

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH 0688 134

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DATE ENTERED JAN 12 1979

**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
Walasi-yi Inn
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *S of Blairsville on*
U. S. 129 at Neel's Gap
CITY, TOWN Blairsville *nc.* VICINITY OF 9th - Edgar Jenkins
STATE Georgia CODE 13 COUNTY Union CODE 291

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> 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 type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: <i>recreational</i>

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME State of Georgia, State Properties Commission ✓
STREET & NUMBER 7 Martin Luther King Drive
CITY, TOWN Atlanta, VICINITY OF STATE Georgia

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Union County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Blairsville STATE Georgia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Union County Survey
DATE September 18, 1977
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Department of Natural Resources
CITY, TOWN Atlanta STATE Georgia

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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

The Walasi-yi Inn is located on U. S. Highway 129 at Neel's Gap, 14 miles south of Blairsville, Georgia, in Union County. It is administered by Vogel State Park, which is surrounded by the Chattahoochee National Forest. The Inn is on the east side of the highway, straddling the crest of the gap and facing Blood Mountain to the West. A section of the Appalachian Trail passes between the two sections of the building. Presently, the Inn is used as a craft and hiker's supply shop and as lodging for the park ranger who operates the shop and cares for the site.

The Inn is a one-story structure built of native stone on a natural bed and was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps, Camp Sp-2, in cooperation with the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, during 1934-38. The land on which it stands is part of a parcel given to the State of Georgia by Mr. Fred Vogel, Jr. and Mr. August H. Vogel on May 1, 1927. The original gift was of 16 acres, only two of which are at Neel's Gap.

The primary facade of the Inn faces west toward the Highway and parking area, and is reached by stone steps. The entrance double doors into the foyer are flanked by two small windows. A flagstone terrace surrounds this western facade as well, overlooking the valley to the south. Three double glass doors with transoms open onto the front terrace from the dining area. A large bay window faces this southern view as well.

An unobstructed rear view of the building is hampered by the rapid rise in elevation, and the vegetation. However, two large stone chimneys are at the rear of the building, one opening into the fireplace nook of the dining area and one into the kitchen. There is a rear door from the kitchen opening onto a small walkway which leads to the trail and the front of the building. Windows from the restrooms also face this walkway. There are three windows in the kitchen and two on either side of the fireplace in the dining room.

The northernmost portion of the building, which is reached by crossing the Appalachian Trail, is connected to the main building by a covered walkway. This was originally a wooden structure, built by the Pfister-Vogel Land Company. It was used as a tea room and for lodging. During the C.C.C. construction, this structure was veneered with stone to tie in with the other section of the building. The old tea room became the actual lodging quarters of the Inn. The main floor had, after renovation, a lounging area and four bedrooms. The basement floor had two bedrooms, surrounded by a stone terrace facing north. Above the stone mantel in the lounging area of the old tea room is a memorial plaque in brass citing the gift of the property by the Vogels. The interior walls are all panelled with chestnut, and room numbers originally used for guest lodging remain on the doors. At present, the ranger in charge of the site lives on the main floor of the building. The basement floor is now used only for storage.

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The main building originally consisted of a foyer with a concessions counter, a chestnut-panelled dining and lounge area with crossed chestnut beams and rafters. Beyond the foyer and counter was the kitchen, which also opened into the dining room. The foyer now contains vending machines and topographical and other maps of the area. The lounge-dining area is now the crafts and concessions shop. The kitchen is used primarily for storage at present.

A rough comfort station and rough cabins existed behind the tea room to the northeast but were demolished during work by the C.C.C. Two log cabins with water sewerage disposal were built by the C.C.C. a short walk from the gap on the hillside overlooking the valley to the northeast. These cabins are now greatly deteriorated.

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 type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) recreational history
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1934-38

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

U.S. Dept. of the Interior
National Park Service

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the Walasi-yi Inn resides primarily in its architecture and the history of its construction by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The Inn rests on a site of two acres that was part of a parcel of 16 acres of land that was given to the State on May 1, 1927 by August H. Vogel and Fred Vogel, Jr.

The State in 1925 completed a highway leading through Lumpkin County into Blairsville in Union County and on to Murphy, N.C. The highway at that time was a 20 ft. graded road with a 10-ft. paved strip. On the 4th of July, 1925, a dedication ceremony was held at Neel's Gap, the site of the Inn. The local newspapers reported that between 3,000 and 4,000 people attended the ceremony, said to be the largest number that had ever gathered on any mountain in the area. State Representative Bonnell Stone of Union County had been instrumental in the conception and construction of the highway. Speeches were presented by Governor Walker, President J. A. Sharp of Young Harris College, President J. H. Ennis of the State Senate, Secretary Fred Houser of the Atlantic Convention Bureau and Chairman John Holder of the State Highway Board.

Until the highway was built, the gap was known as Frogtown Gap, a name which had been used since the Cherokee inhabited the area. In fact, one historian says that Walasi was a great mythical frog in Cherokee lore who was the chieftain of the animal council, and made his home high in the gap. Frogtown Gap was changed to Neel's Gap about 1924 in honor of the engineer in charge of the highway construction.

Near the turn of the century, the Pfister-Vogel Leather Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, bought approximately 65,000 acres of land around what is now Vogel State Park. At that time, tanbark and tanwood from trees were used to supply tannic acid for the leather company's tanning processes. During World War I, however, a synthetic tannic acid was developed, saving some of their Georgia forest land from destruction. But the Pfister-Vogel Company also had five saw mills on their property and participated in logging. The acting director of the Division of State Parks, in a report issued in 1939, stated that although Vogel was in a section which until recently contained the principal virgin timber remaining in the east, little evidence of it existed at that time. However, because little logging had taken place in several years, and because of the inaccessibility of many of the higher slopes, there was a mixed stand of pines and hardwoods and, in many locations, masses of rhododendron and laurel. Shortly after the Vogels' first gift to Georgia, the State set aside Vogel State Forest Park.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Boatright, Sherry: Interview with Mr. Bonnell Akins of Blairsville, Ga. 12/17/76
 _____: Interview with Mrs. Madelaine Anthony, Dahlonega, Georgia, 10/23/76
 _____: Interview with C. C. Earnest, Cornelia, Ga., 12/15/76

continued'

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Neels Gap

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 | 232870 | 3847350

B | |

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C | |

D | |

E | |

F | |

G | |

H | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Walasi-yi Inn is located approximately 14 miles south of Blairsville, Georgia, on U. S. Highway 19-129 at Neel's Gap. The southeast corner of the Walasi-yi Inn site is 178 feet east of the corner of land lots 35, 36, 38 and fractional lot 37,

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Sherry Boatright; Kenneth H. Thomas, Jr., Historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Preservation Section

DATE

July 1978

STREET & NUMBER

270 Washington Street, S. W.

TELEPHONE

(404) 656-2840

CITY OR TOWN

Atlanta

STATE

Georgia 30334

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Elizabeth A. Lyon

TITLE

Elizabeth A. Lyon

DATE

10/13/78

Acting State Historic Preservation Officer

FDR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11/22/79

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

William L. ...
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

1/8/78

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In June of 1928, the Vogels donated another tract of 140 acres. Bonnell Stone, a State Representative from Union County, was employed as a forester with the Pfister-Vogel Company. A founder and secretary of the Georgia Forestry Association, he, along with another of the company's forest rangers, Mr. C. C. Earnest of Cornelia, inspired the donation of Vogel State Park.

With the beginning of President Roosevelt's Emergency Conservation Work in 1933, a C.C.C. camp was set up on the eastern side of the highway at the bottom of the ridge to the north of Neel's Gap. The camp was at first placed under the State Forestry Department and the United States Forest Service, Department of Agriculture. In the spring of 1934, the camp was taken over by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. From then until it was closed in 1938, it was used to develop Vogel State Park as a scenic recreation area. At the site of another Vogel grant of 91 acres, an earthen dam was built and water impounded in a 130-acre lake. Cabins were built here, and this area is now the central lodging area of Vogel State Park. A picnic area was developed at Nottleley Falls, and an overnight shelter erected at the top of Blood Mountain. A portion of the Appalachian Trail extended from Neel's Gap to the crest of Blood Mountain, and a three-mile trail from Nottleley Falls to Helton Falls. A system of foot trails was constructed at the park by the C.C.C.

Most of the development work accomplished by the C.C.C. was concentrated at Neel's Gap, where the stone inn was built, along with two log cabins, a 10,000-gallon, spring-fed reservoir and sewerage system. The stone for the Inn's construction came from the highway construction. A blight had hit chestnut trees in North Georgia beginning in 1925, and many of them had to be cut. It is probably for this reason that the beautiful chestnut panelling exists in the Inn. The highway in the gap was relocated toward the west, and the banks opposite the Inn sloped and landscaped, and the parking area was constructed. The State Highway Department then surfaced the road and parking area with asphalt.

The Inn was immediately popular. The year after its completion, the State Parks director recommended that additional bedrooms and servants' quarters be constructed at the Inn. The State leased the Inn to concessionaires from the beginning, and it was usually open only from spring through November.

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The coming of World War II and difficulties with lessees probably prevented the construction of more lodging. Mr. Bonnell Akins of Blairsville leased the site from 1952 to 1963, although during some of this time he sub-leased it. He ran a restaurant and lodge during the summer months, and he indicates that although it was popular, it was never financially successful.

The continued growth of tourism in the North Georgia area and the growing interest in hiking and outdoor recreation, as well as the history of its construction, makes the preservation of the Walasi-yi Inn desirable. The site's value to the state will be enhanced by its nomination to the National Register.

This site is significant, even though it is not yet fifty years old, because it is an outstanding example of the workmanship of the Civilian Conservation Corps and needs to be recognized for that now, rather than waiting until another decade has passed and it has attained the fifty year mark.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES: (continued)

Deed File, Parks and Historic Sites Division, Department of Natural Resources, State of Georgia.

General Development Outline. Vogel State Park, Division of State Parks, Historic Sites, and Monuments, State of Georgia; September, 1939.

Master Plan-Report, Vogel State Park. Union and Lumpkin counties, February, 1937, in records of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

Personal Inspection by Sherry L. Boatright.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA: (continued)

16th District, Section 1, Union County, on the boundary between lots 37 and 38. The eastern boundary extends 208.7 feet east on a line 14 degrees 30 minutes east from this point north 75 degrees 30 minutes west where it crosses at 240 feet the boundary line of land lots 38 and 35 and extends to the right-of-way of the highway. The boundary line follows the right-of-way south to where it intersects a line passing south 75 degrees 30 minutes east from the point of beginning. The site includes approximately 2 acres.

SKETCH MAP - NOT TO SCALE

Walasi-yi Inn
Blairsville vicinity, Union County, Georgia

NOV 20 1978

