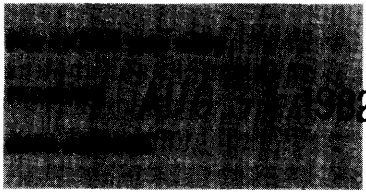


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



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

**1. Name**

historic

and/or common Hambidge Center Historic District

**2. Location**

~~3 miles west~~<sup>W</sup> of Dillard on  
street & number Betty's Creek Road N/A not for publication

city, town Dillard *vic.*  vicinity of ~~congressional district~~

state Georgia code 013 county Rabun code 241

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name See continuation sheet

street & number

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Superior Court

street & number Rabun County Courthouse

city, town Clayton state Georgia

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Historic Structures Field Survey:  
title Rabun County, Georgia has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1977-1978  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Georgia Department of Natural Resources

city, town Atlanta state Georgia

# 7. Description

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

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Hambidge Center is a small rural historic district in the Betty's Creek area of the north Georgia mountains. The natural landscape in the district consists of the creek with its narrow, irregular floodplain, forested hillsides, and Owen Mountain. This natural landscape forms the setting for some two dozen historic buildings and structures, several historic ruins, associated landscape gardening features, and a few non-historic structures all clustered near the center of the district. Buildings and structures in the district include an 1830's log cabin and log outbuilding, an 1890's log lodge and remodeled house, a 1920's rock farmhouse with spring house and shed, a 1930's log cabin, a 1930's gristmill, a 1940's dairy complex, and 1940's arts and crafts buildings including cottages, studios and kilns. Several small contemporary cottages and sheds are also present, including the 1966 "Foxfire" studio. There are ruins of a 1914 lodge, several cabins, and a dam along the creek. A natural amphitheater is located in a small cove on the western side of Owen Mountain.

### BUILDING AND STRUCTURES WITHIN THE DISTRICT

Note: The following descriptions are keyed by number to the accompanying "buildings and structures" map.

- #1. Entrance Gates. Two fieldstone piers with concrete caps, flanking dirt driveway; early twentieth century (photograph 1) (contributing).
- #2. Spring House. Reinforced concrete structure with stone veneer; 1922 (photographs 1, 2) (contributing).
- #3. Shed/Pavilion. Open, pavilion-type structure with pyramidal roof supported by tree-trunk posts; fieldstone fireplace/chimney with iron tub or kettle at one corner; early twentieth century (contributing).
- #4. Dairy Barn. Woodframed structure on low concrete foundation; gable-roofed central section flanked by lean-tos; horizontal flushboard siding; 1944 (photograph 12) (contributing).
- #5. Milking Shed. One-story shed-roofed structure, with board and batten siding, on low concrete foundation; 1944 (photograph 12) (contributing).
- #6. Silo. Round silo; poured concrete construction; 1944 (contributing).
- #7. Weaving Shed and Exhibition Hall. Two story gable roof structure, with long, narrow proportions; masonry block first floor, woodframed second floor with board and batten siding and steel casement windows; 1940's (photograph 12) (contributing).
- #9. Foxfire Studio. Contemporary one-story gable-roofed cottage, with board and batten siding and a deck; 1966 (photograph 11) (contributing).
- #10. Garage. One story terra-cotta block structure, 1940's (contributing).

(CONTINUED)

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Continuation sheet    Property Owners

Item number    4

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The Hambidge Center for Creative Arts and  
Sciences, Incorporated  
Mary Nikas, Executive Director  
P.O. Box 33  
Rabun Gap, Georgia    30568

Mary Nikas  
Post office Box 33  
Rabun Gap, Georgia    30568

Virginia Jones  
P.O. Box 363  
Franklin, North Carolina    28734

Mr. Robert Heard  
Heard, Heard, Cuthbert, and Allston  
P.O. Box 896  
Elberton, Georgia    30635

Alice M. Lawrence  
RFD 4, Box 1  
Milledgeville, Georgia    31061

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- #11. Hambidge Cottage. One story gable roofed log cabin, "dogtrot" plan, with board and batten shed room; on fieldstone foundation; fieldstone chimneys; interior paneled in wormy chestnut; early twentieth century (photographs 6,7,8,9) (contributing).
- #12. Pavilion. One story woodframed structure with open interior under hipped roof; continuous screened windows; board and batten enclosure, rear; 1940 (photograph 10) (contributing).
- #13. Dry Kiln. Fieldstone and concrete ruins of early twentieth century kiln (contributing).
- #14. Lodge Ruins. Stone foundations of uncompleted lodge; 100 feet by 35 feet; 1914 (contributing).
- #15. Kiln. Fieldstone and concrete ruins; c. 1940 (contributing).
- #16. Rock House. One story fieldstone farmhouse, with front and side porches, stone chimneys, beaded tongue-and-groove interior woodwork; 1920 (photographs 1,2,3) (contributing).
- #17. Weave Shed. Long, narrow, one-story gable roofed woodframed structure; board and batten siding, dormers, and weatherboarding in gable ends; front entry porch; post, beam, and plank interior; 1940 (photographs 4,5) (contributing).
- #19. Sun House. Mid twentieth century woodframed cottage (non-historic).
- #20. Sun Studio. Mid twentieth century woodframe cottage (non-historic).
- #21. McCraw House Site. Chimney and Springhouse of original Rabun Colony member; 1914 (contributing).
- #22. Sheep Shed. Simple wood framed shed; 1940 (contributing).
- #23. Nikas Property. Traditionally an in-holding in the Hambidge Center property; contains an extensively remodeled 1890's house (non-historic).
- #25. Natural Amphitheater. Open area on hillside, surrounded by forest (contributing).
- #27. Hopper House. One story log cabin; gable roof, front porch, rear shed; squared logs, modified dovetail notching; 1830 (contributing).
- #28. Sheep Shed. One story gable roofed log shed; round logs, saddle notching; fieldstone chimneys; 1890 (contributing).

(CONTINUED)

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#29. Latimer Lodge. Two story log house; gable roof, front porch; round logs, saddle notching; fieldstone chimneys; 1890 (contributing).

#31. Sheep Barn. One story woodframed structure, with central gable section flanked by sheds; c. 1940 (contributing).

#32. Barker's Creek Mill. One story gristmill; woodframed on fieldstone foundation; board and batten siding, gable roof; overshot metal waterwheel with flume, stone dam short distance upstream; 1936 (photograph 13) (contributing).

BOUNDARIES

The nominated property consists of the remaining intact tract of land that is historically associated with the Rabun Colony Club, the W. Carroll Latimer Farm, and the Jay Hambidge Art Foundation (now the Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts and Sciences, Inc.). This tract of land includes a distinct group of architecturally and historically related buildings and structures in their historic natural setting.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The Historic Preservation Section has determined that the photographs taken in March 1981 still represent the character and appearance of the property.

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1830's- 1940's **Builder/Architect** Multiple

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Hambidge Center historic district represents several major periods in the history of the north Georgia mountains. In terms of exploration and settlement, land in the district was among the first to be settled in Rabun County, and the 1830's log farmstead testifies to this early occupancy. Agriculture, carried out on the flood-plain, provided a livelihood for early settlers and continued throughout the history of the valley, culminating in sheep raising during the 1930's and dairying in the 1940's; these agricultural practices are representative of the Georgia mountains. Buildings and structures in the district chronicle the history of development in the valley and represent a variety of vernacular architectural practices relating to design, construction, materials, and workmanship. Chief among them is the use of indigenous log, stone-masonry, and rubble concrete construction. The natural landscape itself is historically significant for the way in which it has served as a setting for 150 years of cultural activity that has changed the perception of the land from a means of subsistence to one of enjoyment and artistic inspiration. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century attempts at establishing seasonal resorts in this part of the Georgia mountains are documented by the one surviving lodge, the ruins of another, and the assembly of a large tract of land under single ownership. The most important area of significance associated with the historic district relates to the establishment of an arts and crafts center in this area during the early twentieth century. This arts and crafts center made use of the buildings and structures already built on the tract of property assembled during the preceding resort era. Founded in the mid 1930's by Mary Hambidge in honor of her husband, the Jay Hambidge Arts Foundation was dedicated to the practice of traditional mountain arts and crafts such as weaving. Its products won awards at the 1936 Paris Exposition, were displayed at the Museum of Modern Art and the Smithsonian Institute, and were marketed at the "Weavers of Rabun" on Madison Avenue in New York City. The internationally known magazine of folklore, Foxfire, was conceived here while Eliot Wigginton was in residence during the 1960's. This arts and crafts tradition is being continued today by the Hambidge Center for the Creative Arts and Sciences, which provides a retreat for artists, writers, and scholars.

The architectural and historical significance of the Hambidge Center historic district supports its National Register eligibility under National Register Criteria A, B, and C. Settlement of this remote mountain valley in the early nineteenth century, the coming of seasonal residents during the turn-of-the-century resort era, the introduction of dairy farming in the early twentieth century, and especially the founding of a leading arts and crafts center during the early twentieth century are all important historical events that support National Register eligibility in terms of criteria A. Association with numerous individuals who played important roles in the history of the area, such as the Hopper and Darnell families during the pioneering days of the early nineteenth century, the Haynes and Field families of the turn-of-the-century resort era,

(CONTINUED)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

. See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 660 acres (estimated)

Quadrangle name Dillard, GA-NC

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	1,7	2,7,8	5,6,0	3,8	7,4	9,0,0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

B	1,7	2,7,8	5,3,0	3,8	7,3	7,2,0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

C	1,7	2,7,6	5,6,0	3,8	7,2	9,6,0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

D	1,7	2,7,6	3,4,0	3,8	7,4	9,0,0
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

E						
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

F						
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

G						
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

H						
	Zone	Easting		Northing		

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Boundary is described by a heavy black line on the accompanying maps and is justified in Section 7.

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

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

state		code	county	code
-------	--	------	--------	------

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Cloues, National Register Coordinator

Historic Preservation Section

organization Georgia Department of Natural Resources date August 25, 1982

street & number 270 Washington Street, S.W. telephone 404/656-2840

city or town Atlanta state Georgia

# 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

*Elizabeth A. Lyon*  
Elizabeth A. Lyon

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 8/26/82

For HCRS use only

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

*Robert W. Anderson*

date 10/5/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: *Patrick W. Anderson*

date 10/5/82

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet    Significance    Item number 8    Page 2

W. Carroll Latimer who introduced modern dairy farming to the valley, and Mary Hambidge who developed the arts and crafts center in the 1930's and 1940's, supports National Register eligibility under criteria B. The historic architectural and environmental qualities of the district, most notably the emphasis on vernacular structures largely hand crafted from indigenous materials, support National Register eligibility in terms of criteria C. Although archaeological potential in the valley may be assumed, no professional investigations have been made in conjunction with this historic structural nomination, and therefore no claim of National Register eligibility under criteria D is made at this time.

Many of the buildings, structures, and landscape features in the district, and their historical associations, are less than fifty years old. National Register eligibility is supported by the extraordinary role that these resources played in the history of the Georgia mountains and in the revival of interest and proficiency in the traditional arts and crafts of the Appalachian Mountains.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Rabun County was created by an act of the Georgia legislature in 1819 from lands ceded by the Cherokee Indians in the Treaty of 1819. White settlement followed, with the majority of first settlers coming from the surrounding territories of North Carolina and South Carolina. Land along Betty's Creek was one of the first areas of settlement in the county, apparently due to the rich farmland located there. One of the earliest families to settle in this area were the Hoppers from North Carolina. This family purchased two lots of land at the head of Betty's Creek and built a house of hewn popular logs which still stands today. The Hoppers, like most families in the area, have been farmers. In contrast, the Darnells, who came into the area in the 1840's, have been a family of craftsmen. Members of the Darnell family have been blacksmiths, brick makers, brick layers, chimney builders, and stone masons. Some of the structures located within the historic district may have been built by members of this family. Several descendants from both of these families continue to reside in the area today.

Prior to the turn of the century, residents of Betty's Creek lived in a small, isolated and closely-knit community and received their livelihood from the land. With the construction of the Tallulah Falls Railroad in 1905, this area became accessible to the outside world and a resort period in the development of Betty's Creek began. According to Margaret Norton, a life-long resident of Betty's Creek, a few outsiders came into the area prior to the completion of the rail line. The Haynes family was one of the first outside groups. This family came to the area in the late 1800's, purchased land, and built a resort home of log construction, which still stands today. Mrs. Norton describes the Haynes as "summer folk" and "lowlanders." Although the Haynes originated from the coast, most outsiders came from the Atlanta area.

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group of women for the weaving who became known as the "Weavers of Rabun." The group was commissioned to weave fabrics for nationally-known personalities. This work had won awards at the 1937 Paris Exhibition and was displayed at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Smithsonian Institute in Washington. Woven goods were also marketed at the "Weavers of Rabun" on Madison Avenue in New York City. For the weaving operation, Mary Hambidge had a building of chestnut wood constructed near the rock house, and this building became know as the "weave shed." She also added silos and a milking shed in the area of the barn for the modest dairying operation. In 1936, on lands donated by the local residents, Mary built a grist mill along Barker's Creek at the site of a former mill and agreed to operate the mill for the community.

After World War II, new industry came into the county, and many of the local weavers were attracted to the blue collar jobs. The Jay Hambidge Art Foundation broadened its concepts and began to offer a peaceful haven to artists, writers, and musicians. Among the artists to come to the center at Rabun Gap were Eva Palmer Sikilianos, wife of the Greek poet Andrew Sikilianos, concert pianist Jean Reti-Forbes, artist Stanton Forbes, writer Marguerite Steedman, composer Edwin Gerschefski and others. The internationally known folklore magazine, "Foxfire," was conceived at the foundation and much of the work and research for the magazine was carried on while Eliot Wigginton was in residence at the Jay Hambidge Art Foundation during the mid 1960's. Through the 1950's and 1960's, several structures were added to the property for use as artist studios. Mary Hambidge died in 1973, but the center continues to operate under the leadership of Mary Nikas, the executive director of the Foundation. The Hambidge Center continues as a haven for artist and programs in arts, crafts, and music are offered on a year-round basis.

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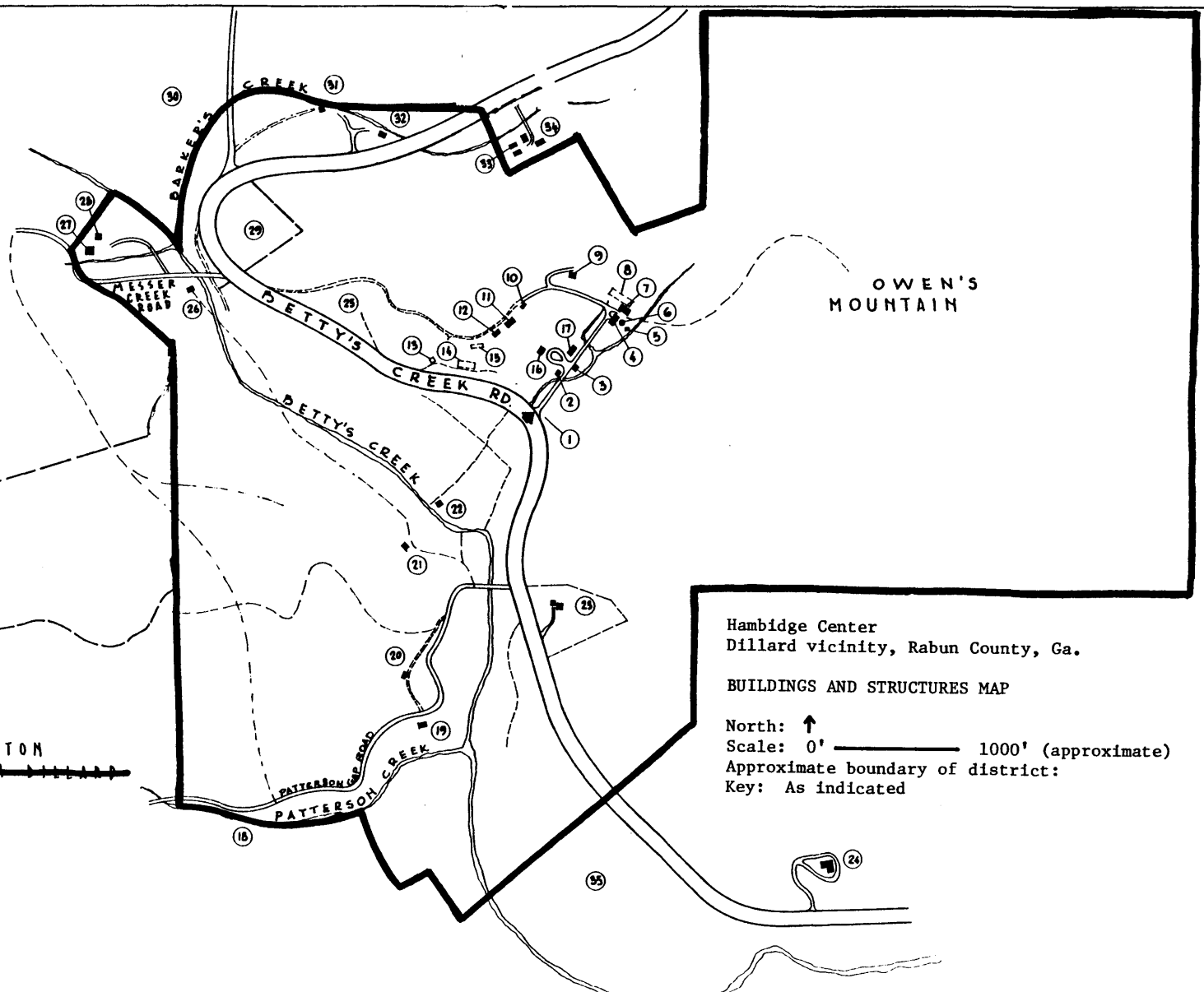
Margaret Burrell Norton (life-long resident of Betty's Creek), Betty's Creek Georgia, May, 1981.

L.D. Hopper (life-long resident of Betty's Creek), Betty's Creek, Georgia, May, 1981.

Mary Nikas, Executive Director of Hambidge Center, Betty's Creek, Georgia, January, 1981.

L E G E N D

- 1 ENTRANCE GATE
- 2 SPRING HOUSE
- 3 SHED
- 4 BARN
- 5 MILKING SHED
- 6 SILO
- 7 WEAVING & EXHIBITION
- 8 GARDEN
- 9 FOYFIRE STUDIO
- 10 GARAGE
- 11 HAMBIDGE COTTAGE
- 12 PAVILLION
- 15 DRY KILN
- 14 LODGE RUINS
- 15 KILN
- 16 ROCK HOUSE
- 17 WEAVE SHED
- 18 WATERFALL
- 19 SUN HOUSE
- 20 SUN STUDIO
- 21 OLD M<sup>c</sup>CRAW HOUSE (SITE ONLY)
- 22 SHEEP SHED
- 23 MIKAS PROPERTY
- ~~24 BETTY'S CREEK CHURCH~~
- 25 NATURAL AMPHITHEATER
- ~~26 FORMER DANIEL YANHOUS~~
- 27 HOPPER HOUSE
- 28 SHEEP SHED
- 29 HEARD, HEARD, CUTHBERT, & ALLSTON
- ~~30 FORMER L. HOPPER, NOW JIM DILLARD~~
- 31 SHEEP BARN
- 32 BARKER'S CREEK MILL
- ~~33 EDITH'S WEAVE SHED~~
- ~~34 CLAUDE PARWELL FAMILY~~
- ~~35 NIANE ADAM'S HORSE RANCH~~

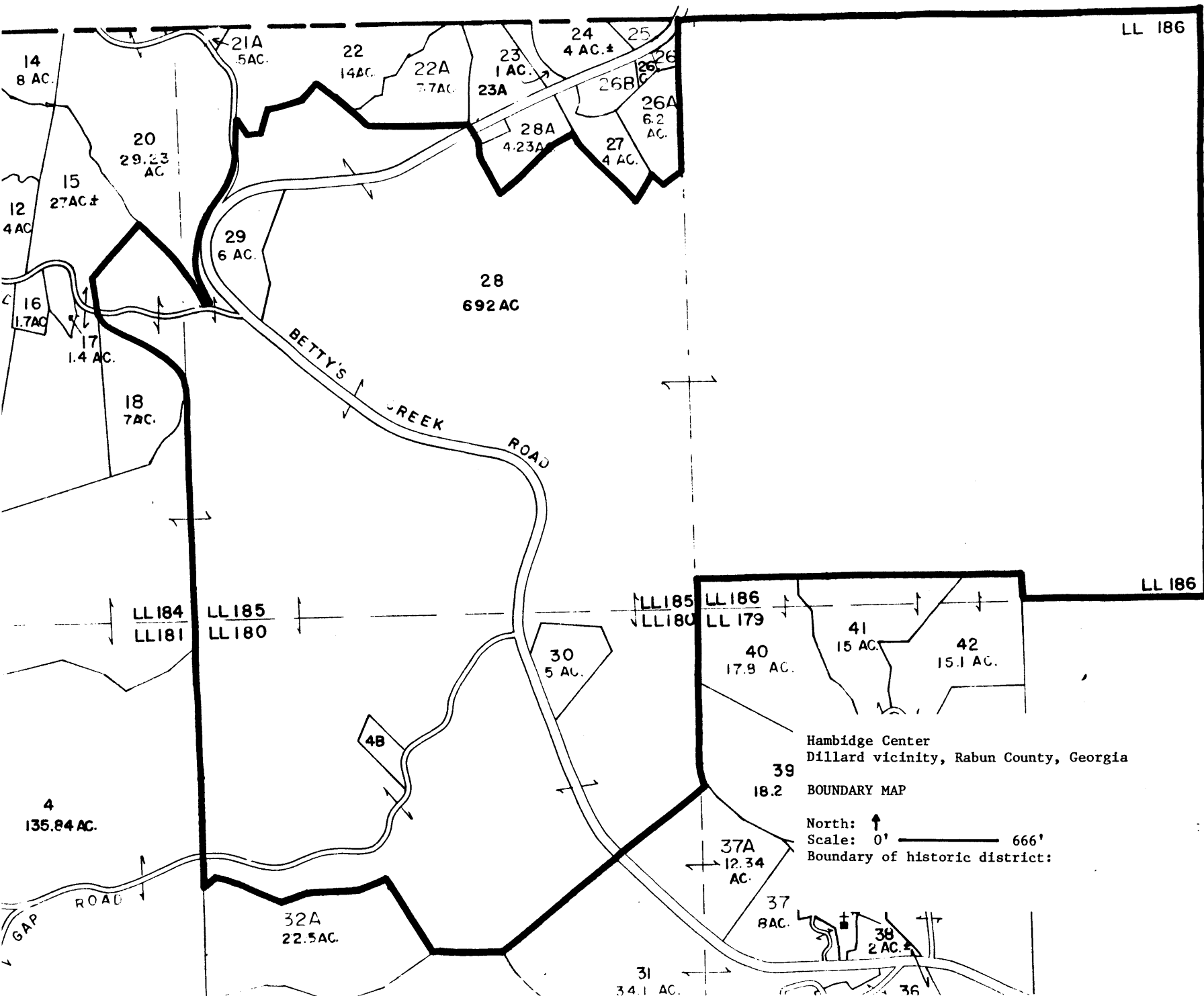


OWEN'S MOUNTAIN

Hambidge Center  
Dillard vicinity, Rabun County, Ga.

BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES MAP

North: ↑  
Scale: 0' ————— 1000' (approximate)  
Approximate boundary of district:  
Key: As indicated



LL 186

LL 186

Hambidge Center  
Dillard vicinity, Rabun County, Georgia

39  
18.2 BOUNDARY MAP

North: ↑  
Scale: 0' ————— 666'  
Boundary of historic district:

44