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 (former) Randall Memorial Building
   other names/site number The Village Cafe

2. Location
   street & number Greenway Court
   city, town Blowing Rock
   state North Carolina
   code NC
   county Watauga
   code 189
   zip code 28605

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
   □ buildings
   □ sites
   □ structures
   □ objects
   □ Total
   Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

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.
   Signature of certifying official
   Date

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
Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Social: civic

Architectural Classification
Bungalow/Craftsman

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Commerce/Trade: restaurant

Materials (enter categories from instructions)
foundation
walls
roof
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The (former) Randall Memorial Building, now the Village Cafe, is sited off the east side of Main Street in Blowing Rock, on a lot directly behind the lots which front on Main Street. The rear of the building sits directly on Greenway Court, a dead end street running into the center of the city block from Sunset Drive and paralleling Main Street. To reach the front of the Randall Memorial Building, one must descend several steps from the sidewalk of Main Street and follow a flagstone path shaded by hemlocks and deciduous trees. The path leads to a flagstone patio on which the (former) Randall Memorial Building and a small tool house, once a Girl Scout hut, front. The patio, used to serve luncheon guests, is surrounded by flowering plants, hemlocks and large trees. The site is completely shielded from Main Street and the two buildings themselves shield the view of Greenway Court. Parking for the Village Cafe is on Main Street.

The (former) Randall Memorial Building is sited along the north and east boundaries of its lot, the entrance door facing south. It is a weatherboarded, one and one-half story building, approximately 18 feet by 60 feet, with a steep gable roof on the story and one-half main block and a very tall hip roof on a one-story wing which projects on the west elevation. Gable ends are shingled. A large square porch with gable roof and lattice-work at trios of square-post corner supports and railing shields the entrance, and an exterior stairway rises from the entrance porch to a landing at the second story. The landing is gable-roofed, with one side of the roof extended in a shed over the staircase; a matchstick railing marks the stairs and landing. The gables of both porches are shingled and carry small cutwork ornament at their peaks, as does the west gable of the main block. About 1920 the original building was extended on the east eleven feet, and faced with German siding on the first story and shingles above. The gable roof of the main block, which has a boxed cornice, was continued over the addition with exposed rafter ends, but the addition is set back slightly from the original front and rear elevations. On the original block there is a central uncoursed ashlar chimney and each flank of the roof has two shingled, gable-roofed dormers. Corner boards at the side elevations are plain. The roof is asphalt shingles and the foundation is fieldstone piers with stone infill, covered in places with stucco.

See continuation sheet
The building has a variety of windows. Many of the original windows exist in the first story and are 16 over one. The replacement front door, which opens from the square entrance porch, has panels of glass, and on its west side, sheltered by the porch, is a fixed sash window of 32 small panes. In the early, east addition, windows are six over one with moveable sash or replacement eight-pane sash hinged at the top so that they are pushed out to open. A door under a shed canopy in the east gable end has panels below nine panes of glass. The hip-roofed wing on the west elevation contains 16 over one windows on the north and south elevations, and a horizontal panel containing nine over nine panes on the west wall. The windows in the north dormers have been replaced by sliding eight-pane sash and there are top-hinged eight-pane sash in the south dormers.

From the entrance porch on the south elevation one steps directly into a large room with exposed-rafter ceiling, now used for dining. To the right is a large, free-standing fireplace and chimney. The firebox has a round-arched opening and on its face and sides the chimney is covered with rough stucco. The rear of the fireplace and chimney are uncoursed ashlar with evidence of stove flue holes. Originally the fireplace was flanked by partitions; these partitions were removed in 1990. To the left of the entrance door, a broad opening with plain surround leads to the room in the west, hip-roofed wing, which is open to the flush board-sheathed planes of the roof. A plate rail runs along three sides. The opening to the room has been enclosed with a pair of French doors flanked by multipaned and paneled windows, all with frosted glass. All walls in these two original rooms are clear chestnut planks, vertical to the clear chestnut chair rail and horizontal above. In the wing to the west, the walls have been painted white; in the entrance room walls have been stripped. Flooring in these rooms is poplar with pine detail. The hearth is concrete. All window surrounds are plain; some have been repaired or replaced.

Behind the chimney is the large restaurant kitchen, occupying a large space created by the removal of the original east end wall so that the room extends into the east addition. Broad stairs of chestnut were constructed in 1990 from the rear of the kitchen to the second floor. Floors in the kitchen area are a mixture of woods covered with vinyl tile.

The second floor of the (former) Randall Memorial Building contains two large rooms and two restrooms. The stairs from the kitchen open to a small square hall at the rear of the building. Restrooms open off this hall. Two large room with dormer windows, now used for dining, occupy the second floor.
These rooms rise the full height of the plank-sheathed roof with its exposed beams. The room to the west contains a five-sided opening which looks down into the west wing. From the central room of the second floor, a door leads to three steps running down to the landing on the outside of the south elevation of the building, where stairs lead down to the entrance porch.

The room in the west wing contains a trap door which leads to a flight of open wood steps to a cellar, walled with uncoursed ashlar. The cellar, which does not extend to the main block of the building, has a new wood floor and is used for storage.

A gable-roofed, one-room garden house, built in 1938 as a Girl Scout hut, sits at right angles to the main building, facing the garden and patio. It is faced in German siding, roofed in asphalt shingles, and is approximately ten feet by fourteen feet, with a shed-roofed porch across the facade. The porch is supported by four plain posts. The central door of the three-bay facade is paneled wood and glass, and is flanked by 16 over 16 windows. On each end of the building are two top-hinged windows with six-pane sash. Directly opposite the entrance door of the little building is a large fireplace of coursed ashlar with concrete hearth. There are no windows in the east, or rear, wall of the building. The floor is pine, in the interior and on the porch. (1).

No exterior changes except for in-kind replacement windows and a brick flue or the north elevation were made to the building between the 1920s and 1990, when exhaust equipment was installed on the north side. This exhaust equipment is the only noticeable modern exterior alteration. In 1990 the interior of the building was modified to accommodate the restaurant. A partition which flanked the fireplace was removed as well as the original east wall of the building, forming a large kitchen space, and a stairway was added to provide access to the second floor. These interior changes are not visible from the facade of the building, where it retains its integrity.
The (former) Randall Memorial Building, now the Village Cafe, of Blowing Rock, North Carolina, is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C because it represents the efforts of early residents to improve the economic conditions of the people of the western North Carolina mountains and because of its architecture. The weatherboarded, one and one-half story cottage with steep gable roof, 16 over one windows and hip-roofed, one-story wing, was built in 1907 by the local Episcopal Church congregation to serve as a workshop and training center for mountain handicrafts, where local mountain people could weave, spin and finish articles which would then be sold to tourists or to markets out of the state. The building, which has served as workshop, library, social club and residence, is virtually unchanged on the exterior. The interior has been modified to accommodate a small restaurant. The Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina sold the Randall Memorial Building in 1936, but it remained in use for many years as an important local civic building, housing the Blowing Rock Community Club and area Girl Scouts.

[X] See continuation sheet
SOCIAL HISTORY CONTEXT:

After the Civil War, northern philanthropists became interested in the living conditions of the mountain people of western North Carolina, and in their schooling, which the state of North Carolina could ill afford at that time. As early as 1867, George Peabody of Baltimore gave $1,000,000 to assist educational efforts in the impoverished South, adding another million in 1869. The incentive offered by the Peabody Fund in North Carolina encouraged the operation of some excellent schools in the mountain region. (2) Before the turn of the century, various northern congregations of the major religious denominations had established schools which eventually became Mars Hill College, Duke University, Warren Wilson College, Brevard College, Lees McRae College and Montreat-Anderson College, all flourishing today. Several preparatory schools existing today also owe their founding to northern church leaders. (3)

At the same time, others, mainly from outside the state of North Carolina, saw that the production of mountain handicrafts could provide cash income for poor mountain women. In 1895, Miss Frances Goodrich, impressed by the beauty of mountain hand-woven coverlets, organized mountain women north of Asheville to weave, use vegetable dyes and train younger women in the old and nearly-forgotten methods of hand weaving. From Miss Goodrich's efforts has grown the Southern Highlands Handicraft Guild. Shortly after 1900 Mrs. George Vanderbilt organized the Biltmore Homespun Industries, still operating in Asheville. Dr. Rufus Morgan, an Episcopal priest who founded the Appalachain School in Penland in 1914, added a handicraft school to that institution, becoming later the Penland School of Handicrafts. The John C. Campbell Folk School, founded in Brasstown in 1922, has become particularly noted for its woodcarving classes and exhibits. (4) Today, the Penland School and the John C. Campbell Folk School still teach weaving and carving and a large number of shops in western North Carolina sell the handmade work of mountain men and women, including wooden articles, furniture, cornshuck dolls and toys, table mats, chair covers, baskets, musical instruments, pottery, iron kettles and cranes, farm tools and guns. These shops provide an outlet for mountain people who receive cash income for their efforts.

Blowing Rock also was the scene of efforts to aid the local mountain people in improving their economic condition. At the turn of the twentieth century, the rapidly growing tourist industry and wealthy summer visitors with their lavish lifestyles provided seasonal work for the local residents, but the life of the year-round resident, generally a farmer or lumberer, was harsh. Mountain farms were small and subsistence-oriented.
A region-wide depression during the 1890s and a movement by the Blowing Rock residents to fence livestock caused the Watauga Democrat to report in 1897: "Our opinion now is that we in Watauga (County) will see the hardest times next year that we have ever seen financially... during this fall our people have sold all their cattle and sheep, not even saving our cows and heifers. What we will have next year to sell for money is a serious question to consider." (5)

In 1907 The Rev. William Rutherford Savage, Episcopal priest for Blowing Rock and Valle Crucis, opened the Randall Memorial Workshop in Blowing Rock, which provided facilities for spinning, weaving, basketry and woodwork. Savage "encouraged the preservation of traditional crafts and acted as wholesaler for local people, taking their products on consignment to neighboring states." (6) In this activity, Savage continued the tradition of churchmen working to improve the living condition of the mountain people of western North Carolina.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The Episcopal Church Diocese of North Carolina was organized in 1817, and as early as 1842 its presence was felt in Watauga County when a boarding school for mountain boys was established by the church at Valle Crucis, 18 miles from Blowing Rock. A large farm was acquired and buildings erected. Eight candidates for the ministry were educated there. The school was later closed, only to be revived in 1893 and a mission established. (7) The Episcopal mission included a congregation at Blowing Rock which shared space with the Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian congregations of the little mountain town. (8)

By 1900, Blowing Rock was a town of 805 people, in 166 households. Most of the households were headed by a farmer or farm laborer, but the town contained also a shoemaker, several blacksmiths and carpenters, a photographer, a Sawyer, teamsters, druggists, a "jewelry man", butcher, silversmith and several clerks. (9) Many local residents were employed during the summer season by the rapidly developing tourist industry, which flourished in Blowing Rock, especially around the hotels and boarding houses of the day, including the Green Park Hotel (NR), the Blowing Rock Hotel, the Rhododendron Inn and the Watauga Inn. (10) Considered one of North Carolina's most popular resorts, by 1900 the area had become the summer home to wealthy families from the Carolinas, including the Cone family of Greensboro, the Cannon family of Kannapolis and the Snyder family of Charlotte. These families, with their large establishments and lavish lifestyles, also provided extensive summer employment and some year-round employment for area residents. (11) By 1900 Blowing Rock was a
full-fledged tourist community, embarking on a tourist boom which would continue through the 1920s, but in the surrounding regions were mountain people struggling to survive on rugged land and subsistence farming.

In 1902, the Rev. William Rutherford Savage moved into this area as the priest in charge of the missions at Valle Crucis and at Blowing Rock. Savage was born in Pass Christian, Mississippi, in 1854, and died in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1934. His parents were the Rev. Thomas Staughton Savage (1804-1880) and Elizabeth Rutherford Savage (1817-1899), missionaries for the Episcopal Church and residents of New York City. Rev. Thomas Savage was also considered a scientist in his day, studying and lecturing on anthropology and biology. William Rutherford Savage had two brothers, one a physician in New York City and the other the assistant curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. His sister was a noted artist. Savage was educated at the Episcopal Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia, and before coming to Blowing Rock, spent some fifteen years in Virginia Beach, Virginia, ministering to the men of the United States Coast Guard and their families. "The entire family were intelligent, well-educated and artistically-inclined people." (12)

Savage and the Episcopal mission in Blowing Rock were "extraordinarily active." (13) Under his direction a building housing a library and reading room (no longer standing) was constructed on Main Street in Blowing Rock, next to the old post office. (14) This building came to be considered as the "Episcopal Church" until the construction of the Stringfellow Memorial Church, now St. Mary's of the Hills, in 1919. For several years, Savage wrote a column for the county newspaper, the Watauga Democrat, in which he frequently admonished the local residents for poor church attendance. He wrote, "... our village people, with rare exceptions, do not go to church in summer, especially in the morning. Why is it? Because they think themselves too good to worship along side the gay summerer or not good enough - I wonder which?" (15) However, Savage's efforts in Blowing Rock were well received and it was said of him that "... Mr. Savage has done more than any other to create a fraternal feeling among all the denominations of the mountains." (16)

Savage's work in Blowing Rock is best remembered for the establishment of a workshop and exchange for the use of mountain people, where they might market their handicrafts, selling to tourists as well as to markets out of the region. The workshop initiated by Savage became a craft center with facilities for spinning, weaving, basketry and woodwork.
"Galacking", picking the leaves of the galax plant, which were widely used in floral decorations, became a major pursuit for the mountain people, and Savage established a mail order business for the sale of the leaves. He advertised galax leaves through the Southern Churchman magazine and sent leaves to President Theodore Roosevelt in the White House. Savage acted also as a wholesaler for other local crafts, taking the products of the mountain people on consignment to neighboring states. (17)

In 1907 Savage opened the Randall Memorial Building to facilitate the exchange of mountain crafts and to provide a place for work, education and distribution of the crafts. The little weatherboarded building was completed in the fall of 1907 by unidentified local builders. (18) It was similar in style to Chetola Manor, built in 1892 by William W. Stringfellow of Alabama, and a masterpiece of craftsman design (19) (Chetola Manor stands today on North Main Street in Blowing Rock, the center of a resort complex.) The Randall Memorial Building originally contained three rooms on the main floor, the center room containing a large fireplace, and two rooms on the second floor, reached by an outside stairway. In this "workshop" the manual industries of the mountain people are preserved and fostered. There are an old-fashioned hand loom, spinning wheels, etc., in this building. The Blowing Rock Exchange is nearby and its object is to afford a greater opportunity to the home people to sell home-made articles, such as woven rugs, coverlids, embroidered bedspreads, laces, articles made of laurel, baskets, etc. In it are a library, a fine collection of Indian relics and mineral specimens. In front of the Workshop is a garden of rare wild and cultivated plants and one of the two sundials in Watauga County." (20)

Savage organized the first public library in Blowing Rock, and a Men's Social Club, less formal than the local Masons. The local men would enjoy "a couple of hours of companionship before the biggest open fireplace in Blowing Rock (in the Randall Memorial Building), eating apples and swapping yarns, guessing riddles and 'smoking the weed.'" (21) The collection of Indian relics and the garden of rare plants were Savage's work.

The Workshop was built behind the Episcopal reading room building, and was named for William George Randall (1860-1905), whose estate may have provided funds for construction. Randall, one of North Carolina's most noted artists, was born in Burke County and under severe economic hardship obtained a degree from the University of North Carolina at
Chapel Hill. After teaching school in Marion, North Carolina, he studied art in New York City and went abroad to study in France, England and Germany. In 1894, he was engaged to paint several portraits for the University of North Carolina and continued in portrait painting. He spent summers in Blowing Rock and moved there about the turn of the century. (22)

The Rev. William R. Savage left Blowing Rock for Virginia in 1917. The Randall Memorial Building continued to be used by the Episcopal Church as a craft center, library and community center, and occasionally as the home of the rector. About 1920 a two-story addition was added to the east end of the building, providing a kitchen on the first floor and a third room and bath on the second floor. Sometime during this period, dormer windows were added to the second floor. In 1936 the building was sold by the Diocese of Western North Carolina to the Blowing Rock Community Club. (23) The Club had been organized in 1926 as an outgrowth of the "Community Service Fund", and was the original sponsor of the Blowing Rock Charity Horse Show, an "important addition to Blowing Rock's attractions." (24) The Community Club also sponsored a small lending library in the building. (25)

About 1938, Mrs. C. V. Henkel, a resident of the apartment on the second floor of the Randall Memorial Building, had the one-room cottage constructed on the property for use by the local Council of Girl Scouts. (26) In 1946, the Randall Memorial Building was sold by the Community Club to Charles and Mary Beck, residents of Atlanta and Savannah, who made the building their summer home. (27) Mary Beck's heirs sold the building in 1983 to Frances Feely, who transferred the property in 1990 to Ann Esposito, the present owner. (28) Ms. Esposito has repaired and adapted the building for use as the Village Cafe.
FOOTNOTES

1. Thompson, Deborah, Watauga County Historic Architecture Survey, inventory, NC Division of Archives and History, 1989.


3. Ibid., pp. 153-165.

4. Ibid., pp. 186-192.


6. Ibid., p. 43.


9. Ibid., p. 21


11. Ibid., p. 22.

12. Savage, William R., Collection, in the Southern Historical Collection of Manuscript Department, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.


14. Savage, William R., Collection, op. cit A letter to Savage from Rt. Rev. Junius Horner, Bishop of the Diocese of Western North Carolina March 7, 1903: "I do not think it (a lot on Main Street) a suitable place for a church, but for a kind of reading-room and lecture hall it would serve very well."


FOOTNOTES - (Continued)

17. Buxton, op. cit., p. 43.
18. Watauga Democrat, September 5, 1907
20. Thompson, op. cit., p. 217
24. The Blowing Rocket, op. cit., p. 16.
25. Ibid
The Randall Memorial Building, now the Village Cafe, property comprises all of parcel 2792 in the Town of Blowing Rock as shown on a copy of the map from the Office of Tax Assessor, Watauga County, map 2807.
Bibliography


Burke County Historical Society, The Heritage of Burke County, Morganton, 1986.


Clear, Helen, interview, July 24, 1990, Blowing Rock.

Savage, William R., Collection, Southern Historical Collection of the Manuscript Department, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Thompson, Deborah J., Watauga County Historic Architecture Survey and Inventory manuscript, 1989.


Watauga County Register of Deeds, Watauga County Courthouse, Boone.

Watauga Democrat, September 5, 1907.
(former) Randall Memorial Building, parcel 2792
ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty
Medium-duty
Light-duty

Poor motor road
Wagon and jeep track
Foot trail

U. S. Route
State Route

In developed areas, only through roads are classified

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

BOONE, N. C.
36081-B6-TF-024

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DMA 4856 II NW-SERIES V842