

VLR-4/22/92 NRHP-10/27/92

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 COUNTRY CABIN

other names/site number DHR File No. 97-59

2. Location

street & number Jct. US 23 and SR 790 N/A not for publication

city or town Norton vicinity

state Virginia code VA county Wise code 195 zip code 24293

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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State of 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

COUNTRY CABIN

Wise County, Virginia

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.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Music facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Music facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Log cabin

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls WOOD: Log

CONCRETE

roof OTHER

other _____

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1937-1942

Significant Dates

1937

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

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):

- Checkboxes for documentation types: preliminary determination, National Register, National Historic Landmark, Historic American Buildings Survey, Historic American Engineering Record.

Primary location of additional data:

- Checkboxes for data locations: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State agency, Federal agency, Local government, University, Other.

Name of repository:

COUNTRY CABIN
Name of Property

Wise County, Virginia
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.2 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

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

3

Zone	Easting						Northing							

4

Zone	Easting						Northing							

 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 Connie Clark and Anna Breeding

organization Appalachian Traditions, Inc. date October 1991

street & number P. O. Box 67 telephone 703-328-0100

city or town Wise state VA zip code 24293

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 _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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 Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Country Cabin, Wise County, Virginia

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Country Cabin is a simple rustic log cabin, built around 1937. It is located in a picturesque mountain setting, and situated in a natural hollow surrounded by mountains. The property upon which the cabin is built is an imperfect triangle in shape, and roughly one and a quarter acres in size. Its landscape is rich with pine, walnut and peach trees. The cabin faces south, toward the community of Josephine. The Powell River runs directly in front of the cabin property, marking its longitudinal boundary.

The County Cabin is twenty by forty feet in measure. It houses a rustic stone fireplace, and boasts a tall ceiling comprised of sturdy chestnut log beams. A log porch extends twelve feet from the front of the cabin. The County Cabin has endured no significant alteration since its original construction and remains largely intact. It's rectangular plan and unpartitioned interior are reflective of its design as a community center.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The cabin is constructed of chestnut logs that were felled on the nearby Williams Mountain. The logs are saddle notched, and a wood chip and cement mixture serves as chinking. The cabin is twenty feet wide by forty feet in length, one story in height, and situated on a foundation comprised of ten stone piers. The cabin has a gable roof constructed of rough pine boards, sheathed on the exterior with plywood and rolled composition paper.

The only projection beyond the cabin's rectangular configuration is a one-story, gable-roofed porch, constructed of the same material as the main block. The porch extends twelve feet from the cabin, and is accessed by four stone steps.

The windows are paired, double-hung, one-over-one sash. There are three bays across the front and rear of the cabin, and one bay on each side of the cabin. A rustic stone chimney is located near the northwestern corner of the cabin, and a small chimney for a cookstove is located in the cabin's northeast corner. An original kitchen extension, located to the rear of the cabin, was removed in around 1952 by the State Highway Department for road expansion; however, work is in progress to reconstruct the kitchen facilities at the rear of the cabin.

On the interior, the floor is covered in tongue-and-groove pine boards that replaced the original damaged pine material. The notched chestnut logs and chinking are visible on the interior, as are the rough pine boards of the exposed roof framing. A cookstove and assorted Appalachian accoutrements complement the cabin's rustic construction style.

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Section number 8 Page 2 Country Cabin, Wise County, Virginia

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Country Cabin, located near the town of Norton, Virginia, is significant under Criterion A because of its long-term use as an Appalachian-culture community center. From the time of its construction in 1937 until the early 1950s, the cabin was used for a variety of community-oriented events. Music lessons, cakewalks, applebutter making and visits by local banjo player Dock Boggs, who later played at Cargenie Hall, were all popular events at the Country Cabin. Returning to use as a community center in 1977, the Country Cabin has been continually used to promote traditional Appalachian heritage through music, dance, and cultural programs, echoing its original 1937 function and design.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Country Cabin property was originally owned by members of the O'Neil family, residents of Josephine, a community located outside the city of Norton. Concerned with preserving the culture of her community, Katherine (Kate) O'Neil Peters Sturgill, daughter of Irish immigrants William and Henrietta O'Neil, sought the creation of a community center. William O'Neil, her father, is said to have agreed to donate the property to his daughter if could persuade local leaders to fund a community center. Indeed, Kate O'Neil was able to persuade local government officials to fund the project under President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration Program.

About 1937, local young men began constructing a rustic log building to be used for recreational purposes. Once it was in place, young Kate O'Neil, who was locally-popular for her folk singing and ballad songwriting, conducted musical programs, taught guitar lessons, and organized community gatherings at the cabin. Also under the direction of O'Neil, the County Cabin was host to square dances, box suppers, and cakewalks. In addition, a local banjo player named Dock Boggs, who later played at Carnegie Hall, often joined O'Neil at the cabin to play music.

The onset of World War II brought the draft and the induction of many of Norton's young men to serve. This greatly depleted the population of individuals involved in managing the cabin events. The women in the community continued to manage the festivities in their absence, but community participation eventually dwindled. By the early 1950s there was little interest in the cabin's use as a community center, so the O'Neil family used the cabin as domestic rental property. Around 1952, when the State Highway Department removed the cabin's kitchen for road expansion, the cabin was sold to Bill Humphries, a local coal operator. Humphries continued to offer the cabin to renters for residential use.

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Continuation Sheet**

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Country Cabin, Wise County, Virginia

Section number _____ Page _____

In 1976, select Norton residents, including Led Ross, Vilas Williams, and Bruce Arwood, attended a birthday celebration in honor of Kate O'Neil's son, Fred Peters. At the O'Neil home located in Josephine, the Norton locals began reminiscing about past gatherings at the old cabin, which sparked a renewed interest in Appalachian community activities. Soon after, those who had attended the party began meeting each Saturday at another facility in Josephine.

The community gatherings became popular and resulted in the planning of additional festivities. Programs included a molasses stir-off, applebutter making, and regular Saturday-night musical programs, as well as many other traditional Appalachian arts and crafts that had disappeared from Norton's mountain life. The events became so popular that soon the facility was outgrown. The organizers began searching for a larger place to meet and attempted to obtain the larger, original Country Cabin that was once owned by Kate O'Neil and her family. Community leaders asked Humphries, the owner of the cabin, if they could again use the it for cultural activities. At the time, the cabin was being rented to a family for domestic use; however, the renters were asked to relocate to another rental property owned by Humphries. Once they agreed to relocate, Humphries obliged the requests of the community leaders and returned the cabin to use as a recreational facility.

Since its resurrection in 1977 as a community center, the Country Cabin has featured musical programs similar to those that made it popular in the 1930s. Referred to tourists by the local Chamber of Commerce, the Country Cabin features cultural exchange programs with touring artists, and hosts regular Saturday evening events that are aired on local and regional television stations. Most importantly, the cabin conducts workshops in traditional mountain music, dance, and crafts.

In 1988, the owner of the cabin, Humphries Enterprises, deeded the cabin and property to Appalachian Traditions, Inc., a non-profit organization devoted to cultural programs and entertainment, thereby encouraging the cabin's continued use as a community center. Since 1988, Appalachian Traditions has endeavored to maintain the traditional cabin activities and offer the Norton community a means of preserving, perpetuating, and understanding the significant qualities of its Appalachian culture.

To accommodate Appalachian Traditions's increasing audience and need for performing space, the group's long-range plan is to construct a larger log building for use as a music hall. The revenues realized from this expansion will be used to rehabilitate the original log cabin as a mountain heritage museum.

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Section number 10 Page 4 Country Cabin, Wise County, Virginia

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

BEGINNING at the point being the common corner of a lot owned by William Hammonds and the right-of-way of State Route 23 and 58 and the cabin property; thence in a southwardly direction with the common line of the cabin property and William Hammonds property to a point being two small sycamores on the west bank of Powell River, being a common corner of the cabin property and William Hammonds property; thence leaving the common corner of the cabin property and William Hammonds property with a new line in a southwardly direction approximately 150 feet to the point being the north right-of-way line of the Interstate Railroad, being the common corner of the cabin property and Interstate Railroad right-of-way; thence in a westwardly direction with the north right-of-way line of Interstate Railroad Company approximately 340 feet to a point where said corner is 140 feet south of the center line of State Route 23 & 58; thence in a northwardly direction 70 feet to the southern right-of-way line of State Route 23 & 58; thence with the southern right-of-way of State 23 & 58 in a eastwardly direction approximately 380 feet to the point of BEGINNING, containing 1.20, more or less.

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Section number Photos Page 5 Country Cabin, Wise County, Virginia

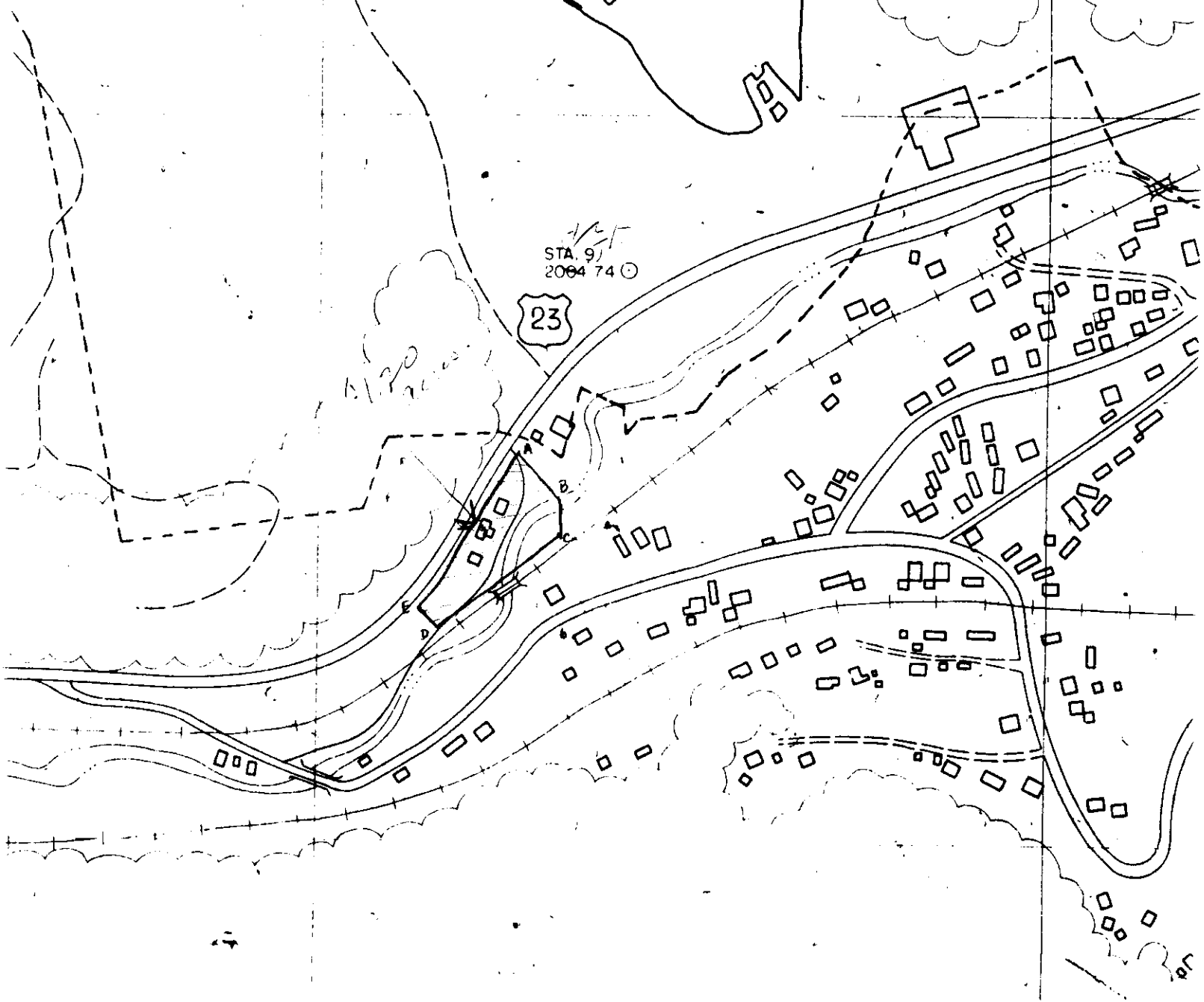
PHOTOGRAPH IDENTIFICATION

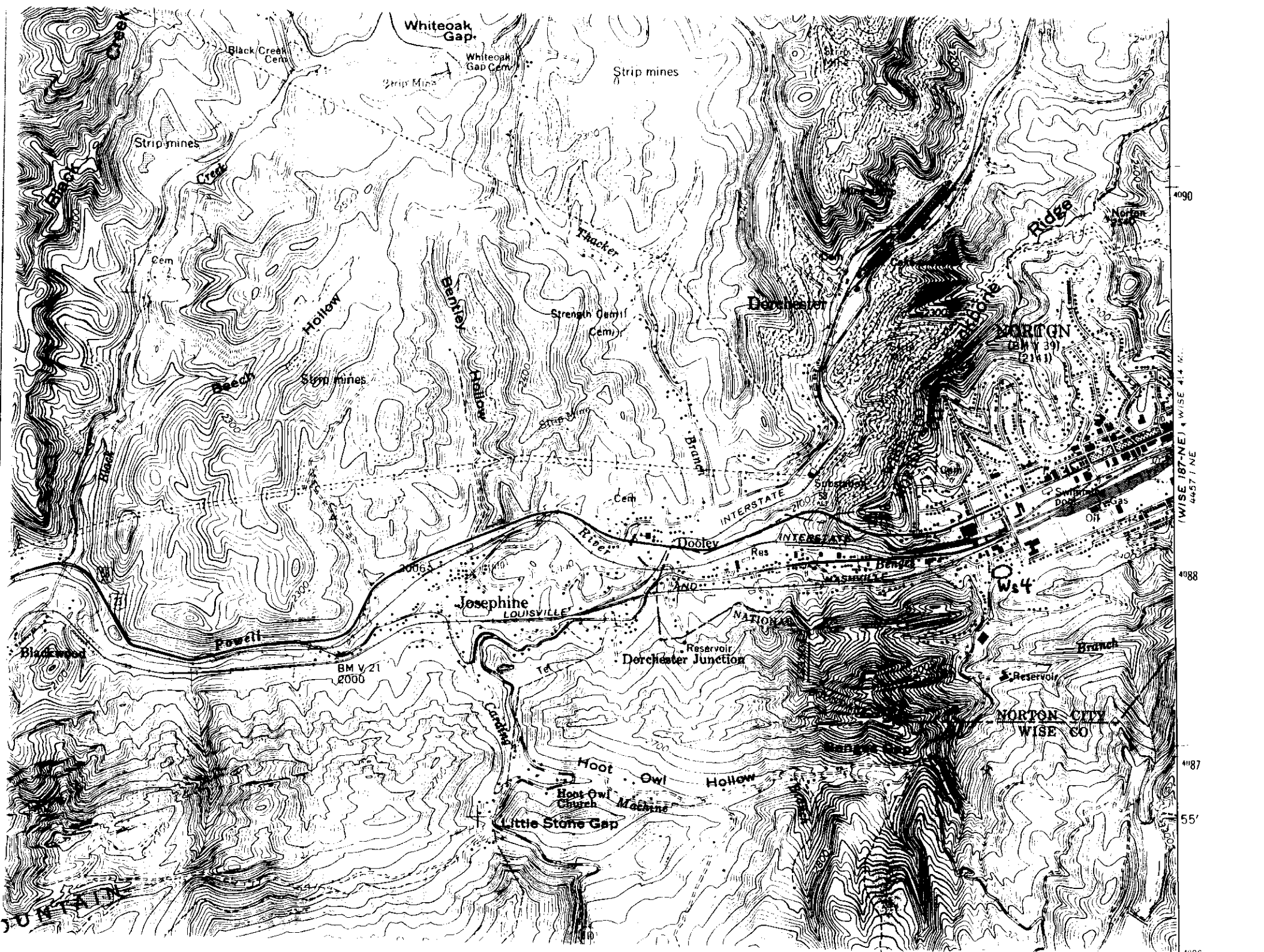
1. Country Cabin (97-59)
Wise County
Photographed by Julie Vosmik/September 3, 1992
Negatives on file at Virginia State Library, Richmond, VA
Negative # 12379
View of front elevation looking north
Photo 1 of 6
2. View of west elevation
3. View of east elevation
4. View of interior looking east
5. View of interior looking west
6. Detail of fireplace



3224
2146.57

STA. 9)
2064 74





4090

(WISE 187-NE) WISE 4:4 1/2 4457 I NE

4088

4087

55'

Whiteoak Gap

Strip mines

Strip mines

Black Creek Cem

Whiteoak Gap Cem

Strip Mine

Strength Camp (Cem)

Dorchester

NORTON CITY

Hollow

Battle Hollow

Thacker

Ridge

Beech

Strip mines

Branch

INTERSTATE

INTERSTATE

Josephine LOUISVILLE

Dorchester Junction

NORTON CITY WISE CO

Powell

BM V 21 2000

Reservoir

Branch

Reservoir

Hoot Owl

Hollow

Little Stone Gap

Hoot Owl Church

Machine

Blackwood

JOHN TAYLOR