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 Pine Mountain Gold Mine
other names/site number Stockmar Gold Mine

2. Location

street & number 1881 Stockmar Road
city, town Villa Rica (X) **vicinity of**
county Douglas **code** GA 097
state Georgia **code** GA **zip code** 30801

( ) **not for publication**

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

( ) **private**
(X) **public-local**
( ) **public-state**
( ) **public-federal**

Category of Property:

( ) **building(s)**
(X) **district**
( ) **site**
( ) **structure**
( ) **object**

Number of Resources within Property:	**Contributing**	**Noncontributing**
buildings	0	2
sites	1	4
structures	10	0
objects	0	0
total	11	6

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A
Name of previous listing: N/A
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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 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 the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Richard Cloues — 7-9-08

Signature of certifying official — Date

for W. Ray Luce
Historic Preservation Division Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property ( ) meets ( ) does not meet the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

(✓) entered in the National Register

( ) determined eligible for the National Register

( ) determined not eligible for the National Register

( ) removed from the National Register

( ) other, explain:

( ) see continuation sheet

Patrick Andrus — 8/28/2008

Keeper of the National Register — Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: extractive facility.

Current Functions:

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum.

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

OTHER: Gold Mine.

Materials:

foundation	N/A
walls	N/A
roof	N/A
other	N/A

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION:

The Pine Mountain Gold Mine, at 1,200 feet above sea level, is a small mountain that rises 100 feet above Stockmar Road northeast of the city of Villa Rica in Douglas County. The mine is located approximately 10 miles west of the Douglas County seat Douglasville. Douglas County is located in west Georgia approximately 20 miles west of the city of Atlanta. The extant property contains 28.77 acres associated with the historic gold mine.

DESCRIPTION:

The Pine Mountain Gold Mine is located approximately three miles northeast of downtown Villa Rica on the north side of the Villa Rica Regional Airport. The extant mining complex covers 28.77 acres of hilly terrain. The historic property was larger but is no longer associated with the current property and some areas have lost integrity due to redevelopment. Contained within this 28.77-acre site are 10 structures associated with different historical periods of gold mining operations conducted on this site (Attachments 7, 8).

Gold mining activity on the mountain spanned over a century and is evident across most of the wooded site. The earliest physical evidence of mining activity is a series of trenches that were used for panning gold. Later mines included two large pits where a majority of the gold found was removed. Established in the 1890s, the "Old Glory Hole", as it is known, includes a 60-foot-long trench and a "man-way tunnel" through the top of the mountain that shortened the distance the ore had to be transported for processing. The property is laced with unpaved roads and covered with piles of tailings, or discarded ore.

Beginning in 1915, cyanide was used to process gold at Pine Mountain. Structures on the site associated with the cyanide process include a 35,000-gallon reinforced-concrete reservoir, two reinforced-concrete cyanide dissolving tanks, two reinforced-concrete percolator/leaching tanks, a reinforced-concrete sump tank, a reinforced-concrete solution tank, ore stacking bins, Miner's Tunnel, and the "Old Glory Hole."

Gold usually forms at very low concentrations in ores—less than 10 g/t (grams per ton) or 0.001 percent (mass basis). The use of hydrometallurgical extraction processes (a.k.a. beneficiation) was the only economically viable method of extracting the gold from the ore.[1] Standard hydrometallurgical gold recovery, as used at Pine Mountain, involves a leaching step during which the gold is dissolved in an aqueous medium ($H^2$0), followed by the separation of the gold-bearing solution from the residues, or adsorption of the gold onto activated carbon.

Pine Mountain Gold Mine used a conventional milling and agitated leaching circuit. When this method was used, the ore was milled in semi-autogenous balls or rod mills until it forms a powder. The milled ore (slurry) was conveyed to a series of leaching tanks (Photographs 10, 11, 12, 13) (Attachment 1). The slurry was agitated in the leaching tanks, either mechanically or by means of air injection, to increase the contact of cyanide and oxygen with the gold and enhance the efficiency of the leach process. The cyanide dissolved the gold from the ore and formed a stable gold-cyanide complex. The remaining gold-bearing solution was cemented using zinc powder. Once the solution hardens the gold can be extracted. Meanwhile, once the gold-bearing solution had left the leaching tanks, the miners pump the remaining cyanide into a sump tank. There, the solution was recycled in the hydrometallurgical processing of gold extracted from iron-ore deposits.

The **water reservoir** is a reinforced-concrete tank that is approximately three feet deep and 40 feet in diameter. The tank could store up to 35,000 gallons of water that was drawn from a stream 3,900 feet away.

The property has two **cyanide dissolving tanks** (Photograph 8). Both are constructed of reinforced concrete. The larger cyanide dissolving tank is approximately 18 feet deep and 10 feet in diameter. The smaller cyanide dissolving tank is two feet deep and two feet in diameter. The smaller tank's top is formed in the shape of a funnel. Apparently, the tunnel was lined with a mesh-type material and was used to strain the potassium salt of cyanide, which typically comes in blocks and can contain impurities. As the block dissolved, it drained into the solution tank, where it was tested and the exact amount of cyanide to water ratio was formulated.

The property has two **leaching tanks** (Photographs 10, 11, 12, 13) (Attachment 1). Both tanks are constructed of reinforced concrete. Both are approximately 12-feet deep and 24-feet in diameter. Each tank could hold up to 350 tons of crushed ore. The bottoms of the tanks were lined with a

[1] Beneficiation, in its strictest definition, includes every phase of upgrading mineral value, from the mine face to the refinery product. However, in its common use, the meaning of beneficiation is restricted to the processing of ore in a mill or concentrator, or otherwise preparing ore for refining. In some parts of the country, concentrators were called "beneficiation plants".

wooden frame. The cyanide solution was pumped into the tanks from the bottom up until the liquid was about two feet above the ore. After a period of 24 to 36 hours, the process was reversed and the liquid was pumped to the shaker table covered with zinc shavings and the zinc boxes (which no longer exist), where the gold attached itself, gold having an affinity for zinc. The liquid was then allowed to drain to the sump tank.

The **sump tank** (Photographs 20, 21) is the largest reinforced-concrete structure located on the property. The sump tank is approximately six-feet deep and 30-feet in diameter. Once the liquid passes through the zinc boxes, it was stored in this tank and aerated, as highly oxygenated water is needed to effectively use this process of extraction. Once the desired level of oxygen was reached, additional cyanide was added for a weak solution and passed through the leaching tanks again and the process was repeated. The water was then discharged.

The **solution tank** (Photographs 7, 9) is a reinforced-concrete structure that is five-feet deep and eight feet in diameter. This tank was used for making up the cyanide solutions to the working strength. Once the solution was tested, it was pumped into the leaching tanks, first the strong solution of cyanide/water and then a weaker solution.

The **laboratory/ assay office** (no longer exists) was a wood frame building that once housed the laboratory, where the process of cyanidization was perfected. In addition, the assay office was housed here in addition to the roasting furnace. The furnace consisted of a shallow cast-iron pan or plate, built over a small furnace. A funnel-shaped hood of light wrought iron was placed over the furnace to carry off the zinc oxide and other fumes. Once the gold reached the point of melting, it was poured in small crucibles labeled with varying sizes to become pellets of pure gold.

The cyanidization process required massive amounts of iron ore. Small particles of gold exist in most iron ore deposits. The cyanidization process separates the gold particles from the heavier iron ore minerals. The iron ore was stored in **ore stacking bins** (Photographs 14, 15) that were constructed of reinforced concrete. The ore stacking bins were located next to the stamp mill and ball mill (both no longer exist) that crushed the ore for further processing.

The site also contains two **mining tunnels** that are contributing structures. The "Old Glory Hole" is a 60 feet deep open mining tunnel that was the center of gold mining activity at the site for over a century (Photographs 17, 18, 19) (Attachment 2). The bulk of gold mined and extracted from the site came from the "Old Glory Hole." The site also has a man-way/miner's tunnel that was initially used to extract gold but eventually transformed into a transportation route that decreased the distance a miner had to travel in order to cross Pine Mountain (Photographs 16, 22).

The noncontributing building and sites on the western side of the property were built between 1920 and 1969 and include the ruins of the Stockmar family house (Photographs 1, 4), the ruins of a horse stable from the time when the property was used as a dude ranch from 1947 until 1965 (Attachment 3), the ruins of a cinderblock building once used as a Boy Scout meeting place (Photograph 2), and the ruins of a concrete block works—where blocks known as "T-Blocks" (Attachment 4) were manufactured using tailings from the mining operations in 1944. The property also contains a

noncontributing cinderblock building once used as the offices of Stockmar Engineering that dates after this property's period of significance (Photograph 3).

In 2001, the property was donated to the city of Villa Rica by Liberty Road Properties—a real estate development company that constructed the massive Mirror Lake Community/Subdivision(s) that today surrounds the Pine Mountain Gold Mine property. Recently, the city of Villa Rica has developed the property into a recreational and educational park. A large asphalt parking lot was added to the property adjacent to Stockmar Road. In 2007, the city constructed a 5,000-square-foot museum on the site—also adjacent to Stockmar Road—that will house artifacts and exhibits related to the history of gold mining in west Georgia. The museum is a noncontributing building located inside of the historic district.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

( ) **nationally** (X) **statewide** ( ) **locally**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

(X) **A** ( ) **B** (X) **C** ( ) **D**

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): (X) **N/A**

( ) **A** ( ) **B** ( ) **C** ( ) **D** ( ) **E** ( ) **F** ( ) **G**

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

ENGINEERING
INDUSTRY
SETTLEMENT/EXPLORATION

Period of Significance:

1826-1936

Significant Dates:

1826—Gold discovered.
1915—T. H. Alrich introduced cyanide processing at Pine Mountain.
1936—End of mining operations.

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

N/A

Statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Pine Mountain Gold Mine is located approximately three miles northeast of downtown Villa Rica on the north side of the Villa Rica Regional Airport. The extant gold mining complex covers 28.77 acres of hilly terrain. Contained within this site are 10 structures associated with different historic periods of gold mining operations conducted on this site. The site meets National Register Criterion "A" and "C" at the state level of significance in the areas of industry, engineering, and settlement/exploration because the mine is an excellent example of two major phases in the history of gold mining in the United States and because its initial development accelerated the pace of white settlement in west Georgia. The Pine Mountain Gold Mine's period of significance is 1826 to 1936. In 1826, gold was discovered for first time in the immediate area at the Pine Mountain property. Gold mining operations continued on the property until 1936.

INDUSTRY AND ENGINEERING

The Pine Mountain Gold Mine is significant in the areas of industry and engineering at the state level of significance because the mine is an excellent example of two major historic phases in the history of gold mining in the United States. This site represents at least two major technological phases in the history of gold mining in the United States. In Georgia, phase one began with the 1826 discovery of gold at the Pine Mountain Gold Mine site. Both the cities of Villa Rica (Carroll County) and Dahlonega (Lumpkin County) claim to be the site of the first gold rush in state history. Villa Rica cites 1826 as the beginning of its gold rush, while mining activity in Dahlonega began in 1829. While supporting evidence exists documenting Villa Rica's claim, only a handful of scholars accept the 1826 start date as factual. Most historians believe that gold was not discovered in the vicinity of Villa Rica until 1830. The debate over where the state's first gold rush began, however, does not affect the significance of the Pine Mountain Gold Mine because whether or not mining activity began in the area in 1826 or a few years later the site still represents one of the earliest examples of a gold mine in Georgia and the United States. Antebellum-era mining technology involved the use of handcrafted devices such as rocker boxes to sift gold from the soil. Gold mining required large amounts of manual labor. Some miners used slave labor. Gold mining also involved digging a series of long narrow trenches. Trenches varied in size and were often temporary additions to the landscape that quickly filled in during rainstorms. At least two trenches that date from the antebellum period can be found on the property. The fact that the site lacks an abundant supply of buildings and structures associated with its antebellum mining operations evidences the period's limited available technology as well as the impermanent nature of early gold mines and continued mining activity into the early 20th century.

Pine Mountain Gold Mine also represents a second major technological phase in the history of gold mining in the United States. During the early 20th century, the application of the cyanide leaching process breathed new life into many of the country's dormant mines. At Pine Mountain Gold Mine, mining activities had slackened during most of the late 19th century as the quantity of readily available gold at the site declined. Miners at the time knew that a large supply of gold existed trapped inside of the abundant iron ore deposits located at the site, but lacked the technology required to extract that gold in an efficient and profitable manner. In 1890, T.H. Alrich—the owner of Hillabee Gold Mining

Company and operator of a gold mine located in Hog Mountain, Alabama—was the first mine operator in the region to adopt the cyanide leaching process. The cyanide leaching process involved the use of a highly toxic chemical agent (cyanide) to separate gold particles trapped in iron-ore deposits. This innovative process required a substantial amount of capital investment to construct the necessary dissolving tanks, water reservoirs, leaching tanks, and solution tanks required to extract gold from iron ore. In 1914, A. H. Stockmar purchased the Pine Mountain Gold Mine and implemented the exact cyanide leaching process used by Alrich. Pine Mountain Gold Mine is the only known gold mine in the state of Georgia to use the cyanide leaching process. The surviving structures associated with this pioneering process are unique to the state and represent a major technology development in the history of the state's gold mines. Unlike its antebellum predecessor, 20th century mining activities at Pine Mountain involved the use of mechanical technologies such as gasoline powered engines, conveyer belts, pumps, and agitators. The site has eight reinforced concrete tanks used to contain the cyanide and water solutions used to extract gold from iron ore. The use of modern machinery and construction techniques combined with advances in chemistry fostered a new era of mining activity at the site divorced from earlier extraction methods. For uncertain reasons, the introduction of the cyanide leaching process did not produce sustainable profits at Pine Mountain. While the mine used this process for more than two decades, operations were halted routinely due to insufficient funds resulting from the rising cost of cyanide and labor and in 1936 mining operations were discontinued. Today, numerous mines throughout the United States continue to use the cyanide leaching process. Pine Mountain Gold Mine represents an early developmental example of a form of mining technology that remains in use today.

SETTLEMENT/EXPLORATION

The Pine Mountain Gold Mine is significant in the area of settlement/exploration at the state level of significance because the purported discovery of gold on the property in 1826 expedited the white settlement of west Georgia. During the early 19th century, Georgia was host to two major gold rushes. Both gold rushes directly influenced the movement of peoples across the state. The 1829 gold rush that began near Dahlonega (Lumpkin County) provided the state's leaders and President Andrew Jackson with additional motivation to hasten efforts to remove the Cherokee Indians from north Georgia. Only three years after that discovery, the state of Georgia held a land lottery to redistribute Cherokee lands to white settlers. By the time the state and federal governments officially removed the Cherokee in 1838-1839, tens of thousands of white settlers had migrated to the region. Most historians believe that the 1829 gold rush was the first in the state's history. Evidence exists, however, that suggests that an earlier gold rush may have occurred beginning in 1826 in west Georgia. The Pine Mountain Gold Mine site played a pivotal role in the development of this earlier gold rush. There, miners purposely hid their discovery in order to avoid prosecution under the 1825 Georgia Mineral Reserve Act that claimed state ownership of all underground mineral resources. Their discovery remained virtually undetected until an 1830 newspaper report identified west Georgia as the site of a substantial gold rush. Shortly after the 1826 discovery, some historians have argued, thousands of miners poured into the area around the Pine Mountain Gold Mine seeking fortune. Most historians question whether miners could have concealed such a monumental discovery for four years without attracting attention. Most state histories cite 1830 as the start date for the discovery of gold at Pine Mountain.

Regardless of whether gold was first discovered in the area in 1826 or four years later in 1830, the discovery of gold played a major role in determining the pace of white settlement in the region. In 1825, the state of Georgia created Carroll County from territory acquired from the Creek Indians. Carroll County originally encompassed all the territory east of the Alabama state line and west and north of the Chattahoochee River and lands south of the Cherokee Nation boundary. Eventually five other counties—Campbell (now defunct), Troup, Douglas, Haralson, and Heard—were taken from the original Carroll County—including the Pine Mountain Gold Mine which today is part of Douglas County. In 1825, the Pine Mountain Gold Mine was located in Carroll County. Residents of that county lived a frontier existence that at times lacked law and order and was separated from the state of Georgia's major cultural and economic centers of Macon, Augusta, and Savannah. The discovery of gold in the area contributed to the county's early instability. Gold strikes initially attracted thousands of prospectors to the area. Most of these men were single and did not own any real property. Prospectors often illegally squatted on land in search of gold until forcibly removed by the property's rightful owner. The eviction of prospectors sometimes led to conflicts between landholders and squatters that at times resulted in violence. Prospectors as well as other landless whites helped organize a band of horse thieves known as the Pony Club who controlled the county during those early years of settlement. Other prospectors shunned lawless bands such as the Pony Club in favor of forging strong community ties with their neighboring settlers. In 1830, hundreds of Carroll County men worked as paid employees of several large mining operations. Other prospectors purchased land and began farming abandoning their search for gold. Because of the gold rush, Carroll County's population increased at a faster pace than comparable frontier counties that did not have similar mineral deposits. By 1860, Carroll County's population had grown to become the seventh largest county in the state.

The Pine Mountain Gold Mine also contributed to the development of the city of Villa Rica. In 1832, the community of Hixtown was formed a few miles from the mine. Named for William Hix, a prospector turned merchandizing tycoon, the town developed into a thriving mining town that contained housing, a general store, and a saloon. In 1883, the town relocated several miles to the northeast and became the modern-day city of Villa Rica. Today, many residents of the region trace their ancestry back to those early prospectors who were first attracted to the area by gold fever.

National Register Criteria

The Pine Mountain Gold Mine meets National Register Criterion "A" at the state level of significance in the area of settlement/ exploration because the discovery of gold on the property in 1826 expedited the white settlement of west Georgia.

The Pine Mountain Gold Mine meets National Register Criterion "C" at the state level of significance in the area of engineering and industry because the property contains historic structures associated with two major phases of technological development in the history of gold mining.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The Pine Mountain Gold Mine's period of significance is 1826 to 1936. In 1826, gold was discovered for first time in the immediate area at the Pine Mountain property. Gold mining operations continued on the property until 1936.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

Mining Landscape (trenches, pits, spoil piles, tunnels)—Contributing site
Water Reservoir—Contributing structure
Cyanide Dissolving Tank A—Contributing structure
Cyanide Dissolving Tank B—Contributing structure
Ore Stacking Bins—Contributing structure
Old Glory Hole—Contributing structure
Man-way/Miner's Tunnel—Contributing structure
Leaching Tank A—Contributing structure
Leaching Tank B—Contributing structure
Sump Tank—Contributing structure
Solution Tank—Contributing structure

Miners' Bunkhouse Foundation—Noncontributing site
Stockmar House ruins—Noncontributing site
Laboratory/ Assay Office—Noncontributing site
Stockmar Office—Noncontributing building
Gold Mining Museum—Noncontributing building
Boy Scout Meeting Place—Noncontributing site

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

The Pine Mountain Gold Mine is located approximately three miles northeast of downtown Villa Rica on the north side of the Villa Rica Regional Airport. The extant gold mining complex covers 28.77 acres of hilly terrain. The historic property was larger but is no longer associated with the current property. Contained within this 28.77-acre site are 10 structures associated with different historical periods of gold mining operations conducted on this site.

The Pine Mountain Gold Mine was located originally in Carroll County. In 1825, the state of Georgia created Carroll County from territory acquired from the Creek Indians. Carroll County originally encompassed all the territory east of the Alabama state line and west and north of the Chattahoochee River and lands south of the Cherokee Nation boundary. Eventually five other counties—Campbell (now defunct), Troup, Douglas, Haralson, and Heard—were taken from the original Carroll County—including the Pine Mountain Gold Mine which today is part of Douglas County.

The exact start date for gold mining at Pine Mountain remains in question. Local historian Joe Cobb, author of *Carroll County and Her People*, claimed "Gold was discovered long before the county was laid out in 1826." According to Lucian Lamar Knight, the first State Historian of Georgia, gold was discovered in 1826 near the west Georgia town of Villa Rica. That town, according to Knight, "became sort of a Klondyke, to which argonauts of the period rushed with pick in hand to unearth the fortunes, which they expected to find." Unfortunately, neither Cobb nor Knight, as was common practice among historians during this period, identified their sources of information. This shortcoming had led some historians to question some of the facts included in their work. For example, Kenneth Coleman's *A History of Georgia* neglected to mention an 1826 gold rush in west Georgia but addressed the significant role the 1829 gold rush in the Cherokee Nation (what would eventually become northeast Georgia) had upon the state's desire to hasten Indian removal. David Williams, author of *The Georgia Gold Rush: Twenty-niners, Cherokees, and Gold Fever* as well as several articles on the history of gold mining in Georgia, questioned the accuracy of Knight's claim that a gold rush occurred in west Georgia in 1826. Williams points out that newspapers failed to mention any gold rush in the state prior to August 1, 1829, when the *Georgia Journal* reported that a Habersham County man struck gold. Antebellum newspapers reported gold rushes across the country and throughout the world on a regular basis because the topic sparked their reader's interest. To be sure, if a gold rush occurred in west Georgia prior to 1829 it was the quietest discovery ever made.[2]

Recently, local historian Doug Mabry, has gathered documentation that challenges Williams' assertion that the 1829 gold rush was the first in Georgia's history. Mabry believes that a strong case can be made that a gold rush began in the vicinity of Villa Rica prior to 1829. He provides as evidence an 1830 Map of Georgia (Attachment 6) that identifies Carroll County as a "GOLD REGION." Antebellum-era cartography was a time consuming and often expensive process. The production of new maps required extensive surveys particularly in states such as Georgia where the political boundaries were in a state of constant flux. Mabry argues that if the 1830 Map of Georgia took more than a year or two to produce then surveyors who traveled to Carroll County learned of the area's gold mining operations and recorded it in their cartographic reports in the late 1820s. The 1830 Map of Georgia fails to identify the location of the gold strike in Habersham County, as reported by state newspapers in August of 1829. This omission perhaps provides evidence that the map was prepared prior to that strike therefore making the find in Carroll County the state's oldest gold rush. Mabry also refers to an assorted array of land records and maps that further corroborate his argument.

Many state historians argue that if a strike occurred in Carroll County it would have attracted the attention of newspaper editors throughout the country and would have instigated a massive rush of white settlers to the region. Mabry counters that Carroll County miners kept their discovery a secret due to their open violation of an 1825 Mineral Reserve Act. In 1825, the Georgia General Assembly passed a law that "set apart and reserve[d] for the use of the State all valuable Ores, Mines, and

[2] David Williams, *The Georgia Gold Rush: Twenty-niners, Cherokees, and Gold Fever* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993); David Williams, "The Great Gold Revival: Georgia's Second Gold Rush, 1899-1906," *Atlanta History: A Journal of Georgia and the South* 35 (fall 1991); Fletcher M. Green, "Georgia's Forgotten Industry: Gold Mining," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 19 (June 1935).

Minerals, which have been or may hereafter be discovered upon Lands which now are or may hereafter be the property of the State of Georgia, and to make penal and provide for the punishment of removing, carrying away, or secreting the same to the loss of the State."[3] The law acted as an insurance policy for the state as it worked to distribute millions of acres of land recently acquired during a contested treaty made with representatives of the Creek Indians. That same year gold was first discovered in America in North Carolina. Lawmakers aware of that find might have been reluctant to distribute land titles to property that might potentially wield substantial gold deposits without some form of protection for the state. It is unclear whether anyone was ever prosecuted by the state for violating this statute. Mabry maintains that gold prospectors in west Georgia successfully hid their mining activities until the 1825 law was repealed in 1829. While the 1825 law would have discouraged miners from publicly announcing their discoveries, it remains questionable whether such an act could silence hundreds if not thousands of miners who supposedly entered west Georgia between 1826 and 1830.[4]

The question of whether a gold rush began in 1826 in the vicinity of the Pine Mountain Gold Mine remains subject to the discovery of new evidence. The current information suggests that it is plausible that gold was discovered in west Georgia prior to the 1829 gold rush in the Cherokee Nation. Therefore, the Pine Mountain Gold Mine was potentially the site of the state of Georgia's first gold rush.

If Pine Mountain Gold Mine's first miners managed to keep their discovery secret between 1826 and 1829, their findings were soon revealed to national audiences in newspaper reports that first appeared in 1830. That year the *North Carolina Spectator and Western Advertiser* published a report declaring that numerous gold mines found in Carroll County, Georgia, were "the richest ever discovered in the United States." The newspaper also stated "there has been gold found within two miles of [Villa Rica] and about 2,000 men are working at the above mines."[5] Local historians claim that the first gold prospectors to work the mines in west Georgia came from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. These mid-Atlantic prospectors migrated southward along the Appalachian Mountains in search of gold. A small band of these migrants discovered gold in North Carolina in 1825. Their discovery encouraged others to continue their search. One year later, they along with prospectors from several Atlantic seaboard states arrived in west Georgia where they settled near the modern-day city of Villa Rica. About two miles northeast of Villa Rica they struck a gold vein. That discovery led to the creation of a permanent settlement that soon contained houses, stores, and taverns.

During its first few years Villa Rica was truly frontier territory. A band of horse thieves called the Pony Club for a time dominated local affairs through both fear and control of local government. Many ex-

[3] Acts of the State of Georgia, 1825.
[4] Acts of the State of Georgia, 1829. The State of Georgia repealed the 1825 Mineral Reserve Act in 1829 to encourage thousands of white settlers to invade the Cherokee Nation in search of gold without the fear of potential prosecution. State leaders hoped to convince the Federal government that the gold rush had created a state of chaos in the Cherokee Nation that necessitated the extension of Georgia law into their nation.
[5] *North Carolina Spectator and Western Advertiser* [Rutherfordton, North Carolina], 30 July 1830, [microfilm], North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh.

prospectors who came to the region in search of gold belonged to this group. Honest citizens, known locally as "Slicks," were finally able to band together and drive the Pony Club out of the county.

Robert A. Fleming, a Jefferson County, Georgia, farmer, was the first legally titled owner of the Pine Mountain Gold Mine. In 1826, the state of Georgia held a land lottery to redistribute land to white settlers that had been recently acquired from the Creek Indians following the 1825 Treaty of Indian Springs. Fleming won Lot #206 (located in Land District #2) and included the right to 202.5 acres of land. Unlike a majority of lottery winners, Fleming established a residence on his awarded property and moved from Jefferson County to Carroll County sometime between 1827 and 1829. The land lot was recorded in the Carroll County courthouse as the "Pine Mountain Lot."

During the 1830s, the Pine Mountain Lot was subdivided on 26 occasions among prospectors and land development companies such as the Eatonton Company and the Columbus Company. From 1830 to 1840 the prospectors annually removed approximately 20,000 pennyweights of gold. Most of the miners lived in nearby settlements. In 1832, the community of Hixtown was formed. Named for William Hix, a prospector turned merchandizing tycoon, the town developed into a thriving mining town that contained housing, a general store, and a saloon. In 1883, the town relocated several miles to the northeast and became the modern-day city of Villa Rica (Carroll County/ Douglas County—Villa Rica's city boundaries extend across Carroll County into neighboring Douglas County). Mining activities at the Pine Mountain site dwindled during the late 1840s as gold rushes in Colorado and California lured many local prospectors away. The annual gold output significantly declined following 1840.

Between 1840 and 1866 a minimum amount of mining activity occurred on the site due to the availability of more lucrative sources of gold elsewhere. In 1869, Jane W. Stone purchased the property. She owned the mine until her death in 1914. Between 1869 and 1914 only small amounts of gold were mined at the site. In 1914, A. H. Stockmar purchased the Pine Mountain Gold Mine from Stone's surviving estate. One year later, he began commercially mining the site using a cyanide leaching process developed and implemented by Hog Mountain, Alabama, mine-operator T. H. Alrich (Attachment 1). Stockmar transferred ownership of the property to his son, Buddy Stockmar, who oversaw mining operations on the property for the next 21 years.

During the early 20th century, the use of cyanide to extract gold from ore deposits was a developing technology. The process required large amounts of cyanide and an abundant fresh water supply conveniently located near ore deposits. All of the extant historic structures on the site were built by Stockmar to be used for the cyanide leaching process. This was a labor-intensive operation that required a dozen or more full-time and seasonal employees. Stockmar constructed a miners' bunkhouse to house his fluctuating workforce. The mine produced only small amounts of gold. The cost of labor and materials drained the operation's profits. Between 1916 and 1936, the mine closed and reopened on several occasions (Attachment 5). In 1936, the Stockmar family permanently ceased their mining operations on the property. During the 1940s the family briefly manufactured "T-blocks" (T-shaped cinder blocks) from mining tailings—a by-product of gold mining involving the use of cyanide—that were found in great abundance throughout the property (Attachment 4). This business soon ended due to high labor costs and superior competition from state cinder block

manufacturers.

Since the cessation of mining operations at Pine Mountain Gold Mine, the property was used as a recreational facility—known as the Flying S Dude Ranch—during the 1940s and 1960s. The ranch used several of the reinforced-concrete swimming pools. Since the mid-1960s, various property owners in conjunction with local government officials have attempted to develop the site into a theme park. Those efforts never materialized. Today, the city of Villa Rica owns the property. In 2007, the city constructed a building on the property to house a planned museum highlighting the history of gold mining in west Georgia.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Green, Fletcher M., "Georgia's Forgotten Industry: Gold Mining," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 19 (June 1935): 75-90.

Noble, Bruce J. and Robert Spude. *National Register Bulletin: Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering Historic Mining Properties.* Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1997.

Reese, Jeff. "Pine Mountain Gold Mine: Historic Property Information Form." 2006. On file at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Office, Atlanta.

Rickard, T. A. *The Stamp Milling of Gold Ores.* New York: The Scientific Publishing Company, 1898.

Smith, Duane A. *Mining America, The Industry and the Environment, 1800-1980.* Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1987.

Williams, David. *The Georgia Gold Rush: Twenty-niners, Cherokees, and Gold Fever.* Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993.

Williams, David. "The Great Gold Revival: Georgia's Second Gold Rush, 1899-1906," *Atlanta History: A Journal of Georgia and the South* 35 (Fall 1991): 105-135.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) **N/A**

( ) **preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
( ) **preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**
date issued:
( ) **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 #**

Primary location of additional data:

(X) **State historic preservation office**
( ) **Other State Agency**
( ) **Federal agency**
( ) **Local government**
( ) **University**
( ) **Other, Specify Repository:**

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 28.77 acres

UTM References

A)	Zone 16	Easting 695571E	Northing 3736761N
B)	Zone 16	Easting 695833E	Northing 3736949N
C)	Zone 16	Easting 696098E	Northing 3736793N
D)	Zone 16	Easting 695838E	Northing 3736579N

Verbal Boundary Description

The property contains 28.77 acres of land historically associated with mining activities at the Pine Mountain Gold Mine. The property is bounded to the south by Stockmar Road and to the west by a golf course and housing subdivision.

Boundary Justification

The property contains 28.77 acres of land historically associated with mining activities at the Pine Mountain Gold Mine. It contains the major gold mining site and associated structures on a contiguous parcel of land.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Keith S. Hébert
organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
mailing address 34 Peachtree Street, N.W.
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303
telephone (404) 651-5568 **date** 02-25-2008
e-mail keith.hebert@dnr.state.ga.us

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable) (X) not applicable

name/title Doug Mabry
organization Independent Historian
mailing address 846 Bethel Church Rd.
city or town Carrollton **state** GA **zip code** 30118
telephone N/A
e-mail dcmabry@bellsouth.net

( ) **property owner**
(X) **consultant**
( ) **regional development center preservation planner**
( ) **other:**

Property Owner or Contact Information

name (property owner or contact person) Jeff Reese
organization (if applicable) City of Villa Rica
mailing address 646 Industrial Blvd.
city or town Villa Rica **state** GA **zip code** 30180
e-mail (optional) vrrd1@aol.com

Name of Property: Pine Mountain Gold Mine
City or Vicinity: Villa Rica
County: Douglas
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: April 2006

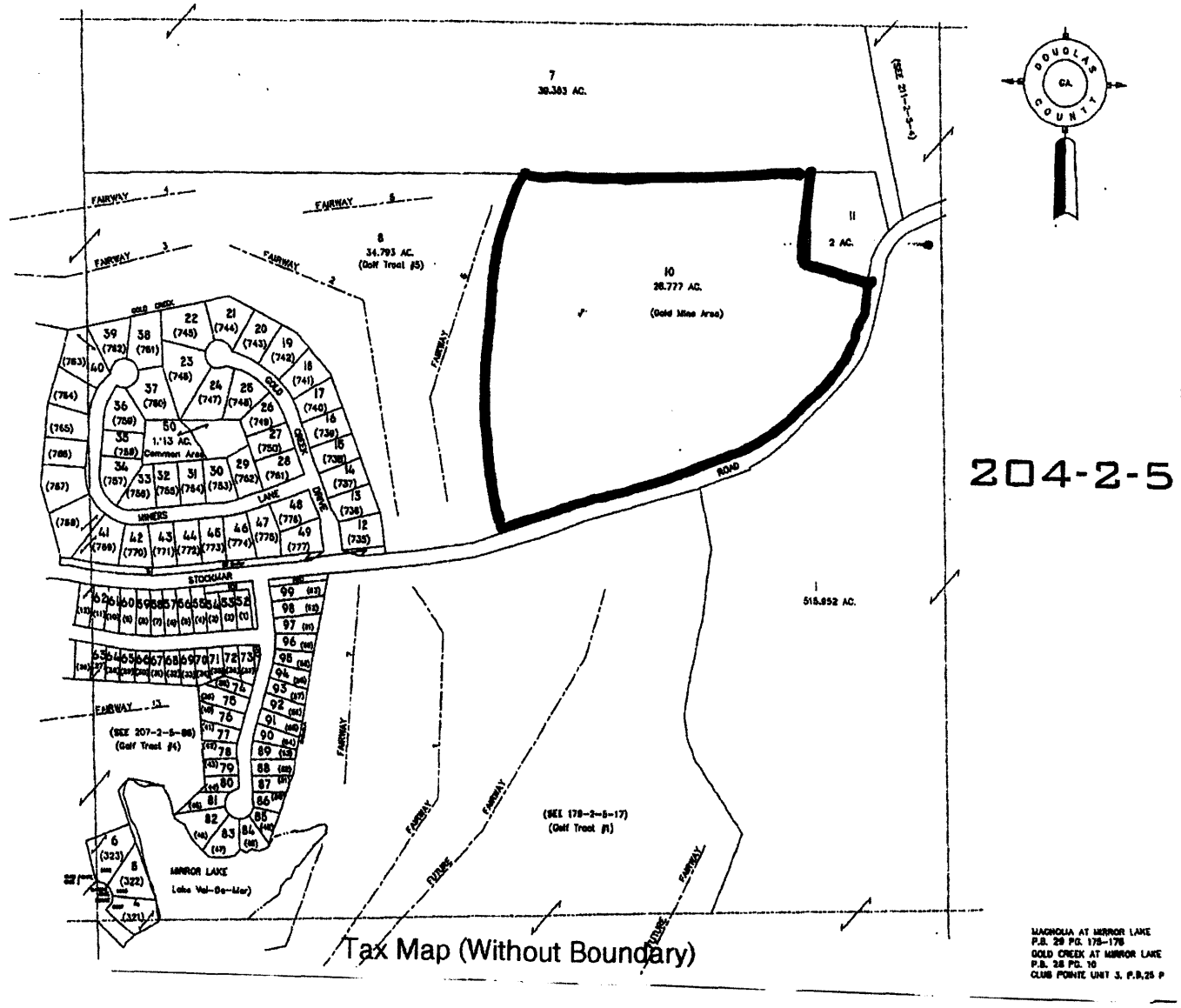
Description of Photograph(s):

Number of photographs: 22

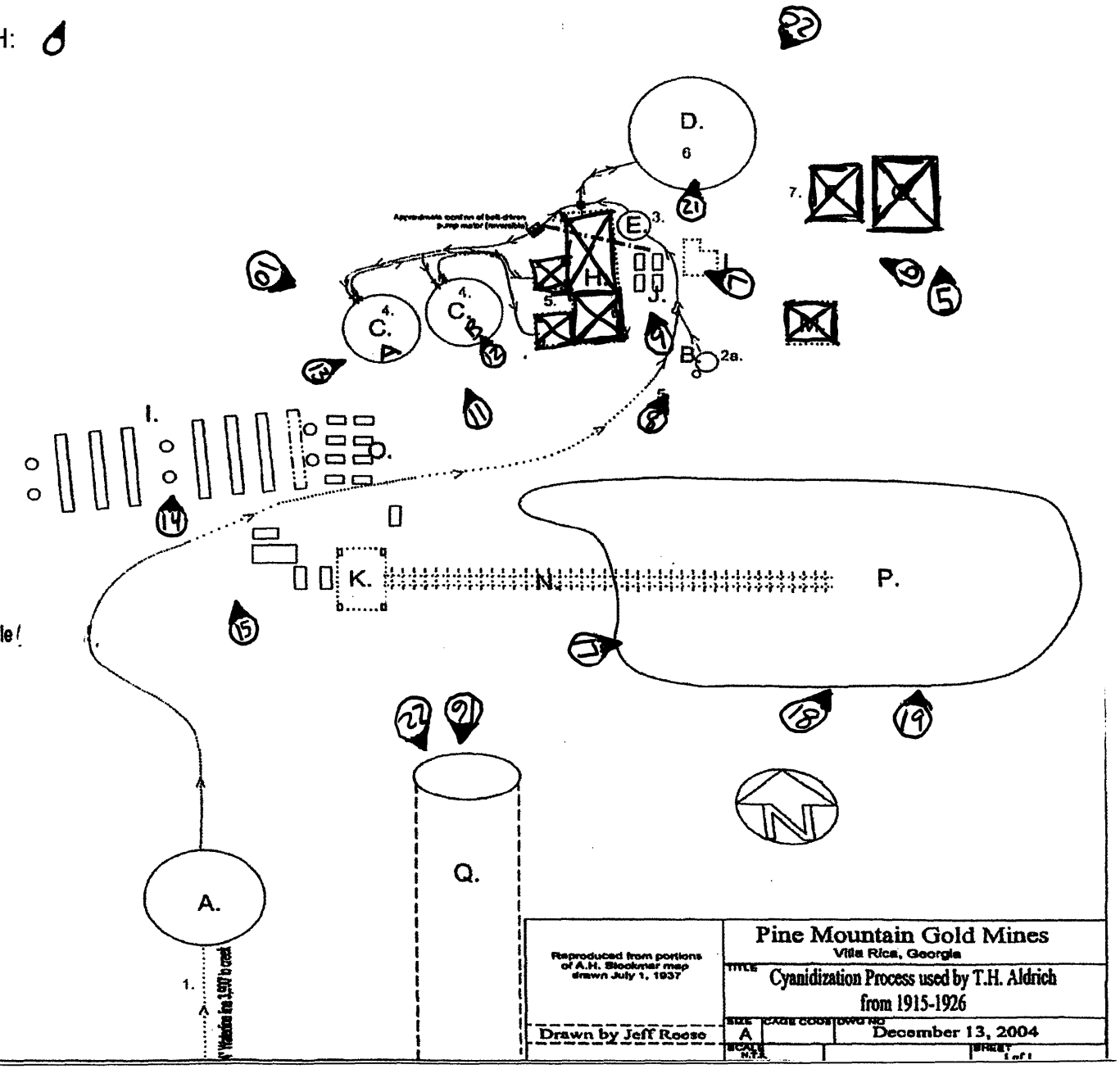
1. Main Entrance to Property; photographer facing west.
2. Ruins of Boy Scout Meeting Place; photographer facing west.
3. Stockmar Engineering Building; photographer facing west.
4. Stockmar House Ruins; photographer facing northeast.
5. Miner's Bunkhouse Ruins; photographer facing north.
6. Solution Tank and Sump Tank; photographer facing northwest.
7. Solution Tank; photographer facing west.
8. Cyanide Dissolving Tank A and B; photographer facing northeast.
9. Mill Building Ruins; photographer facing northwest.
10. Leaching Tank A and B; photographer facing southeast.
11. Leaching Tank A and B; photographer facing northwest.
12. Leaching Tank B; photographer facing northwest.
13. Leaching Tank A; photographer facing northeast.
14. Ore Stacking Bins; photographer facing northwest.
15. Ore Stacking Bins; photographer facing northwest.
16. Miner's Tunnel; photographer facing south.
17. Old Glory Hole; photographer facing east.
18. Miner's Tunnel; photographer facing northeast.
19. Old Glory Hole; photographer facing north.
20. Sump Tank; photographer facing southwest.
21. Sump Tank; photographer facing northeast.
22. Miner's Tunnel; photographer facing south.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)

PINE MOUNTAIN GOLD MINE
DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA
TAX MAP
SCALE: 1"=666'
NORTH:
PROPERTY BOUNDARY:
SOURCE: Douglas County Tax Assessor's Office. 2007.



PINE MOUNTAIN GOLD MINE
DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA
SITE MAP
NORTH: ↑
DIRECTION OF PHOTOGRAPH: 6



R.

REFERENCE

A. Water Reservoir
B. Cyanide Dissolving Tank
C. Percolators/Leaching Tanks
D. Sump Tank
E. Solution Tank
F. Laboratory/Assay Office
G. Miner's Bunkhouse
H. Mill Building Containing Zinc Boxes, Shaker Table
I. Ore Stocking Bins
J. Steam Engine Mounts
K. Ore Cart Tower Pilings
L. Unknown Building
M. Old Shop
N. Ore Cart Tracks
O. Pilings for Stamp Mill and Ball Mill
P. Old Glory Hole
Q. Man-Way/Miner's Tunnel Circa 1890
R. Mining Tailings

..... = Building/Structure No Longer Exists
^ = Gold Extraction Process
< = Direction of Water/Solution
..... = Approximate Location of Water Line

Reproduced from portions of A.H. Blackmar map drawn July 1, 1937

Pine Mountain Gold Mines
Villa Rica, Georgia

TITLE: Cyanidization Process used by T.H. Aldrich from 1915-1926

Drawn by Jeff Reese

SIZE A | CAGE CODE | DWG NO

December 13, 2004

SCALE N.T.S.

SHEET 1 of 1

PINE MOUNTAIN GOLD MINE
DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA
ATTACHMENT ONE: Leeching Tanks Under Construction, c. 1919

PINE MOUNTAIN GOLD MINE
DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA
ATTACHMENT TWO: Glory Hole, c. 1920s

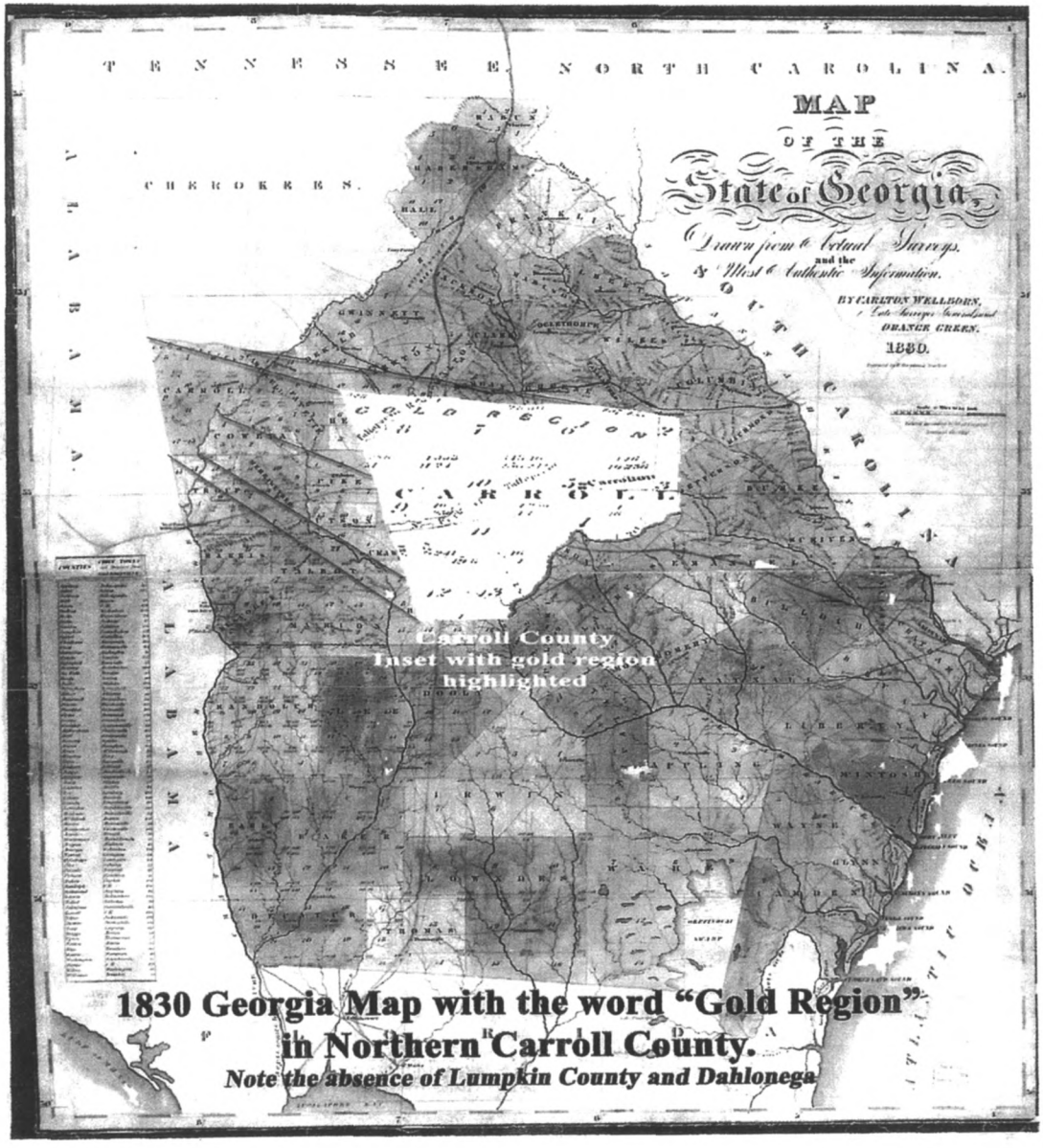
PINE MOUNTAIN GOLD MINE
DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA
ATTACHMENT THREE: Flying S Dude Ranch Advertisement

PINE MOUNTAIN GOLD MINE
DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA
ATTACHMENT FOUR: T=Block Molds

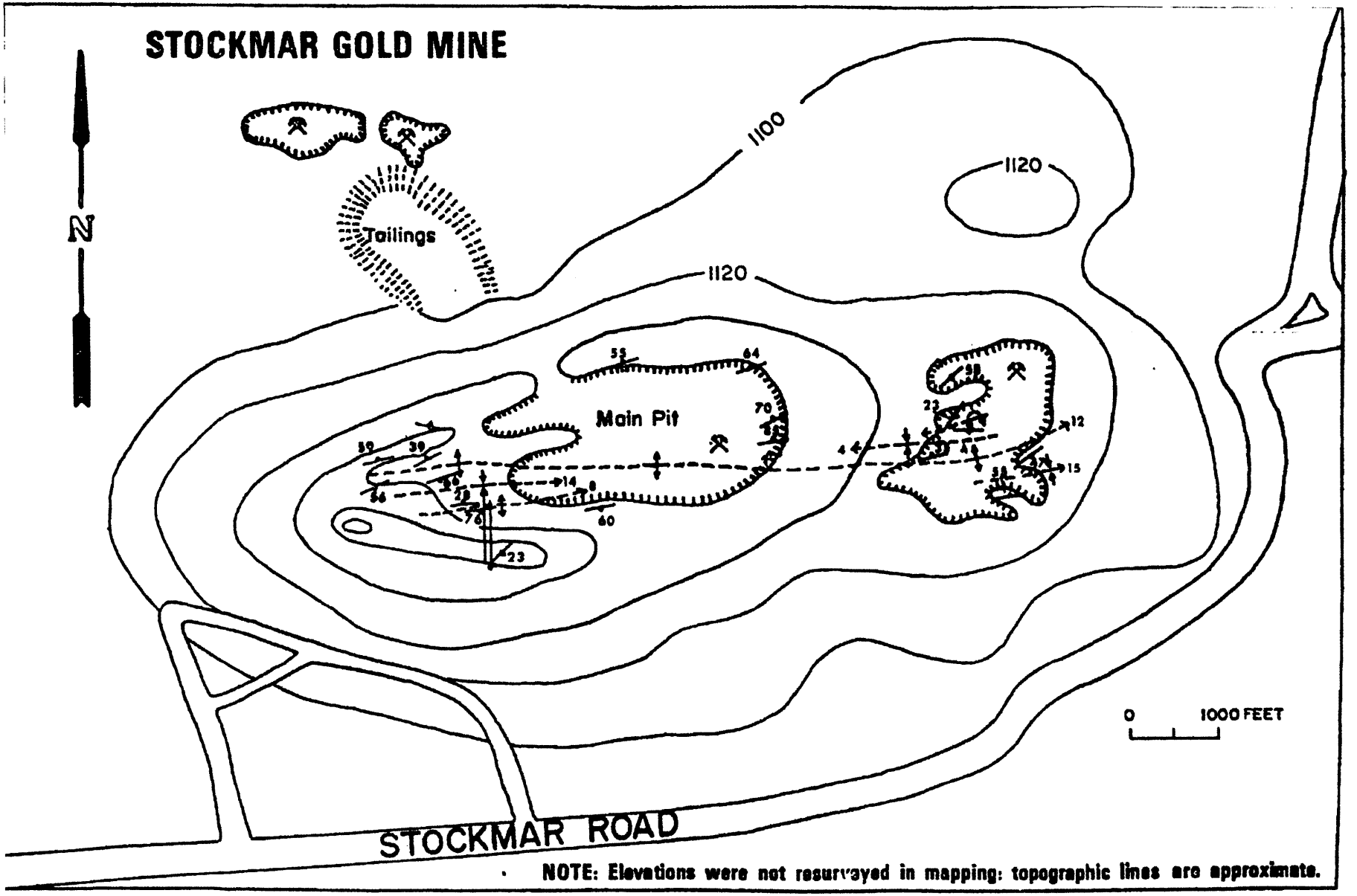
PINE MOUNTAIN GOLD MINE
DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA
ATTACHMENT FIVE: Pine Mountain Miners, c. 1915

A group of unidentified miners (Circa 1915)

PINE MOUNTAIN GOLD MINE
DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA
ATTACHMENT SIX: Georgia Map, 1830



PINE MOUNTAIN GOLD MINE
DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA
ATTACHMENT SEVEN: Site map of gold mine drawn in 1975



PINE MOUNTAIN GOLD MINE
DOUGLAS COUNTY, GEORGIA
ATTACHMENT EIGHT: Topographical Map of Mine
SCALE: 1"=285'