over two in the middle section appears to the left of the main entrance to the Inn, probably dating also from 1936. The entrance door, near the center of the main block, has a molded surround and transom. Other windows and doors have plain surrounds.

About 1900 the dining area of the Inn was enlarged by the addition to the east end of the original building of a three-story flat-roofed wing with a second dining room on the first floor and guest rooms above. A two-story office wing with flat roof was added to the west

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end of the facade about 1936. The original porch was continued across both office wing and dining area. (See Exhibit for key to additions.)

The office wing (1936) contains two offices on the first floor and guest rooms on the second floor, and has German siding on the first story and weatherboard on the second. A three-bay storefront occupies the west end of the lower elevation. It contains a central door with paneling and large single pane of glass, flanked by large, three over three windows. Beneath the windows is vertical planking. Windows on the second floor of the west wing are one over one; on the first floor of the west elevation are several six over six windows apparently moved from the west wall of the original building at the time of the 1936 renovations.

In 1950 a three-story addition was added to the east of the 1900 dining room, replacing the east end of the wrap-around porch. This addition continued the design of the 1900 addition, including the porch of the 1880 section. The addition provided a foyer for the dining room and bedrooms above. At about that time, the porch floor on the facade was replaced with a concrete sidewalk and Main Street was paved to the sidewalk. Nevertheless, the sidewalk has continued to serve as front porch for the Inn.

In 1985 additions were made to the rear of the Inn to accommodate guests. A three-story, weatherboarded wing containing twelve guest rooms, each with small porch to the rear, was constructed to the rear of the Inn and connected to the lobby by a sunroom or atrium, which replaced a rear porch. A two-story and basement dinner theater of concrete block was constructed behind the 1900 and 1950 additions and three firestairs were added. The guest room addition and the dinner theater addition were built flush with the rear or north wall of the original projecting ell of the 1880 Inn.

The main entrance door to the Inn remains on the main facade and opens from the sidewalk to two steps which lead up to the lobby floor. Originally these two steps were outside the Inn proper and led from the porch. Close to the entrance door is the original open string stairway leading to the second floor. It has a quarter turn with winder. A heavy walnut rail and newel post distinguish the stairway. The lobby itself, approximately 32 feet by 30 feet, has a fireplace with replacement mantel of "French provincial" design on the west wall and opens to the rear through a pair of French doors to the sunroom, which connects the lobby to the new guest wing and firestair. To the right of the lobby is a double dining room with the original

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fireplace. The 1880 mantel has been replaced with a similar mantel of pine and the chimney has been removed above the roofline. Beyond the second dining room is the entrance to the dinner theater wing which contains a staircase with iron railing leading from the street level to the dining room level. Behind the dining rooms and theater entrance are the large kitchen, firestair and large dinner theater with stage. All interior first floor walls are plaster and floors in the 1880 block are pine and cherry. Door and window surrounds are plain. Many old paneled doors remain.

West of the lobby but not connected to it are the two office spaces added about 1936. The office space next to the lobby has a single door on the facade, no windows and a narrow stairway leading to the second floor apartment or guest rooms. West of the office, directly on the corner of Fourth and Main Streets, is the four-room Tartan Museum, which runs for 50 feet north along Fourth Street.

In 1989-90, several small guests rooms on the second and third floors of the central block of the Inn were joined together to form larger rooms and baths. The transverse hall plan survives, but the stairway from second to third floor has been relocated to the rear of the second floor and a hallway formed around it which parallels Main Street. Walls are plaster and window and door frames are plain. Some second floor windows on the main facade have been formed into doors opening to the porch. Four air conditioning units have been inserted in the lower portion of the facade wall on the third floor. The rear ell remains much as it was when built in 1880. The first floor contains the large kitchen. On the second floor a hallway divides very small guest rooms with six over six windows and leads to a single bathroom at the end of the hall.

In 1985, a building of weatherboard with six over six windows and conical roof was built on the north lot line of the Inn property, to the rear of the guest room wing. It is octagonal in design and opens to a paved garden area with small pool. The gazebo shares the garden area with a two-room and bath guest house, built also in 1985. It has a low hipped roof and paired one over one windows. A wood deck connects the guest house with the guest room wing. Each building is a single story.

A number of structural changes have been made to make the Highlands Inn conform to present-day ideas of comfort and entertainment in the mountains, but these changes are evident only from the rear of the building, where the balconies of the new guest wing, the massive

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concrete block of the dinner theater wing and one firestair are obvious. (See Exhibit) On the Main Street elevation and the Fourth Street elevation, the Inn appears as it did in 1936 when the office wing was added, with the exception of the east wing added in 1950. The original front porch of the Inn has been continued across additions unchanged except for the second story balusters. Molded door surround at the entrance door, carved rafter ends and beaded frieze have been carefully preserved, as has the one remaining chimney and six over six windows. On the interior, the configuration of lobby, dining rooms and kitchen remain as originally constructed. On the upper floors, the rear ell remains as constructed; the rooms in the main block have been enlarged and one stairway relocated. In spite of these changes, the Highlands Inn continues to convey its historic character of the 1880s through the 1930s, and occupies a central place in the town of Highlands and in its heritage.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1880-1940

Significant Dates

1880
1900
1936

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Significant Person N/A

Architect/Builder Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

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Section number 8 Page 1 Highlands Inn, Macon County, NC

Summary

The Highlands Inn is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment and Recreation. Built in 1880, it is one of the oldest continuously operating resort inns in western North Carolina and the oldest west of Flat Rock. One of the first buildings to be constructed, and still the largest, in the town of Highlands, the Inn has attracted summer visitors and convalescents for 110 years, and represents the development of the recreation and health industry in western North Carolina, the major income-producing activity in the region. The frame, three-story building with gable roof and rear ell features a two-story porch on the facade. About 1900 a second dining room was added and in 1936 and 1950 wings were added at the east and west ends of the facade. With each addition, the two-story porch was continued across the facade. In 1985 a three-story guest wing of weatherboard and a two-story dinner theater wing of concrete block were added to the rear of the building, where they are not visible from Main Street. In spite of these changes, the building clearly conveys its character throughout the period of significance of 1880 to 1940.

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Section number 8 Page 2Entertainment/Recreation Context:

As early as the turn of the nineteenth century, wealthy people in South Carolina and Georgia discovered the delight of mountain coolness and began to visit western North Carolina when the summer heat of the lowlands was at its worst. Health-seekers also heard about the climate, said to be helpful to sufferers of consumption and other respiratory diseases. John Lyon, a distinguished English botanist, was one of the first individuals to come to Asheville for his health, arriving about 1800 and dying in Asheville in 1814.(1) After the opening in 1828 of the Buncombe Turnpike, a toll road from Greenville, Tennessee to Greenville, South Carolina, "Great entourages of servants and fine carriages with refined passengers" traveled over the road to Asheville to visit the city and the resorts which were being built at the mineral springs of the mountains.(2) In 1827 the sulphur springs four miles west of Asheville were discovered and shortly after that date a rambling resort hotel was built which, by 1848, could accommodate 200 guests.(3) Built about 1830, Alexander's Inn, downstream on the French Broad River from Asheville, was a summer resort in the hot months and a stock "stand" and tavern in the fall, when drovers led and pushed herds of hogs and flocks of turkeys south along the Turnpike to Charleston and Augusta.(4) A hotel was built at Hot Springs in Madison County before 1830; it flourished until after World War II. "Thousands came who were not ill. They came because of the good food, the dances, the pleasant company, and the recreational attractions of the hotel."(5) The Woodfield Inn, the oldest operating inn in the Asheville vicinity and west, was built about 1850 on the Buncombe Turnpike in Flat Rock, now US 25.

As settlers pushed farther into the mountains of western North Carolina, inns were established for the benefit of the traveling public and for the refreshment of summer visitors. By 1830, Franklin, settled in 1828 as the seat of Macon County, reported the opening of a large inn, the Junaluska Hotel.(6)

The advent of the railroad into western North Carolina in 1880 marked the region's beginning of two decades of frantic building of inns which provided stop-overs for travelers on the several lines offering rail travel west and north from Asheville. By 1882 the railroad connected Asheville with Waynesville, 30 miles west of Asheville, stopping en route at George Smather's Turnpike Hotel near Candler (1882) (7). At the turn of the twentieth century, North Carolina west of Asheville was sprinkled with mountain resort inns and spas,

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including the White Sulphur Spring Hotel, c. 1886 in Waynesville and Carrier Springs Hotel at the sulphur springs near Asheville, c 1887. The Mount Beulah Hotel, built in Dillsboro in 1884 and later renamed the Jarrett Springs Hotel, and the Balsam Inn, 1908, were each built near the railway right-of-way. One of the most famous resort establishments of the region, the Fairfield Inn at Sapphire Valley was opened in 1896 without benefit of railroad or hot springs. It was followed in 1905 by the Toxaway Inn, which achieved national renown.(8)

The Highlands Inn, constructed in 1880, continued the tradition of providing summer quarters for convalescents and tourists who sought the cool, healthful climate of the mountains. "These picturesque inns catered to a clientele who sought the cool mountain air summer after summer, and indeed generation after generation of the same families returned to their favorite inn in the mountains."(9) The Highlands Inn was the first inn to be built in a town designed for the tourist and summer visitor and was soon followed by other inns and boarding houses. In 1882 James Rideout opened the Satulah House and in 1883 Lee's Inn, which stood in Highlands until 1982, was opened by H. M. Bascom. Islington House, later called the King's Inn, opened in 1883. Private homes became boarding houses before the turn of the century; the Central House, built as a residence for David Norton in 1878, and the Phelps House, constructed in 1885, were two of the most famous.(10) Of these early inns in Highlands, the Highlands Inn, King's Inn and Central House, and Phelps House remain.

Today only a few of these early inns remain in the vicinity of Asheville and west of that city. The oldest remaining is the Woodfield Inn in Flat Rock, still in use for tourists and summer visitors (in the Flat Rock Historic District, National Register 1973). The Jarrett Springs Hotel (now the Jarrett House, National Register 1984) and the Highlands Inn thrive, as do the several late nineteenth century inns and boarding houses in Highlands, but the Balsam Mountain Inn (National Register 1982), although standing, is not in operation. Toxaway Inn is no longer standing and the Fairfield Inn (National Register 1982) was destroyed in the mid 1980s. The Highlands Inn remains the oldest inn west of Flat Rock. It continues to occupy a prominent location in Highlands and to draw summer visitors from all over the United States.

Historical Background:

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Samuel Truman Kelsey (1832-1921) and Clinton Carter Hutchinson (1833-1909) arrived in the area now known as Highlands in February, 1875. In March of that year they purchased 839 acres of unbroken land and proceeded to lay out a town of 1 1/2 square miles with the four borders coinciding with the four main compass directions. Legend tells that Kelsey and Hutchinson, who had founded Ottawa, Kansas, in 1866 and Hutchinson, Kansas, in 1871, had theorized that the population hub of the eastern United States would one day be at the intersection of lines drawn between New York City and New Orleans and between Chicago and Savannah. At that intersection was the 839 acre parcel where they intended to found a community. Thus was Highlands born. Kelsey and Hutchinson embarked on a nation-wide advertising campaign for Highlands, utilizing pamphlets and newspaper and magazine advertisements which praised the land for its agricultural possibilities, the magnificent scenery, good building materials, inexpensive labor costs and good water power for mills and machinery. The pure water, pure air and equable climate made Highlands attractive for health reasons as well.(11)

On April 12, 1880, Kelsey and Hutchinson sold land they held in common to Joseph Hallack for due compensation "and the building of a hotel."(12) Hallack is reputed to have been the brother of General Henry W. Hallack, general-in-chief of the Army of the Potomac in the early years of the Civil War.(13) Hallack purchased lots 301 to 311 in the Town of Highlands, running along the north side of Main Street from the corner of Fourth Street and Main Street. Hallack built the inn that summer of native pine, a three-story weatherboard building approximately 30 feet by 60 feet, with two interior end chimneys and a gable roof. In September 1880, Hallack sold the hotel property to John Norton, including in the sale the entire north side of Main Street from Fourth Street to Fifth Street.(14) In 1882 Norton sold lots 303 to 313, containing the hotel, to Joseph Fritts and included a strip of land seven feet by fifty feet from the lot on the corner of Fourth and Main Streets, lot number 301.(15)

In spite of Kelsey's and Hutchinson's intentions to found a year-round community, Highlands rapidly became known as a summer resort and health center. In 1885 Joseph Fritts advertised his hotel, called Highlands House, as a "Health resort for winter and summer...where... the health-giving power of our pure air, spring water and grand scenery has no equal, Winter or Summer. Invalids who go to Florida in winter seeking health, will do well to stop here and get it; also better fare at less than half the cost."(16)

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By 1883 Highlands could boast of a post office, two hotels, a newspaper, a grist mill, a lumber mill, and various other stores and businesses.(17) In 1886 Fritts sold the Highlands House, as he called it, to Eliza B. Wheaton of Bristol, Massachusetts, and in 1889 James Rideout sold Mrs. Wheaton the entirety of lot 301, which allowed the hotel building to expand later to the corner of Fourth Street and Main Street.(18) Mrs. Wheaton was an aunt of Mary Chapin Smith, wife of John Jay Smith of Highlands, and in 1890 Mrs. Wheaton sold the Inn property to Mary Chapin Smith, who renamed it Highlands Inn.(19)

John Jay Smith, born in Pennsylvania in 1853, moved to Highlands about 1883 and set up a saw mill and factory for sash, doors, flooring and siding. His saw mill was the first in Highlands and he "furnished material for every house built in Highlands for over thirty years after his arrival."(20) Smith was also a surveyor who located the roads leading to Highlands. He was a member of the town board, mayor of Highlands for three terms, postmaster and Macon County commissioner as well as a grocer and wood-carver.(21) During the thirty-five years he and his wife operated the Inn, Smith enlarged the building, adding a second dining room next to the original dining room and making guests rooms on the second and third floors above it. For themselves, the Smiths built a residence several doors south of the Inn, a house which still stands.

In 1925 Mary and John Jay Smith sold the Highlands Inn to A. J. Davis and Mrs. F. M. Allen for \$12,500, comprising lots 301 through 307, its present configuration.(22) After the opening of the Highlands Country Club in 1928, Highlands became known as "Atlanta's playground" and continued to prosper, despite the Depression which affected most of the country. By 1932 there were four other sizeable inns in addition to the Highlands Inn in the town and a number of boarding houses.

In 1936 Mrs. Davis sold the property to J. Harvey Trice and Frank B. Cook.(23) Cook at once added a two-story wing with flat roof to the west end of the facade of the Inn. This wing has two offices, each with a door to the sidewalk. The larger office on the corner was used by Cook for his real estate business and contained an apartment on the second floor, now guest rooms. In 1950 Cook enclosed the two-story porch which had once wrapped around the east corner of the facade and added a third floor. This wing formed an entrance room from the street for the second dining room and bedrooms on the second and third floors. At about that time, Main Street was paved and the first floor of the porch on Main Street became a concrete sidewalk.(24) Frank

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Cook and his wife, Verna, operated the Inn for twenty-nine years and in 1969 sold the property to Helen Aberdeen Major, who had been employed by the Cooks for a number of years.(25) Later owners were Rye and Kathryn Page and Glenn and Shannon Arnette.(26) The property was purchased in 1989 by Edward and Patricia Benton, of Highlands, who are completing a renovation of the building.(27)

FOOTNOTES

1. Swaim, Douglas, ed., Cabins and Castles: The History and Architecture of Buncombe County, North Carolina, p. 35.
2. Ibid., p. 16
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.D
5. Van Noppen, John J. and Ina W., Western North Carolina Since the Civil War, p.388
6. Asheville Citizen-Times, June 21, 1976.
7. Swaim, op. cit., p. 24.
8. Arthur, John Preston, Western North Carolina: A History, pp.491-507.
9. Owens, Margaret, Ten County Historic Resources Reconnaissance, p. 19.
10. McIntosh, Gert, Highlands , North Carolina: A Walk into Past, pp. 157-158.
11. Cobb, Carol Carre Perrin, Highlands Historic Inventory, p. 7.
12. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book P, page 568.
13. Arthur, op. cit., p. 568.
14. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book Q, p. 357.
15. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book, p. 520.
16. The Highlander, Highlands, NC, October 2, 1885.
17. Cobb, op. cit., p. 7.
18. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book V, p. 363; Book Y, p. 448.
19. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book AA, p. 85.
20. The Highlander, vertical file, Hudson Library, Highlands, no date.
21. Ibid.
22. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book M-4, p. 42.
23. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book C-5, p. 231; Book C-5, p. 473.
24. Cook, Mary Bascom, interview, March 13, 1990, Highlands, NC
25. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book I-8, p. 146.
26. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book V-11, p. 13; Book X-14, p. 200.

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27. Macon County Register of Deeds, Book I-18, p. 211.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property .45 acre

UTM References

A
 Zone Easting Northing

C

B
 Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The Highlands Inn property comprises all of parcel number 3663 in the Town of Highlands as shown on a map from the Office of Tax Assessor, Macon County, and on the accompanying orthophoto map of the Town of Highlands, published by the Macon County Planning Department.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property comprises all the land historically associated with the Highlands Inn.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

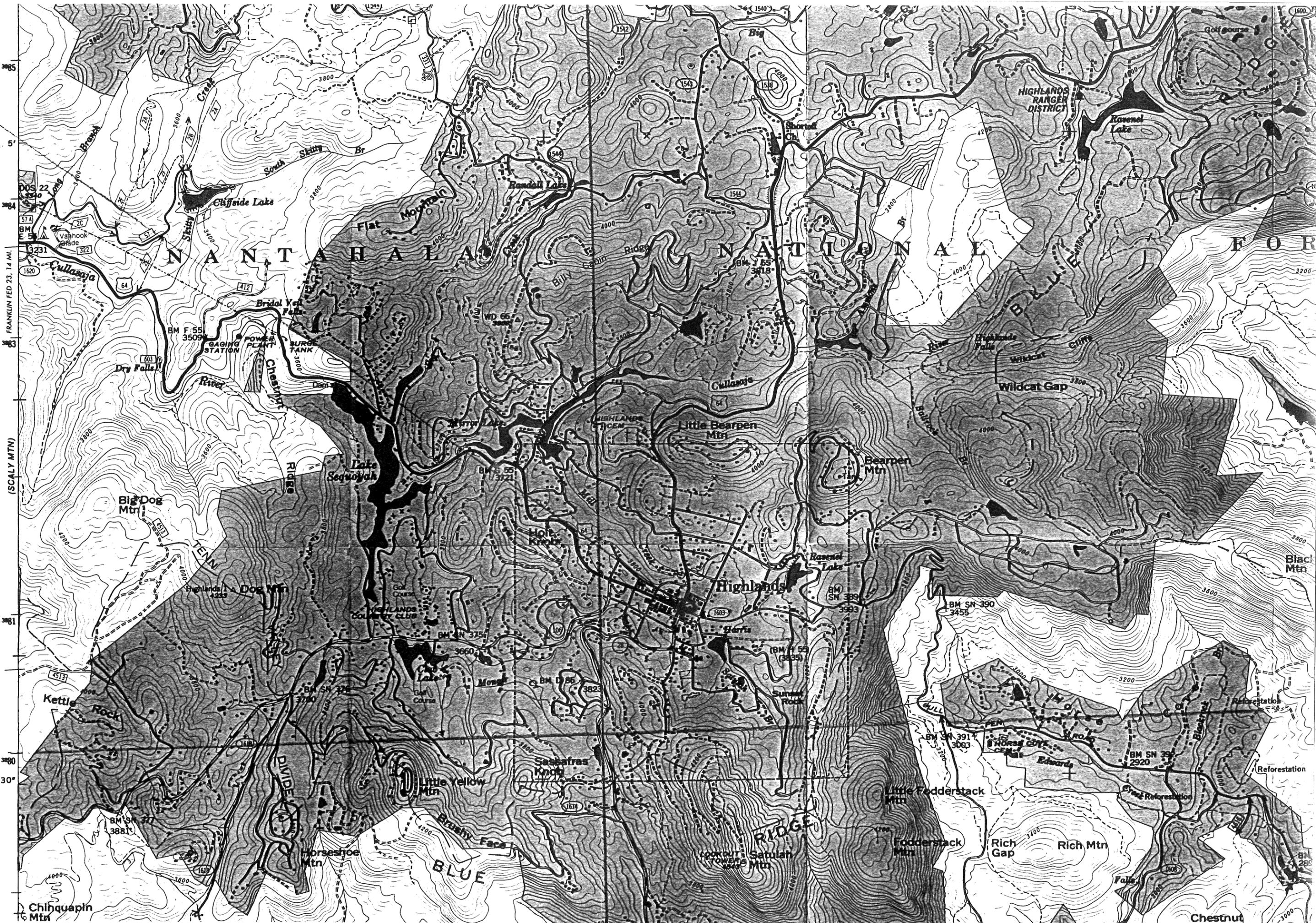
name/title Carolyn A. Humphries, Consultant

organization _____ date April 1, 1990

street & number Route 2, Box 175 telephone 704, 526-9462

city or town Highlands state NC zip code 28741

Highlands Inn
HIGHWAY
QUAL



FRANKLIN FED 23, 14 MI.
(SCALY MTN)

Zone 17
1:24,000

NATHING
3880900

EASTING
299650

2'30"

Chinquapin Mtn

Chestnut

