

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 an 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 The Coffee Pot

other names/site number Joe's Ranchhouse Restaurant DHR file no. 128-50

2. Location

street & number 2902 Brambleton Avenue S.W. not for publication

city or town Roanoke vicinity

state Virginia code VA county Roanoke code 770 zip code 24015

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Julia Abramik 4-3-96
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

VA. DEPT. OF HISTORIC 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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other. (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Coffee Pot

Roanoke VA

Name of Property

County and State

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.)

Table with columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, buildings, sites, structures, objects, 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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

RESTAURANT: roadhouse

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

RESTAURANT: roadhouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE, walls WOOD: log, STUCCO, roof ASBESTOS, other Walls: concrete, other: Stucco, log, metal

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 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
- Entertainment/Recreation

Period of Significance

1936

Significant Dates

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:

Hill Studio, P.C., Owner

Coffee Pot
Name of Property

Roanoke, Va.
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	58941610	4112211210
	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 Helen Hill, Preservation Planner
organization Hill Studio, P.C. date December, 1995
street & number 20A E. Campbell Avenue telephone 540-342-5263
city or town Roanoke state VA zip code 24011

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Carroll Bell Brambleton Avenue Associates
street & number 4316 BelleAire Circle telephone 540-774-8256
city or town Roanoke state VA zip code 24018

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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

COFFEE POT
Roanoke, VA

DESCRIPTION

The Coffee Pot Restaurant, 2902 Brambleton Avenue, is located in what is now a primarily commercial area of Brambleton Avenue, (U.S. 221) within the present city boundaries of Roanoke, Virginia. Built in 1936, it was originally located in an undeveloped area outside the city limits in Roanoke County. The Coffee Pot is an example of Rustic-style architecture with its log construction, employing vertical painted logs with white masonry caulking and a large, natural-stone chimney. It is also a rare example in southwest Virginia of 1930's mimetic roadside architecture with the large stucco coffee sign/structure that is situated on the roof of the building. The property is in good condition and continues to function in its historic use as a roadhouse. Although alterations and additions have been made over the years, they have been sensitive to the distinct character of the building's style and they are reversible.

When the Coffee Pot was built in 1936, U. S. 221 was a recently developed road and very rural in nature. The Coffee Pot was built on the roadside, just beyond the edge of town to attract the passing driver. It was the first commercial building on the outskirts of the city that one would see traveling north into Roanoke from the surrounding rural countryside. This section of 221 saw some residential growth during the 1940's, with early strip development occurring during the 1950's. Aerial photographs show the Coffee Pot in 1947 in a rural setting. By 1960 the Coffee Pot was one of a number of commercial properties that lines U.S. 221, also known as Brambleton Avenue. The early commercial roadside style of the building complements today's ever changing commercial highway strip. The Coffee Pot is situated on a northern corner of a triangular shaped block. The front and side of the lot are paved with perpendicular parking in front of the building. Originally there were gas pumps in front; they were removed shortly after the Coffee Pot opened for business.

The Coffee Pot is a one-story, 6-bay vertical log building with an intersecting gable roof and a T-shaped configuration. Built on a foundation of poured concrete, the walls (both interior and exterior) consist of vertical pine logs, painted black with white mortar caulking between. The composition shingle roof features a large, natural stone chimney along the central ridge of the side gable. The roof-to-wall junction reveals exposed rafters of unhewn logs that emphasize the building's log construction and conveys the exposed truss systems of the interior spaces.

The front facade is composed of four bays in the 30-foot gable-end section and a single door and window along the 49 foot enclosed side-gable section. A one-story, 5-bay frame porch with shed roof and unhewn log posts originally extended across the center. This configuration still exists, only now on the interior. The porch has been enclosed using applied half-timbers and vertical boards to simulate

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COFFEE POT
Roanoke, VA

DESCRIPTION (continued)

the log construction of the original section. The double hung sash windows have been replaced with single-pane plate glass windows. The windows are surrounded by plain milled boards without mouldings. The entrance door is single leaf wood with 15 panels. A narrow, red canvas awning with "The Coffee Pot" inscribed on it extends across and over the windows of the front gable section.

Nestled into the slope of the site, the north facade consists of 4 bays. The walls are of the same vertical-log construction and the exposed rafters are visible at the roofline. The double-hung sash windows have been replaced with single-pane plate glass windows. They are also surrounded by plain milled boards. The windows towards the rear of the building have been infilled to accommodate the stage area inside and to ameliorate the noise level from the bands.

The east, or rear, facade consists of the rear wall of the main, gable and section, and the kitchen addition. The 3 windows on this side have also been enclosed to accommodate the stage inside. The kitchen addition, circa 1960, is composed of concrete block with a flat roof. A metal cooler structure has also been added to the rear of the building. The restrooms were originally entered from the outside towards the south end of this facade. The restrooms were enlarged and given interior entrances.

Situated on the edge of the roof at the south end is the bright red "coffee pot." The approximately 15-foot-high masonry-formed structure is built on the flat roof of the concrete wing and partially extends into the main gable roof. The coffee pot is constructed of exposed unhewn vertical logs and mortar with a stuccoed exterior. The spout and top of the pot are constructed of white painted sheet metal with a wood log handle. The pot has a boarded front window and a door to the rear for access to the interior. The interior of the pot measuring 10 feet in diameter is used as storage. It is said to have been a popular place to drink beers and that at one time a man lived inside the pot. Steam from the furnace in the store room below would rise through the chimney inside the coffee pot into the spout. Along the perimeter of the platform are portions of an iron pipe railing. Stairs originally descended the platform from the rear of the wing. A flagpole and satellite-reception dish are also located on the flat roof of this wing.

The Coffee Pot is T-shaped in plan with a large 54' x 29' room for dining and dancing at the north end, a central bar area (33'6" x 18'6"), poolroom at the south end (14' x 20'), and the enclosed porch area (8'6" x 16') across the front. The kitchen addition extends across the rear of the building. The exposed, painted, vertical log and caulking of the building's construction and the exposed log truss system in the open ceilings throughout the building, as well as the large natural stone chimney continue

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COFFEE POT
Roanoke, VA

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

the rustic character of the building's exterior style into the interior spaces. A unique feature of this building's interior are the steam radiators with exposed pipes leading up to and across the ceilings. The concrete floors throughout the interior are covered with a linoleum tile floor in a checkerboard pattern. The paraphernalia including photographs and memorabilia of the various performance artists who have played at the Coffee Pot, cover the interior walls. Other fixtures contributing to the character include the pool tables and numerous cigarette, game and pinball machines.

The building is entered through a small hallway created when the porch was enclosed. From this hallway, the door opening leads into the bar area. A modern wooden bar is located across the rear wall, where the original bar once stood. The 1960's kitchen addition is reached through doorways behind the bar. This room also features a large (approximately 7'6" wide) natural stone fireplace. Large iron andirons (with arms for holding coffee pots) and a deer head mounted over the mantle add to the rustic character of the interior. The original exterior wall with door and window openings still exists. A small seating area with games is located in the enclosed porch area. The original porch section newer walls features applied half-timber and vertical boards to simulate the original walls. Beyond the barroom to the south is a poolroom. This area was originally the snack bar with a cooking area behind the counter. An exit door leads out of this room to the outside patio area. The two room base below the "coffee pot" is entered from the patio. The heating system is still located in one of the rooms with the other used as storage.

Door openings on either side of the fireplace in the barroom lead to the main dining and dancing area on the north end. The rear of the stone fireplace extends into this space. This large room (30' x 50') features a raised dining area across the front wall and a raised stage area along the back.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Coffee Pot is historically significant for its role as a popular entertainment and recreation location for Roanokers. Although originally designed as a filling station and tea room, the Coffee Pot quickly transitioned into a roadhouse. It has continued to this day as a Roadhouse/Restaurant. The Coffee Pot meets National Register criteria as it is a significant example of two architectural styles that reached their height in the 1930's: The Rustic style and the Mimetic Roadside styles of architecture--clearly evident in the design of the log building, and the "coffee pot."

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Section number 8 Page 4

COFFEE POT
Roanoke, VA

Historical background and significance:

Clifton F. and Irene L. Kefauver built the Coffee Pot in 1936. Mr. Kefauver was secretary-treasurer of Howlkes and Kefauver Real Estate and General Insurance. He had previously purchased the land as well as other adjoining parcels in 1931 and 1933. The land where the Coffee Pot was constructed was part of the Evergreen Development Company subdivision fronting "new State Highway 221." The property was sold in September, 1937 to M. F. Brown, and is described in the deed as a "filling station and tea room known as the Coffee Pot." Tea rooms were a 1920's solution to a place along the highway to purchase a meal. They were usually managed by women. By the time the Coffee Pot was built, the institution was in its waning days.

The establishment served as an active filling station for only a brief period of time. Though designed as a tea room, the Coffee Pot became a roadhouse where primarily locals came to dance, drink beer and socialize. The Browns sold the property in November 1945 to Harold and Frances LaGrande who continued to operate it as a roadhouse. The LeGrandes sold it to Joseph and Helen Graylob in 1957. Wiley Jackson purchased the property in 1960, selling it three years later. It was during these years that the Coffee Pot was known by another name: Joe's Ranchhouse Restaurant. John H. and Margaret M. Wagoner owned the property from 1963 to 1968 and then sold it to LCN Corporation, Inc. Brambleton Avenue Associates, the present owners purchased the property in 1979. The Coffee Pot continues as a well known local entertainment designation featuring live music on weekends.

A popular form of entertainment fueled by growing middle class automobile ownership during the post-prohibition 1930's and 1940's was going to roadhouses. A roadhouse is a "restaurant, dance hall, etc., at the side of a road in a rural area." Roadhouses were commonly Rustic-style buildings in natural surroundings that could be reached by existing roads. The great outdoors was a major attraction during this period, and a popular way to see it was through the windshield of a car. Automobile travel delivered plenty of excitement in the mid-1930's. Driving to a roadhouse was just as exciting as being there. It was common for groups of 6 to 8 people to travel together to the roadhouse. "On a Saturday afternoon, you might start downtown at a the drug store meeting some friends there, and then head out to one place and end up at another."⁽¹⁾ The roadhouse provided a place of social gathering to eat, drink, dance and listen to the jukebox. Many roadhouses featured a three-piece band on Saturday nights.

In Roanoke the Coffee Pot was a popular roadhouse destination. Other local roadhouses during the period were Riverjack (adjacent to the Roanoke River and built from large riverstones), The Log-In,

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COFFEE POT
Roanoke, VA

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

Reno's (later known as Toby's), and Traveltown. The Coffee Pot did not gain a bad reputation. The Browns were an older couple and she was known as "Ma Brown." "Ma Brown" kept her patrons in line. Roadhouses such as the Coffee Pot were quite active after the end of World War II when the soldiers came home. Their popularity began to fade in the beginning of the 1950's because of the growth of the strip restaurant. Today the Coffee Pot remains as the only Roanoke Valley roadhouse still in operation.

The Coffee Pot exemplifies Rustic-style architecture. This style had its origin in the great camps of the Adirondacks of northern New York. These retreats were built between 1880 and 1930 for wealthy Easterners, using native stone and timbers as the primary building materials. They were designed to fit with their natural surroundings. Magazine articles on the camps, their wealthy owners and visitors brought about a greater awareness of this style. It influenced the National Park Service in their design of early park buildings. Strong national-government funding of the national parks after the Crash of 1929 lead to further development of the Rustic style in National Park Service designs reaching its height in the 1930's, with the help of Civilian Conservation Corps construction talent. Virginia was the first eastern state to have CCC camps.(2) There are numerous projects through the state built by the CCC, including the Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park and parts of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Blue Ridge Parkway had an influence on Roanoke due to its close proximity and the fact that the city served as Park Headquarters and Design Office. Rustic style housing in the Roanoke Valley is commonly found in outlying rural areas with groupings on Crystal Creek Drive along Back Creek, the Roanoke River at Wabun, Bottom Creek on Bent Mountain, and near Hanging Rock.

The Coffee Pot is a fantasy-sized rustic cabin that incorporates a three dimensional coffee pot. The "coffee pot" is an excellent example of mimetic architecture. It is a structure unto itself as well as a sculptural element of signage for the entire building. The Coffee Pot Building on Route 60, west of Lexington, is one of Virginia's few surviving examples of true Mimetic Architecture Roanoke's Coffee Pot Restaurant also bears similarities to the Wig-Wam Restaurant on Hanover County's stretch of Route 1. At the Wig-Wam a sheet metal, neon-lit wigwam projects from the vestibule roof.

Late 1920's motorists were attracted by images where the shape of the structure physically illustrated the name or nature of the business. This style is also known as "duck" architecture named after the famous roadside duck built in Riverhead, Long Island, in 1931.(3) Though mimetic architecture is deeply rooted in history it developed during the 1920's and 1930's into a unified package combining advertising and architecture. This synthesis of sign and building is evident in the huge "Coffee Pot" composing the south end of the Coffee Pot restaurant. The three dimensional sign was designed to attract the passing motorist. The structure was made of stucco and sheet metal. On a cold winter's

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COFFEE POT
Roanoke, VA

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

night, the steam emanating from the pot spoke "coffee" to the passing motorist in direct usual terms. Approached from the city, it appears as the first rustic cabin, symbol of picturesque relaxation; approached from the rural south, the large steaming coffee pot reminds the traveler of the sophisticated comforts within as part of the city beyond. Examples of this style are very rare in Virginia as our national roadside is subject to continued modernization.

The Coffee Pot represents key trends in the 1930's. It brings together two styles of architecture that were at their height during that period in a building that was used for one of society's popular leisure activities--going to roadhouses. This combination of a popular and continuous establishment, and two popular styles, provides for us today a rare duck indeed.

ENDNOTES;

- (1) Mrs. John Hart, telephone interview, Roanoke, VA., September, 1995.
- (2) Tweed, William C., Laura E. Soulliere and Henry G. Law. National Park Service Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942. San Francisco, CA: Division of Cultural Resource Management, Western Regional Office, National Park Service, February, 1977.
- (3) Venturi, Robert; Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenous. Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1977.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bobmerger, Bruce D. "26 Preservation Briefs: The Preservation and Repair of Historic-Log Buildings." Washington, D.C.: Cultural Resources, National Park Service, September, 1991.

Casey, Dan. "A Roadhouse Full of Memories." Roanoke Times and World News, Extra Section, Pgs. 1 and 5, June 29, 1995.

Evergreen Development Co., Inc. Subdivision Map, June, 1932.

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COFFEE POT
Roanoke, VA

BIBLIOGRAPHY (Continued)

Kaiser, Harvey H. Great Camps of the Adirondacks. Boston: David R. Godine Publisher, Inc., 1986.

Liebs, Chester H. Mainstreet to Miracle Mile. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985.

Phillips, Karl. Coffee Pot Photograph. March 1, 1937.

Pugh, John. "The Coffee Pot Turns 50". The Roanoker Volume XIII, No. 6, June, 1986. Pp. 1-6.

Roanoke City Aerial Photographs, 1947, 1963.

Roanoke City Deed Books, 1943-1979.

Roanoke City Directories, 1935-1970.

Roanoke County Deed Books, 1931-1942.

Roanoke County Land Books, 1933-1940.

Tweed, William C., Laura E. Soulliere and Henry G. Law. National Park Service Rustic Architecture: 1916-1942. San Francisco, CA: Division of Cultural Resource Management, Western Regional Office, National Park Service, February, 1977.

Venturi, Robert; Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenous. Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1977.

Telephone Interviews by Helen Hill, Hill Studio, P.C., Roanoke, VA.:

Mrs. W. Jackson Shepherd, May 1995

Mrs. John Dull, May 1995

Mr. Homer Clemmons, September 1995

Personal Interviews by Helen Hill, Hill Studio, P.C., Roanoke, VA.:

Mr. Bill Arnold, May 1995

Mr. Carroll Bell, Owner, May 1995

Ms. Marie Crowder, October 1995

Mrs. John Hart, September 1995

Mrs. Ann Kyle, May 1995

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COFFEE POT
Roanoke, VA

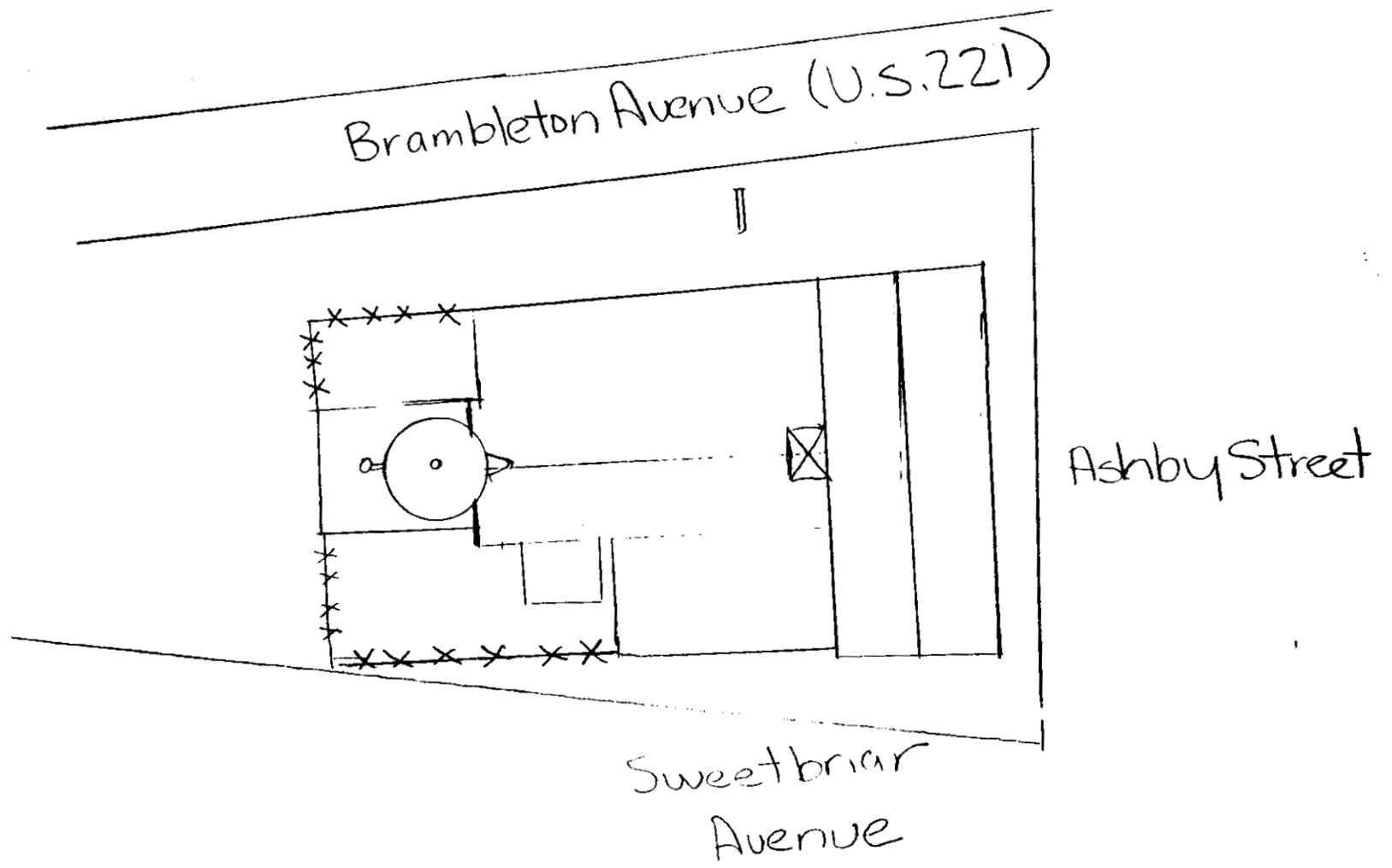
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Greenland Hills, Block 13, Lots Part 3, 4 and 5.

VERBAL BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the coffee pot.

The Coffee Pot
Roanoke, Va.
Site Plan

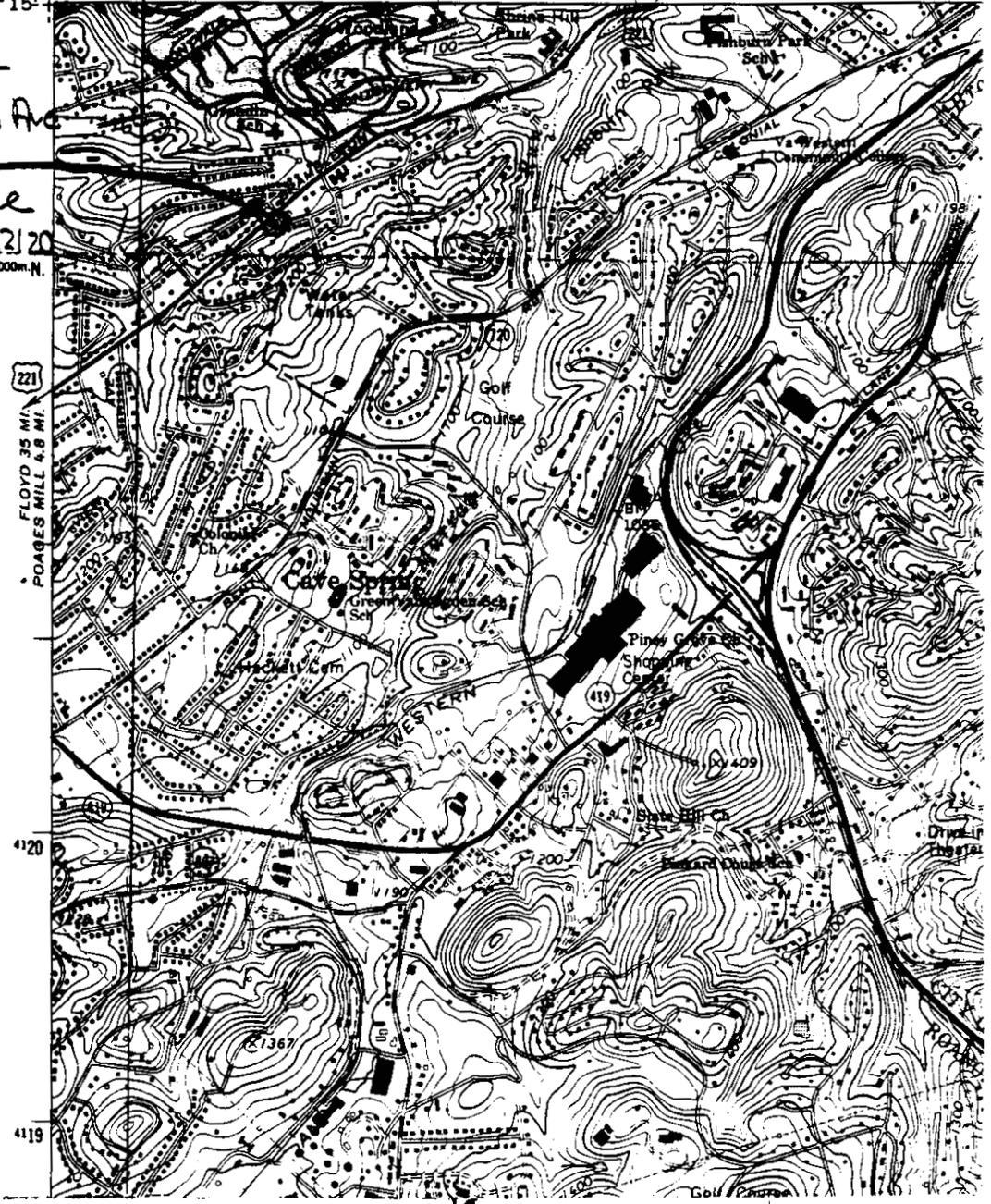


UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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(SALEM)

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The Coffee Pot
2902 Brambleton Ave
Roanoke Va.
UTM Reference
171589460/41223120
4122000m N.



221
FLOYD 35 MI.
POAGES MILL 4.8 MI.

4120

4119

Golf Course