

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Daniel Boone Hotel

and/or common

2. Location

street & number East King Street

not for publication

city, town Boone

vicinity of

congressional district

Tenth

state North Carolina

code 037

county Watauga

code 189

3. Classification

Category

☐ district
☒ building(s)
☐ structure
☐ site
☐ object

Ownership

☐ public
☒ private
☐ both
Public Acquisition
☐ in process
☐ being considered
N/A

Status

☐ occupied
☒ unoccupied
☐ work in progress
Accessible
☒ yes: restricted
☐ yes: unrestricted
☐ no

Present Use

☐ agriculture
☐ commercial
☐ educational
☐ entertainment
☐ government
☐ industrial
☐ military
☐ museum
☐ park
☐ private residence
☐ religious
☐ scientific
☐ transportation
☒ other: unoccupied

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. C.W. Powell

street & number 5003 Butternut Road

city, town Durham

vicinity of

state North Carolina 27707

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Watauga County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Boone

state North Carolina 28607

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
☐ excellent	☒ deteriorated	☒ unaltered	☒ original site
☐ good	☐ ruins	☐ altered	☐ moved
☐ fair	☐ unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Daniel Boone Hotel is a substantial, simply detailed 1920s commercial hotel prominently sited on a hill above East King Street in the downtown commercial district of the mountain community of Boone. The two-and-one-half story brick structure features a modest degree of exterior and interior Colonial Revival detail, but for the most part is a utilitarian building without special architectural elaboration. But its prominent location and its rich historical associations make it one of the chief landmark buildings of Boone.

The hotel is built on a U-plan under a hip roof, with flanking wings, three-bays wide, projecting forward from the long, five-bay main body of the building. The brick veneer is laid in stretcher bond. A one-story lobby area occupies the space between the wings, fronted in turn by a one-story, five bay porch which extends forward almost on line with the wings.

The porch provides the chief decorative focus of the exterior. Circular-in-section Tuscan posts support the wide frieze, and a simple handrail with square-in-section balusters connects the posts. A roof balustrade extends the entire width of the porch, featuring short paneled posts and vertical square-in-section balusters flanking starburst inserts centered over each bay of the porch.

Windows throughout the building are of six-over-six sash, occurring singly and in pairs, and placed in simple frames set between brick sills and lintels. The central front entrance under the porch is a double leaf, glazed French door under a twelve light transom.

A one-bay, hip roof porte-cochere shelters the east side entrance, with posts identical to those of the front porch. Here a double-leaf glazed door is set under a tall twenty-four light transom. There is no entrance to the west elevation. The long rear elevation contains service entrances.

Three hip roof dormers surmount the southern slope of the roof above the porch and between the wings. Identical dormers are centered on the southern slopes of the hips of each of the projecting wings. All have six-over-six sash and sides covered with wooden shingles.

The large open lobby occupies the central portion of the building between the wings and is the only interior space given any special embellishment. This area features an intersecting, exposed beam ceiling, which gives the appearance of coffering, with the undersides of the beams paneled; deep crown moldings carry along the tops of the beams. Wide paneled pilasters are evenly spaced along the walls, marking the divisions between window and door openings, and meeting the beams where they abut the walls. The reception desk, recessed into the north wall, features a shallow segmental arch cover flanked by paneled pilasters. Wide enclosed stairs rise at either end of the north wall into the second floor section of the building above and behind the lobby. Fireplaces with

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corbelled brick mantels are centered on the east and west ends of the lobby. French doors open into adjacent rooms and hallways. A skylight centered in the flat roof provides sun.

Other areas of the building retain their original but simple fabric. Halls and guest rooms have plastered walls with simple baseboards. Doors to guest rooms are the two panel (one-over-one) type, set in simple frames with transoms.

No other structures are located on the property.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1925 **Builder/Architect** C. B. Kearfoot

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

First opened on May 16, 1925, the Daniel Boone Hotel was the town of Boone's first major tourist hotel and for many years was the center of social activity in the Watauga County seat. The northwestern mountain region of North Carolina was long isolated due to problems of access with both rail and highway traffic, but Boone finally began to expand as a result of major improvements in hard-surface highway construction in the early 1920s. Twenty Boone area businessmen organized in 1923 to finance the construction of a modern resort hotel in response to the influx of tourism into the county. The group purchased a property in the center of town known as the Daniel Boone Park and engaged architect C.B. Kearfoot of Knoxville to design the structure. The simple hip roof, three story commercial brick hotel is prominently sited on a hill overlooking the town's business district. Abandoned in recent years, the building is now the subject of local efforts for rehabilitation and reuse for commercial or civic functions.

Criteria Assessment:

- A. Associated with the early twentieth century expansion of the tourist industry in northwestern North Carolina brought about by improved public highway access.
- C. The brick structure is a representative commercial hotel of the period with simple Colonial Revival detailing.

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The Daniel Boone Hotel was opened in the center of downtown Boone on May 16, 1925. For many years it was Boone's finest hotel and played an important part of the development of that county's prosperous tourist industry.

The 1920s was an important decade in the development of Boone and Watauga County. For many years the counties of Watauga, Ashe, and Alleghany were known as the "Lost Provinces." The area was remote and isolated from the remainder of the state. What roads did exist connected Watauga with eastern Tennessee rather than with western North Carolina. It was widely believed that a railroad would cure the county's ills, and agitation for one was long and loud. However, a practicable route could not be found into Watauga from the east, and it was 1917 when the Eastern Tennessee and Northwestern North Carolina Railroad came into Boone. The train was a narrow gauge railroad and existed primarily to transport lumber into eastern Tennessee. The road was sufficiently damaged in the 1940 flood to force its discontinuation.¹

Watauga did not fully break out of its isolation until the advent of the good roads movement of the 1920s. One historian has written: "Beginning with geographic isolation and the Lost Province, the one great imprisoning shackle was forever broken with the coming of modern hard surface roads--literally ribbons of gold."² The new roads made it possible for a tourist industry to develop in Boone. To encourage this development it was felt that Boone needed a modern hotel. One observer writes: "There was much enthusiasm over the prospect of building a new tourist hotel in Boone. It was felt that the development of a new hotel, located in a scenic part of the Northwestern Carolina Mountains, would lead to new opportunities within Boone and the surrounding area."³

Twenty local businessmen organized and incorporated as the Daniel Boone Hotel Company. W. H. Gragg was elected president of the group, which also included G. P. Hagaman, F. A. Linney, Dr. Anglers, L. L. Critcher, A. W. Smith, C. M. Critcher, G. I. Moose, S. G. Eggers, Smith Hagaman, I. G. Greer, John W. Hodges, W. A. Thomas, E. A. Poe, J. L. Qualles, R. C. Rivers, J. B. Taylor, E. N. Hahn, Frank Moore, and D. J. Cottrell. In 1923 the group purchased a valuable piece of property in the middle of Boone, known as the Daniel Boone Park. In 1924 the corporation raised \$100,000 in stock sales and in May of that year began construction of the hotel. C. B. Kearfoot of Knoxville was the architect.⁴

The Daniel Boone Hotel opened on May 16, 1925. The gala opening was attended by over 400 guests. The hotel was hailed as a fine luxury hotel. It catered to the increasing influx of tourists, but also served as the social center of Boone.⁵ The Depression caused problems for the hotel, and in 1935, due to "default in the payment of indebtedness," the Daniel Boone was sold. R. G. Finley and J. B. McCoy purchased the property for \$36,750.⁶ Finley and McCoy were absentee owners and the property was managed for them by Clarence Price. Mr. McCoy died in the late 1940s, leaving his half-ownership to his estate. At the present time McCoy's daughter Mrs. Emily McCoy Verdone owns half of the property, with Finley owning the other half.⁷

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The Daniel Boone Hotel was built primarily for tourists. Over the years, however, it evolved into a more Boone oriented hotel, serving as the town's center for dances, meetings, etc. In recent years much of the hotel's space has been filled with overflow students from Appalachian State University. Since 1974 the hotel has been unoccupied. However, it has been maintained by a caretaker force. Future plans for the hotel are uncertain, but it is hoped that the structure can be used by the Boone community.⁸

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FOOTNOTES

¹Daniel J. Whitener, History of Watauga County, North Carolina 1849-1949 (Boone: N.P., 1949), 46-49, hereinafter cited as Whitener, History of Watauga County; Asheville Citizen-Times, January 26, 1969. The narrow gauge railroad was called "Tweetsie," supposedly because of the sound of its whistle. In recent years a restored portion of this railroad has become one of the area's most successful tourist attractions.

²Whitener, History of Watauga County, 49.

³Mr. Joe Miller, "Daniel Boone Hotel, unpublished manuscript, 1, hereinafter cited as Miller, "Daniel Boone Hotel."

⁴Miller, "Daniel Boone Hotel," 1-2.

⁵Miller, "Daniel Boone Hotel," 2.

⁶Miller, "Daniel Boone Hotel," 2-3; Watauga County Deed Book, 44, p. 407.

⁷Telephone Conversation with Mr. Rogers Whitener, October 23, 1980, notes in file, hereinafter cited as Whitener Conversation.

⁸Whitener, Conversation.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Approx. 1 acre

Quadrangle name Boone, N.C.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

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1	17
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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property is a one acre lot fronting East King Street and measuring approximately 230' square, and includes the hotel, its terraced front lot on East King Street, and associated landscaping.

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

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

Michael T. Southern, Survey Specialist

name/title Jim Sumner, Researcher

Survey and Planning Branch-Archaeology

organization and Historic Preservation Section

date April 9, 1981

North Carolina Division of Archives and History

street & number 109 East 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

William S. Pritchett

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 4 Nov 82

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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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Watauga County Deed Books. Microfilm copy. Raleigh: State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh.

Whitener, Daniel J. History of Watauga County, North Carolina, 1849-1949.
Boone: N.p., 1949.

Whitener, Rogers. Telephone conversation with. Notes in file.

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(ZIONVILLE 220-SW)



