

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 Chase-Coletta House  
other names/site number Lillie Ray Chase House

#### 2. Location

street & number 108 Town Square not for publication N/A  
city or town Burnsville vicinity N/A  
state North Carolina code NC county Yancey code 199 zip code 28714

#### 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 4/30/04  
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:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
___ 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): _____		

**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	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	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)

DOMESTIC/single-dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single-dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow/Craftsman

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

roof Asphalt

walls Wood/weatherboard; Wood/shingles

other Synthetics/vinyl

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

**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.)

Property is:

- 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.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1914-15

**Significant Dates**

1915

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Western Office, Archives & History

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 0.65 ac

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>382800</u>	<u>3975270</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____

3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing

4	_____		
	See continuation sheet		

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Clay Griffith

organization Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc. date February 24, 2004

street & number 825-C Merrimon Ave., #345 telephone (828) 281-3852

city or town Asheville state NC zip code 28804

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Dr. Frances Coletta

street & number 233 East Elm Street telephone (231) 924-4153

city or town Fremont state MI zip code 49412

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

### Section 7. Narrative Description

The Chase-Coletta House stands at the southeast corner of Burnsville's Town Square, between the present Yancey County Courthouse and the Nu-Wray Inn (NR, 1982). The property is the only remaining private residence located on the public square. Six or more prominent residences stood on the square in the early twentieth century, situated largely on the north and east sides of the square. A tall hedgerow of hemlocks surrounds the property on the north, west, and east sides while a row of pine trees stretches along the back property line. The hemlocks were planted to provide a measure of privacy some time after the new courthouse was completed in 1965. The hedgerow on the north and west sides of the property between the house and the Nu-Wray Inn replaced an original privet hedge. The house stands on a fairly level lot that begins to slope away from the house at its rear. The lower rear portion of the lot was the site of a vegetable garden, but no traces of the garden remain. The property once contained a variety of fruit trees but only one tree each—pear, apple, and walnut—survive. A grapevine and many of the other pear, peach, and plum trees have been removed. A short section of a wooden picket fence and gate painted white fronts the sidewalk surrounding the square. A concrete walkway at the northwest corner of the property leads from the gate to the front entrance of the house.

#### 1. Chase-Coletta House. 1914-1915. Contributing building.

The one and one-half story bungalow is built on a rectangular plan under a front gable roof with large gable dormers centered on either side. The house rests on brick foundation walls and is constructed of frame with weatherboard siding and shingles in the gable ends. The shingle patterns alternate rows of square and staggered shingles. The house also features triangular purlin brackets in the gable ends and exposed rafter ends. A porch supported by paired square posts on brick piers extends across the north (front) of the house, where it is recessed, and wraps around the entire west side of the house, where it is sheltered by an attached hip roof. Crossed blocks that project from each face of the paired, square porch posts form the capitals and suggest the blocky style of Gustav Stickley's early Mission style furniture. A screened enclosure at the southwest corner of the porch served as a sleeping porch. Hinged panels on the bottom portion of the walls enclosing the sleeping porch could be opened to increase ventilation and air circulation. An inset, screened, corner porch opens from the kitchen at the southeast corner of the house. Windows are single one-over-one double-hung sash on the first floor with the exception of paired windows in the middle bedroom on the west side. Two small fixed-pane windows on the west elevation provide light to closets on the interior. Window and door surrounds throughout are plain with a slightly projecting bull nose molding across the top of each frame. One-story polygonal bays centered under the east and west dormers and east of the central entrance on the main façade provide variation. The main front entrance and a secondary entrance on the west side, both single-leaf doors with a large single pane over a single panel, are topped by a transom. Exterior, red brick chimneys with corbelled stacks rise on the east and south sides of the house. On the second floor

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   7   Page   2  

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

windows are three-over-one double-hung sash that are tripled on the front and rear gable ends and paired on the two side gables. The front gable end contains a louvered vent high in the gable end and square fixed-pane windows flanking the tripled double-hung sash, but is notable for the wooden flower box frame that projects beneath the windows. The flower box frame is supported by four vertical posts with triangular brackets that—along with the crossed top joints—replicate the design of details found elsewhere on the house, specifically the purlin brackets and porch post capitals. The rear gable end contains smaller double-hung sash flanking the central grouping of three three-over-one windows.

On the interior, a central hall extends from the northeast front room to a bathroom at the rear of the house. The living room, den, and dining room, which are located toward the front of the house, flow together spatially, separated by broad openings with square wood columns rising from dwarf walls. These rooms remain intact with oak flooring, dark stained woodwork, picture rails, and original light fixtures and hardware. The house is heated with radiant steam heat and the original radiators remain exposed and well maintained. The brick fireplace in the living room, part of a brick surround, is topped by a corbelled mantel shelf. Built-in bookshelves flank the fireplace beneath the adjacent windows. The dining room features a bay window, grid-beamed ceiling, built-in china cabinet, and a plate rail above tall wainscoting composed of two tiers of recessed panels. A door at the rear of the dining room leads through the pantry to the kitchen, which was remodeled in the latter part of the twentieth century. Some original cabinetry in the kitchen and pantry survives, including a kitchen cupboard with a vented exterior opening to help keep stored food cool during the summer months. The kitchen opens onto the rear inset screened porch at the southeast corner of the house.

The center hall features a straight run of stairs to the second floor with Craftsman style newel and square balusters and a large corridor window that pierces the wall between the hall and kitchen to provide light in the hallway. Three bedrooms are located on the west side of the house behind the den with doors opening from the hallway. The front bedroom, located immediately behind the den, features a bay window and decorative oak mantel for which there is no corresponding fireplace. A door to the exterior is located in one segment of the polygonal bay. An interior door leads to the adjacent bedroom, which also connects with the back bedroom. The back bedroom features a simple mantel over a small brick fireplace and an exterior door onto the sleeping porch. The bathroom located at the end of the hall contains the original ceramic tile, medicine cabinet, and tub. A large linen closet off the center hall is lined with shelves.

The second floor contains two additional bedrooms, bathroom, sitting parlor, closet, and unfinished storage space under the front gable. The second floor hall extends to the rear of the house and is lit by a group of three windows in the rear gable end. The bathroom on the east side of the hall and the linen closet lined with shelves on the west side are long narrow spaces with windows also located in the rear gable end. The two bedrooms are entered from each side of the hall and occupy the space under the gable dormers. An unfinished room under the front gable of the house is used for storage and is lit by a group of three windows in the gable end. Doors in both knee walls of the room provide access to additional storage space, which is lit by small single-pane windows.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

A door beneath the stair in the hallway opens onto a stairway to the basement, which is also accessed by a door on the rear (south) elevation of the house. The basement exhibits plain brick foundation walls and interior brick piers. Additional brick walls partition the coal and furnace rooms. A built-in fixture for making butter and jelly also remains intact. Original wash tubs and wooden bins for storing apples and potatoes survive as well.

The house has undergone few changes since its completion. The primary alteration was the addition of vinyl siding over weatherboards on the first floor. The siding on the north and west sides, under the porch, was removed in 2002 and the original siding restored and repaired as necessary. The vinyl siding still in place on the south and heavily screened east sides of the house, not seen from the street, does not cover any window and door frames or obscure other details of the structure. The kitchen was updated some time in the late 1960s or early 1970s. The kitchen, however, retains many original features and design elements, including a large interior window illuminating the hallway, but with modern appliances added. With the exception of vinyl siding on the first floor of two sides of the house, the property remains highly intact.

### **2. Shed. Ca. 1925. Contributing building.**

Located to the southwest of the house and closely surrounded by mature vegetation, the shed is a single-pen frame building with a standing-seam metal gable roof. Rafter ends and flat purlins are exposed under the eave. German siding on the north and east sides is covered by aluminum siding while the south and west sides are sheathed with flush plank siding. A double-leaf wooden door in the northern end of the shed provides access although one leaf of the door has been covered by siding and is inoperable. The shed, which originally housed the family's milk cow, Rose, is now used for storage.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   4  

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

### Section 8. Statement of Significance

The Chase-Coletta House is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its architecture. Completed in 1915, the house is a prominent, well executed example of a Craftsman bungalow in Burnsville and possesses a high degree of integrity on both the exterior and interior. The property possesses many details typical of fully developed Craftsman style houses of the period including the dominant gable roof, triangular purlin brackets, a sleeping porch, and fine woodwork and oak paneling on the interior. Several details in the design of the Chase-Coletta House, however, distinguish the property from numerous other examples of simple bungalows and Craftsman-style houses found throughout Burnsville and Yancey County. The quality of the interior woodwork, bold treatment of the porch posts, generous proportions, and the full-width side porch are distinct elements of the house in comparison to the plainer, vernacular bungalows that appear more frequently as small farm houses throughout the county. The Chase-Coletta House is exceptional example of Craftsman bungalow for the quality of its original design, workmanship, and materials and for the high degree of architectural integrity that it retains.

#### *Historical Background*

Formed in 1833 from Buncombe and Burke counties, Yancey County was one of the earliest counties established in the western region of North Carolina. Yancey County's boundaries were altered throughout the mid-nineteenth century as several other counties were formed from land belonging to Yancey County. In 1872, when part of the county was annexed to Mitchell County, the present area of Yancey County was established. The Black Mountains, which stretch across the southern part of the county, are the highest in the eastern United States, but their steep terrain yields to fertile forests and farmland to the north as the ridges and streams fall toward the Toe River, which serves as the county's northern border. The South Toe River, Cane River, Jacks Creek, and Crabtree Creek flow through rich bottomland that has supported productive agriculture since the early nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

Burnsville, the county seat, occupies a central elevated site on the divide between the Cane River and the South Toe River. "Yellow Jacket" John Bailey conveyed one hundred acres for the county seat and the Town Square was laid out in 1834. Named in honor of Ottway Burns of Carteret County, a naval hero in the War of 1812, Burnsville stands near the geographical center of the county and continues to be the civic and economic center of community life.<sup>2</sup>

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Burnsville began to establish itself as a prosperous village. Visitors to Burnsville in 1870 could board at either Sol Carter's inn or G. D. Ray's hotel. Ray also

---

<sup>1</sup> Catherine W. Bishir, Michael T. Southern, and Jennifer F. Martin, *A Guide To The Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 239; and Edgar F. Hunter, Jr., "A History of Yancey Collegiate Institute" (Master's thesis, Appalachian State Teachers College, 1952), 1-3.

<sup>2</sup> Bishir, Southern, and Martin, 239, and Hunter, 4-5.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

owned a flour and grist mill in Burnsville. The town counted three barrooms, six dry goods stores, several boot and harness shops, four blacksmiths, and three tanning yards. Offices for doctors, lawyers and other businesses were located on the town square, along with a number of private residences. Burnsville Academy, a private school sponsored by the Methodist Church, stood north of the square on Academy Street.<sup>3</sup>

Although the railroads had crossed the Blue Ridge in 1880 and established Asheville as the regional center for rail traffic, tracks were not laid into the Toe River Valley until the early twentieth century. In 1902 the Carolina, Clinchfield & Ohio (CC&O) Railroad constructed a spur line from Erwin, Tennessee, to Spruce Pine in Mitchell County, which passed through northern Yancey County. The railroad opened new economic opportunities for Yancey County through the mining and timber industries and brought a wave of prosperity to the county through its improved connection with the outside world. By the late 1920s, however, most of the timber had been cut and rail service was either discontinued or significantly reduced.<sup>4</sup>

Yancey County's economy also benefited from a wealth of mineral resources lying beneath its surface, which were known to Native Americans but not extracted in significant quantities until the second half of the nineteenth century. In addition to gemstones, high-grade clay for ceramics, and small quantities of iron, large deposits of mica and feldspar were mined in Yancey and Mitchell counties. The quantity and quality of mica deposits in the region, including several varieties unique to the area, established North Carolina as a leader in mica production during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Similarly feldspar, originally considered a waste product of the mica mines, became commercially viable after the completion of the CC&O Railroad in 1911. Prior to 1911, the nearest grinding plant for feldspar was located in New Jersey and transporting the raw material was too expensive to be cost efficient. Feldspar, which must be ground into a fine powder before it is usable, was an important component of a number of products that were increasing in demand during the early and mid-twentieth century, including porcelain bathroom fixtures, abrasive cleaners, glass, and electrical insulators. A feldspar grinding plant opened in Erwin, Tennessee, in 1914 and by the 1920s five plants were operating in Yancey and Mitchell counties. In 1930, North Carolina produced 103,200 tons of feldspar, which accounted for fifty-two percent of the total amount produced nationally.<sup>5</sup>

Lillie Ray Chase (1877-1959) was one of six children of G. D. and Elizabeth Ray, proprietors of Ray's Inn on the square. The Rays purchased the hotel, which had been built in the 1830s, after the Civil War and significantly enlarged the building. Although the inn operated successfully during the late nineteenth century, G. D. Ray was also active in other local enterprises, including mica mining. The Ray Mine, one of the most productive in the county, was located roughly two miles south of Burnsville on Bolens

---

<sup>3</sup> Mitzi Presnell, "Yancey County" (Report, North Carolina Office of Archives & History Western Office, Asheville, n.d.), 34-35.

<sup>4</sup> Presnell, 32-33.

<sup>5</sup> Lloyd Richard Bailey, Sr., ed. *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley, Volume I* (Durham, NC: Lloyd Richard Bailey, 1994), 41-43; and Yancey History Association, *Images of Yancey: Pictorial History of a Western North Carolina County* (Burnsville, NC: Yancey History Association, 1993), 131.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

Creek. The Rays' eldest daughter, Julia, married William Wray of Shelby, bought out her siblings' interest in the hotel property, and renovated and modernized the inn, which reopened as the Nu-Wray Inn in 1915.<sup>6</sup>

Lillie Ray married Dr. William D. Chase (1872-1914) of Milligan College, Tennessee. Dr. Chase died of tuberculosis in 1914 while the couple was living in Tennessee, and Lillie Chase returned to Burnsville with her four children following his death. Mrs. Chase and the children lived in the Nu-Wray Inn for a year while the house was being built on a lot adjacent to the inn. The land for the house, originally an orchard adjoining the Nu-Wray Inn, had been given to Mrs. Chase by her father. Although the architect's name is unknown, Mrs. Chase hired a firm from Johnson City, Tennessee to design and construct the house and many of the materials for the house, including the brick, came from Johnson City. Either the architect or builder convinced Mrs. Chase to finish the second floor and wire the house for electricity, even though electric service did not come to Yancey County until 1918.<sup>7</sup>

Gladys Ray Chase (1909-2000), the oldest of William and Lillie Chase's four children, lived in the house from its completion in 1915 until her death in 2000. Gladys Chase was granted legal ownership of the house by her mother and three siblings in 1936, one month before she married Peter C. Coletta (1904-1975), a chemical engineer with the Feldspar Milling Company in Bowdage near Micaville. The Colettas raised their six children in the house. A daughter, Frances A. Coletta, the present owner, purchased the house from her mother in 1997.<sup>8</sup>

### *Architecture Context*

The architectural development of Yancey County reflects many of the common building patterns found in the mountainous counties of western North Carolina. The rugged terrain and rich river bottomlands generally dictated where early settlers established their farms, and over time the relative isolation of the area resulted in a landscape dotted with small subsistence farmsteads. Though the county was established early in the nineteenth century and the county seat laid out in 1834 around a public square, a lack of major transportation routes prohibited extensive growth and development in Burnsville, the only major town in Yancey County. The many communities located throughout the county were often built around a school, churches, general stores, or perhaps—as in the case of Micaville—an industrial enterprise. The predominant architecture of the county, therefore, are the many rural farmhouses and farmsteads found throughout the landscape.

Charles Dudley Warner traveled through Burnsville in 1887 and his published account, *On Horseback* (1888), contained a lengthy description of the community:

---

<sup>6</sup> Bailey, 383-84.

<sup>7</sup> Theresa Coletta, interview, December 2002.

<sup>8</sup> Yancey County Deed Book 297, page 70. Also France Coletta interview, May 2003; and T. Coletta interview.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

The country about Burnsville is not only picturesque, but very pleasing. Burnsville, the county-seat of Yancey . . . is more like a New England village than any hitherto seen. Most of the houses stand about a square, which contains the shabby courthouse; around it are two small churches, a jail, an inviting tavern with a long veranda, and a couple of stores.<sup>9</sup>

The first two courthouses were located on the square, which has been an open green since 1908 when a new courthouse was erected at the southwest corner of the square. The two-story Neoclassical Revival style courthouse (NR, 1979) now serves as the town hall. The tavern Warner refers to is Ray's Inn, a rambling antebellum hotel, owned and operated by G. D. and Elizabeth Ray. The Ray's oldest daughter, Julia, married William Wray of Shelby, bought out her siblings' interest in the business, and renovated and enlarged the inn, which reopened as the Nu-Wray Inn (NR, 1982) in 1915. The Colonial Revival-style inn remains one of the principal landmarks on the square. Another prominent commercial building situated on the square is the former Citizens Bank Building (NR, 1990), a three-story, yellow-brick Neoclassical Revival style building erected in 1925. Civic and commercial buildings continue to be concentrated on the square, including the present county courthouse built in 1965.<sup>10</sup>

The Chase-Coletta House survives as the only private residence located on Burnsville's Town Square. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Burnsville's residential development—a mixture of late Victorian and Craftsman styles—dispersed around the square. The oldest house in town is the ca. 1845 John Wesley McElroy House (NR, 1990), sited on a hillside one block west of the square. The Watson-Whisnant House (1898), the finest Victorian House in Burnsville, stood just east of the square and was built for E. F. and Cora Ray Watson, another of G. D. Ray's daughters. Unfortunately, the Watson-Whisnant House was dismantled and moved to Hillsborough, North Carolina, in November 2002. Two other houses built by children of G. D. and Elizabeth Ray still stand just off the square, but both of these properties have been altered substantially.

The Chase-Coletta House is a well-executed example of a Craftsman bungalow and distinguished by its prominent gable roof, deep wraparound porch, screened sleeping porch, and fine interior woodwork. In the early twentieth century, the Craftsman style grew from the influence of Gustav Stickley's *The Craftsman* magazine (1901-1916), itself an outgrowth of the Arts and Crafts movement that spread from England to the United States in the late nineteenth century. Through his magazine Stickley became the chief disseminator of Arts and Crafts beliefs in the United States, and his company, Craftsman Workshops, produced furniture that promoted design unity of both house and furnishings. He published house designs—complete working drawings and specifications—in *The Craftsman* that could be ordered from the company. Craftsman houses,

---

<sup>9</sup> Excerpted in Lloyd R. Bailey, Sr., ed., *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley, Volume II* (Durham, NC: Lloyd Richard Bailey, 1997), 70.

<sup>10</sup> Bishir, Southern, and Martin, 239-40.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

as they came to be known, represented the Arts and Crafts ideal of vernacular revival, honest expression of structure, responsiveness to site, and the use of local materials for comfortable domestic architecture that provided “the proper atmosphere for the pursuit of the simple life.”<sup>11</sup>

The Chase-Coletta House incorporates many of the elements promoted by Stickley and other proponents of “the Craftsman idea,” which asserted that creating a comfortable and secure home environment was the natural antithesis of the commercial and industrial expansion that was perceived by many reformers of the early twentieth century to be corrupting the nation and its citizens. Therefore, efforts to simplify the home—a direct response to the Queen Anne and late Victorian styles of the nineteenth century—were concentrated on removing applied ornament from house designs. Stickley and others argued that the beauty inherent in fine craftsmanship and natural materials was sufficient decoration in itself; decoration that emphasized “the fundamental principles of honesty, simplicity and usefulness . . .” The typical exterior elements included a dominant roofline to define the scale of the house, augmented by deep eaves, multiple gables or dormers, eave brackets, exposed rafter ends, porches, sleeping porches, and bold porch posts. These features serve to convey a sense of shelter, connect the indoor and outdoor realms, and reference Japanese wood construction techniques, which were a common influence on early bungalows in California. All of these elements are present in the Chase-Coletta House, although the full-width side porch is atypical and likely related to the specific site at the corner of the Town Square and the relationship of the house’s owner, Lillie Ray Chase, to the adjacent inn that her father, G. D. Ray, owned and operated.<sup>12</sup>

The typical Craftsman interior elements consisted of the fireplace, open staircase, large living room, large windows, and built-in bookcases and cupboards. While the fireplace was considered the center of home life in Craftsman houses, the interior imagery was equally centered on the convenience of open floor plans, built-in furniture, and the warm, earthy tones of stained woodwork, hammered copper and brass fixtures, and mica lamp shades. The interior of the Chase-Coletta House is notable for its extensive interior woodwork and paneling, which is found throughout the house, but especially in the dining room with its tall, two-tier wainscoting, built-in cupboard, plate rail, and grid-beamed ceiling. The plan is somewhat unusual in its spaciousness, particularly on the second floor; the wide hall and staircase provide access to three bedrooms, bathroom, sitting area, and several storage areas under a front gabled roof with only two modest dormers.<sup>13</sup>

Many of the elements that make the Chase-Coletta House a fully-realized example of a Craftsman bungalow are not often found on the more prevalent bungalow houses found in Burnsville and Yancey

---

<sup>11</sup> Elizabeth Cumming and Wendy Kaplan, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, World of Art Series (New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 1991), 107, 122-124, 141-142.

<sup>12</sup> From an essay entitled “The Craftsman Idea” in Gustav Stickley, *Craftsman Homes, architecture and furnishings of the American Arts and Crafts Movement* (New York: Dover Publications, 1979), 194-205. Stickley originally published this volume as *Craftsman Homes* in 1909. Also see Robert Winter, *The California Bungalow* (Santa Monica, CA: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1980), 35-6, and Paul Duchscherer and Douglas Keister, *The Bungalow: America’s Arts & Crafts Home* (New York: Penguin Studio, 1995) 38-41.

<sup>13</sup> Stickley, 194-205. Duchscherer & Keister, 40-1.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   9  

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

County. The typical bungalow in Yancey County is smaller in scale and usually limited to one floor of living space with an attic. Though the front-gable roof and attached porch with square or tapered posts of the common bungalow examples are appropriate for the style, they usually do not possess an extensive side porch, functional sleeping porch, or Japanese influenced porch posts like that found on the Chase-Coletta House. Shingled gable ends and purlin brackets are occasionally seen on other examples around the county, but the prominent wood framed flower box appears to be unique to the Chase-Coletta House. Many other bungalows in Burnsville and in the county have undergone numerous changes including, most often, replacement doors and windows and the addition of vinyl siding. The Chase-Coletta House has also had vinyl siding applied over weatherboards on the first floor. The siding on the north and west sides, under the porch, was removed in 2002 and the original siding restored and repaired as needed. The vinyl siding still in place on the south and heavily screened east sides of the house, not seen from the street, does not cover any window and door frames or obscure other details of the structure.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page  10 

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

### Section 9. Bibliography

- Bailey, Lloyd Richard, Sr., ed. *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley, Volume I*. Durham, NC: Lloyd Richard Bailey, 1994.
- *The Heritage of the Toe River Valley, Volume II*. Durham, NC: Lloyd Richard Bailey, 1997.
- Bishir, Catherine W., Michael T. Southern, and Jennifer F. Martin. *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Western North Carolina*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Coletta, Frances. Freemont, MI. Interview, May 2003.
- Coletta, Gladys. Burnsville, NC. Videotape interview, December 1985.
- Coletta, Theresa. Burnsville, NC. Interview, December 2002 and May 2003.
- Cumming, Elizabeth and Wendy Kaplan. *The Arts and Crafts Movement*. World of Art Series. New York: Thames and Hudson Inc., 1991.
- Duchscherer, Paul and Douglas Keister. *The Bungalow: America's Arts & Crafts Home*. New York: Penguin Studio, 1995.
- Hunter, Edgar F., Jr. "A History of Yancey Collegiate Institute." Master's thesis. Appalachian State Teachers College, 1952.
- Nu-Wray Inn National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1982.
- Presnell, Mitzi. "Yancey County." Report. North Carolina Office of Archives and History Western Office, Asheville, n.d.
- Stickley, Gustav. *Craftsman Homes, architecture and furnishings of the American Arts and Crafts Movement*. New York: Dover Publications, 1979.
- Winter, Robert. *The California Bungalow*. Santa Monica, CA: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1980.
- Yancey County Land Records.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page  11 

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

Yancey County Register of Deeds.

Yancey History Association. *Images of Yancey: Pictorial History of a Western North Carolina County*.  
Burnsville, NC: Yancey History Association, 1993.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 12

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC

---

### Section 10. Geographical Data

#### Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is shown on the accompanying Yancey County Land Records map (PIN No. 082014342682000).

#### Boundary Justification

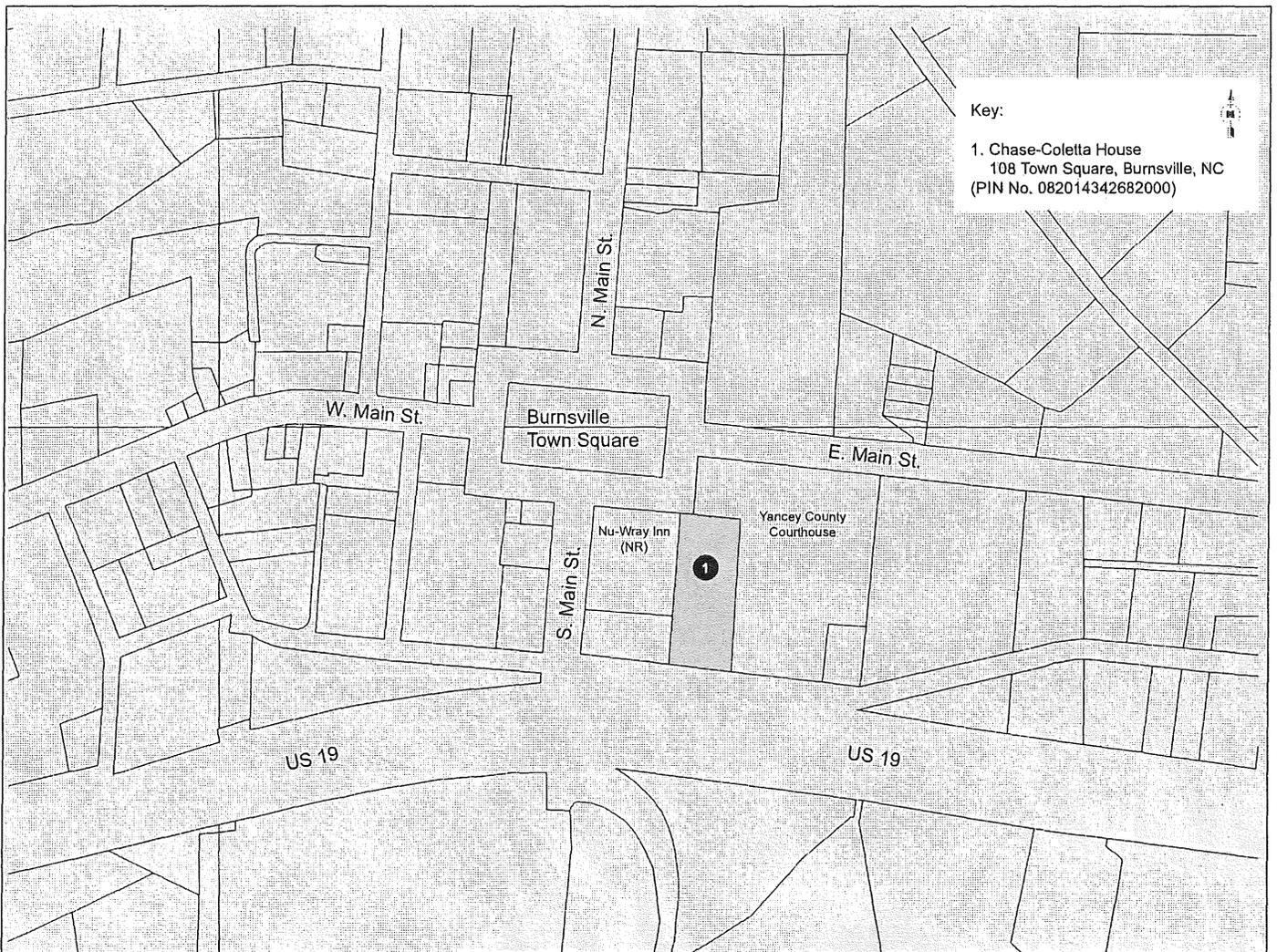
The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with Chase-Coletta House. The house was built on land belonging to Lillie Chase's father, G. D. Ray. Gladys Coletta acquired the parcel containing the house and shed—approximately 0.4 acres—from Lillie Chase and her siblings in April 1936, and three months later the Ray siblings conveyed the rear portion of the present lot (0.25 acres) to Mrs. Coletta. The entire 0.65-acre tract was conveyed to the present owner, Frances A. Coletta, in 1997.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

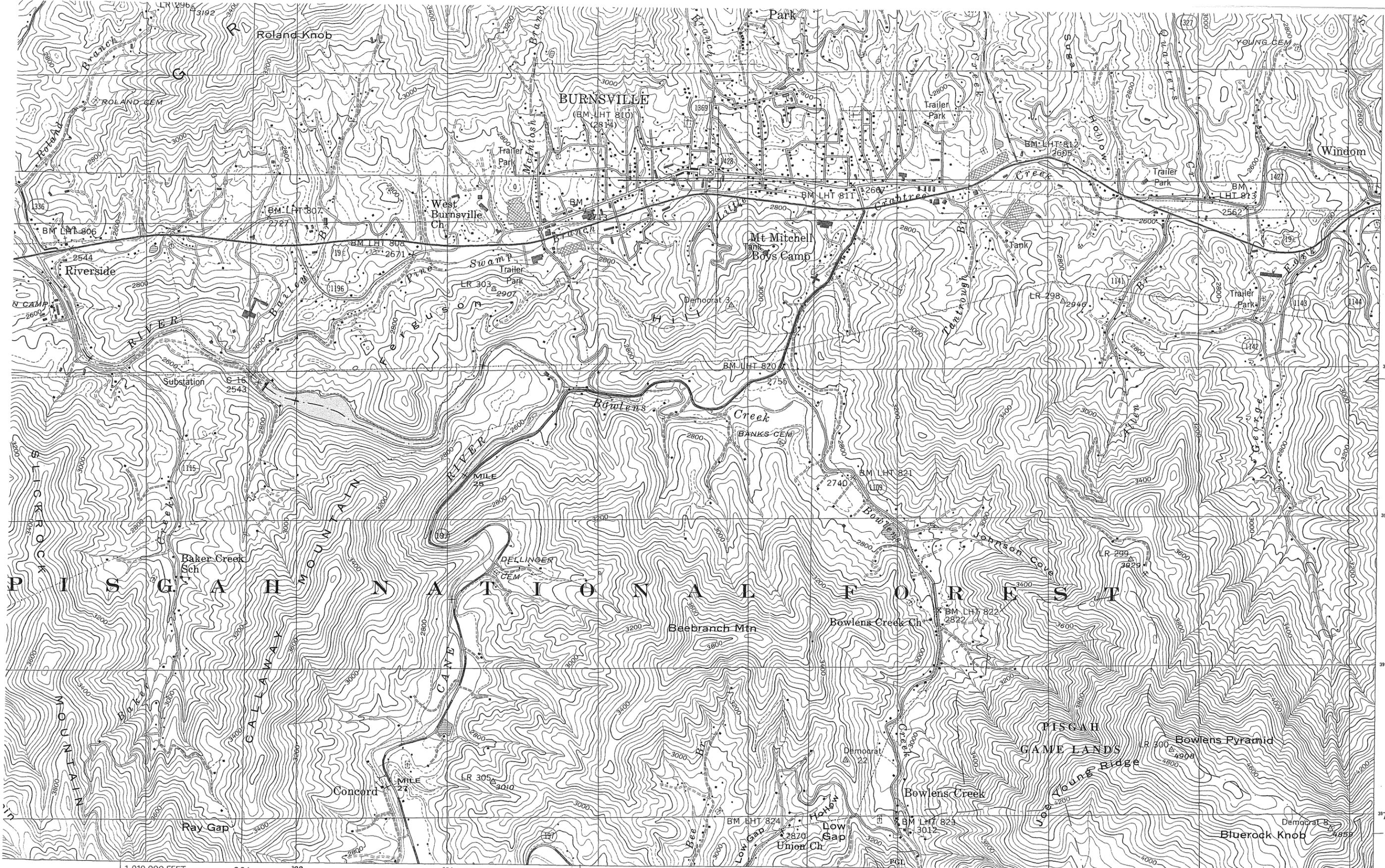
Section number 10 Page 13

Chase-Coletta House, Yancey County, NC



Chase-Coletta House Tax Map – PIN No. 082014342682000

(Source: Yancey County Land Records Office)

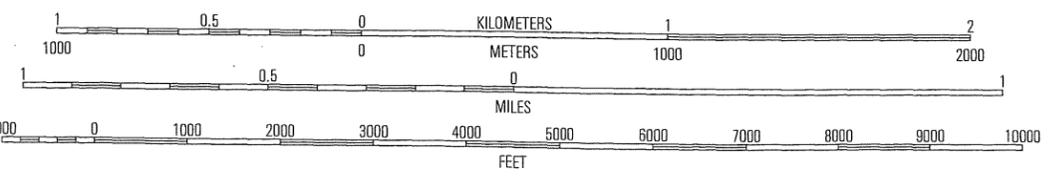
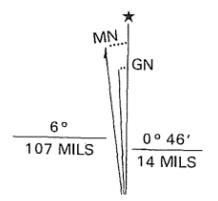


CHASE-COLETTA HOUSE  
 BURNSVILLE, NC  
 YANCEY CO.  
 UTM4:  
 ZONE 17  
 E 382800  
 N 3975270  
 Burnsville  
 Quad

1 010 000 FEET 20' 80 81 82 83 84 85 860000 E 35° 52' 30" 82° 15'

SCALE 1:24 000

INTERIOR - GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA - 2001  
 ROAD CLASSIFICATION (TVA 200-NE)



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Primary highway<br>hard surface .....   | Light-duty road, hard or<br>improved surface ..... |
| Secondary highway<br>hard surface ..... | Unimproved road .....                              |
- Interstate Route  
 U.S. Route  
 State Route

