

**Columbus Mills Pace House
813 Fifth Avenue West
Hendersonville, North Carolina**

Local Landmark Report

**Prepared by
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Southeastern Preservation Services
Asheville, North Carolina**

July 16, 2026



Name of Designated Landmark

Columbus Mills Pace House

Property Address

813 Fifth Avenue West
Hendersonville, North Carolina 28739

PIN#/REID

9568-48-7241/9968353

Deed Book and Page Number

3175, 436

Zoning

RES-Single Family

Acreage to be designated:

1 acre

Interior to be designated:

Staircase all three levels and crown and picture molding on the first and second floor

Property Owner Contact Information

Hilton Family Trust
c/o Carol and Charles R. Hilton, Trustees
813 Fifth Avenue West
Hendersonville, North Carolina 28739
(Carol) 949-310-2449
Mail4hilton@gmail.com

Applicant Contact Information

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Abstract

Statement of Significance

The Columbus Mills Pace House should be designated a local landmark for several reasons. First, the house is associated with Columbus Mills Pace, first elected to the position of Clerk of Superior Court for Henderson County in 1868, and continuing in that position until his death in 1925. Pace lived in this house from ca. 1872 through 1925, for the majority of his career. While known far and wide for his work as Clerk, Pace was also involved in real estate development in Hendersonville, including the development of Laurel Park. In addition to this highly important historic association with Columbus Mills Pace, the house exhibits a high degree of craftsmanship in its finish details, including the hand-planing of the floor boards and staircase, the mantels, and the well-crafted crown molding throughout the house.

Archaeological Comments

Archaeology of the house was not explored for purposes of this landmark report, but it is possible there could be some archaeological evidence of earlier outbuildings which are no longer extant.

Integrity Statement (Location, Design, Setting, Workmanship, Materials, Feeling, Association)

The Columbus Mills Pace house retains a great deal of integrity in terms of its location, design, setting and workmanship. The house has not been moved, and for the most part retains its original materials. The main exception to this is the replacement of original windows with more energy-efficient ones, but the configuration of the original windows has remained. The addition to the west side of the kitchen area and the enclosure of the porch on the south side of the original kitchen is a change to the building overall, but it is not highly visible from the street and it does not affect the main body of the house where most of the original design and craftsmanship remains intact. The den at the north side of the house, while also a change, again does not affect the main block of the house since it was originally a porch. The one-story rear addition currently under construction will also not affect the integrity of the main house. The feeling and association of the house, despite these changes, remains intact, since the original floor plans and finishes have not been changed.

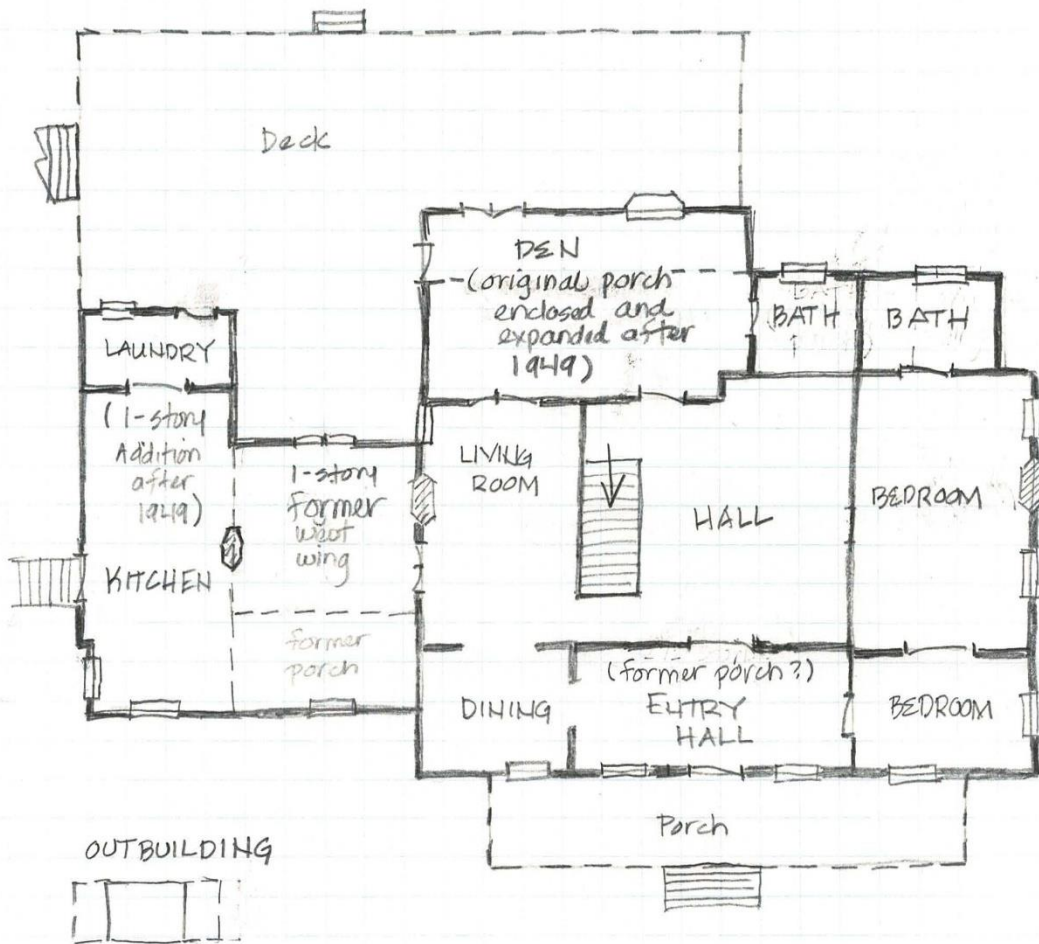
Proposed Boundary Justification

The lot encompasses all of the property associated with the house from at least the early twentieth century. Pace owned most of the land around the house which he sold off through the years, but the land around his own house has remained intact.

Site Plan and Boundary



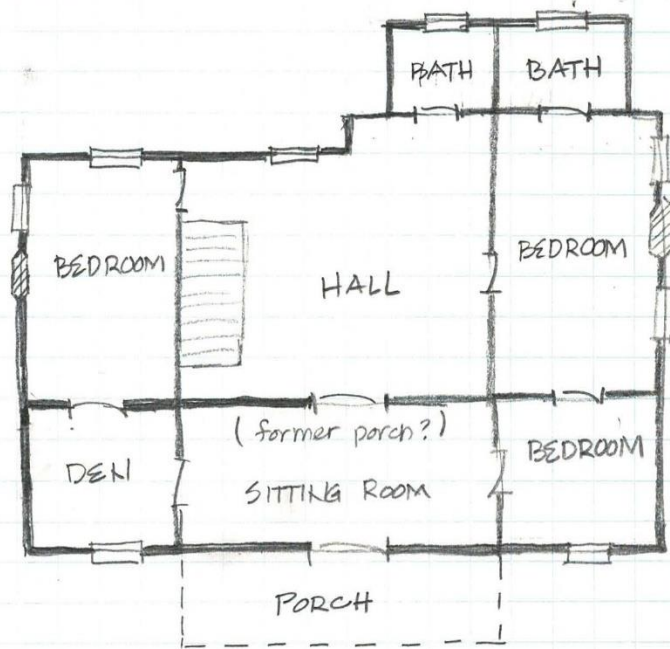
First Floor Plan



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

NORTH ↑

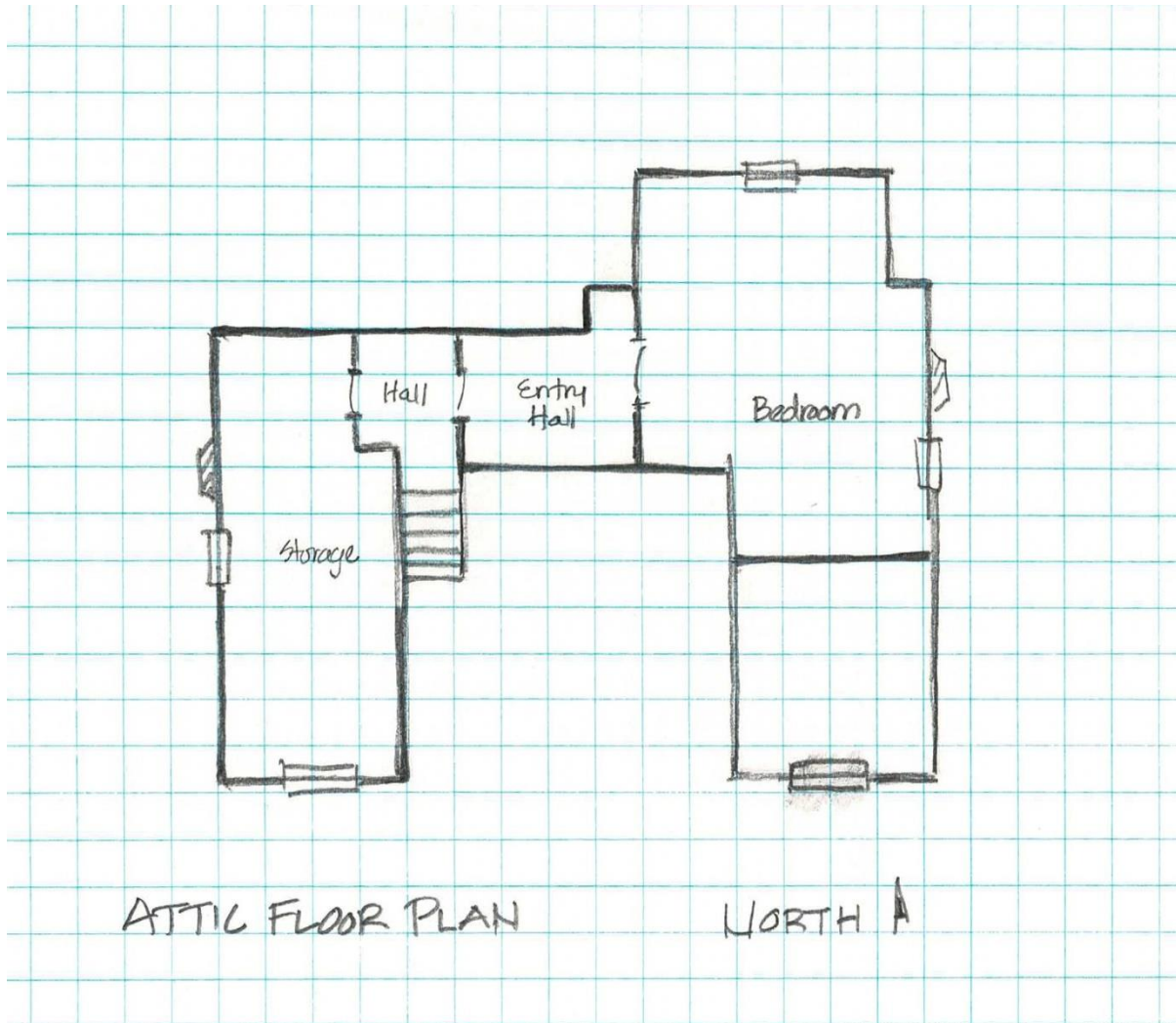
Second Floor Plan



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

NORTH ↑

Attic Floor Plan



Architectural Assessment

Columbus Mills Pace House. ca. 1872-1873.

Set on a one-acre lot, the ca. 1872-1873 Columbus Mills Pace House, the first built in the West Side Historic District, faces south onto Fifth Avenue West (formerly Broad Street), with an entry gravel walkway with a central fountain, leading to the front porch. To the southwest of the main house is a historic stone outbuilding. At the front of the lot, on the south edge, is a stone retaining wall which breaks in the center for concrete steps with metal railing. To the west of this wall is a concrete drive leading to the carriage house, and near the west boundary of the lot is a gravel driveway leading to the non-historic garage at the northwest edge of the lot. Originally there were several additional outbuildings located on the west side of the property,

but these were removed previous to the current owner, as they were in severely deteriorated condition.

The Classically-inspired, two-and-one-half-story, central hall plan house, clad in vinyl siding, has a single-shoulder exterior end brick chimney on the east and west sides, a metal-clad side gable roof, and front gable dormers. The main block of the house is roughly square in configuration, with a front-gable-roof two-story wing at the northeast corner. To the west of this wing is a former porch on the first level that has now been enclosed and expanded to the north, a change made after 1949, likely under the ownership of the Chamison family when the house was in use for a brief time as a rooming house.¹ While not fully documented, it is highly likely that materials to build the house were available on site, including heart pine and chestnut framing. The railroad did not arrive in Hendersonville until 1879, so local skilled craftsmen likely built the house including the hand-planed wide board floors, staircase, and crown molding throughout since milled materials that could be transported by rail were not as readily available at the time the house was built.

On the front of the house (south elevation) there is a nearly full-width porch on the first level and a central porch on the second level, both with scrollwork brackets on narrow wood posts, and a simple balustrade with 2 x 2 balusters. While not fully documented, it appears that both porches were added in the late nineteenth century, based on their style and the fact that physical evidence in the house would indicate this is the case. It appears that the original house form was a U-shape plan on this elevation with the central bay on both levels a recessed porch. This recessed porch likely helped to ventilate the rooms on either side at the front of the house. Physical evidence of this design change includes the fact that the floor boards run in a different direction on the inside on both levels, and on the second floor, the original weatherboard siding around this space is still in place. There is also physical evidence, on the exterior and the interior, that this central section was enclosed. At the time these enclosures happened, likely needed as the family grew, the two exterior porches were added. This is a historic change that was done fairly early in the evolution of the house.

To the west of the house is a one-story wing, visible on Sanborn maps and on the first floor plan, a portion of which appears to be original to the house. This original wing consisted of a small room with a porch.² This likely served as a kitchen for the house, since it was separate from the main block of the house, with an original brick chimney still in place along what would have been the west wall. This one-story wing has now been turned into a large kitchen space, a

¹ Sanborn Maps from 1949 indicate this porch still existed.

² The current owners have documentary photographs that show the floorboards ran in a different direction in the area of the former porch, with a slight slope to the floor.

change made previous to the current owners, likely by the Self family when they ran an inn on the property, along with an addition on the west side. The only structural change to the kitchen space made by the current owners was the removal of a pantry at the northwest corner of the room, along with leveling of the floors and the current floor finish of ceramic tile. To the rear of the house is a large deck, added to the house by the current owners. Windows throughout the house are replacements, but in the same configurations as the original windows, including nine-over-nine and six-over-six. New doors and windows on the first level around the kitchen wing and in the den at the rear of the main house were also added by the owners previous to the current owner.

The front, south elevation of the house, is five bays on the first level and three bays on the second, with the nearly full-width front porch as noted. Beginning on the west end of the first floor, there is a single window, with the four-panel front door with transom lights flanked by single windows. There is a second single window on the east end. The front-gable dormers flank either side of the centrally-located porch. On the second floor, there are single windows on either end, with the four-panel door with transom and sidelights in the center, and the centrally-located front porch extending out from the door bay.

The east elevation of the house consists of three single windows on the first floor, two of which flank the brick chimney, and two single windows on the second floor, flanking the chimney. There is a single window in the gable end at the attic level.

The rear of the house (north elevation), beginning with the two-story wing on the east end, consists of two single windows on each floor, and a single window in the gable end at the attic. The remainder of the main block of the house includes two single windows on the second level. The original shed-roof porch, now enclosed and expanded on the first floor, has a bay window on the east end and a modern double-leaf glass door in the center.

The west elevation of the enclosed porch consists of a single glass door on the north end. The west elevation of the main body of the house has a single window on the first floor, to the north of the brick chimney, with the remainder of the first floor covered by the west wing addition. The second floor has a single window, and there is a single window in the gable end at the attic level.

The former kitchen wing and addition on the west side of the main block of the house has, on the south elevation, a casement window on the east end and a single multi-light window on the west end. The west elevation has a single window on the south end and a multi-light door opening onto a front-gable-roof entry stoop with square posts and simple wooden balustrade,

gated at the base of the stairs leading up to the stoop. The north elevation of the added wing has an added sliding glass door on the east end, and a shed-roof over the multi-light door and single window on the west end. The only other change to the overall house configuration is that the current owners are in the process of adding a one-story wing at the rear of the house which is not visible at all from the main elevation.

The interior of the main block of the house and the two-story wing at the northeast corner has changed very little. Original wide-board heart pine floors remain, as does the original staircase on all three levels. Evidence of hand-planing of wood elements, including on the floors and the staircase, are visible. Notable crown molding remains in place on the first floor. The configuration of the rooms has not changed, but baths were likely added in the two-story wing, possibly during the time the Chamison family operated Locust Lodge, from 1945-1957. The den on the first floor, a former porch, now enclosed and expanded sometime after 1949, has narrow tongue-and-groove oak floors, and modern replacement doors and windows. The change at the den and the modern interior of the former kitchen wing and addition are both recent changes, but they do not significantly impact upon the architectural detailing and floor plan configuration of the main house block. All three levels of the house have finished spaces, including the staircase which extends to the attic, and all of the original craftsmanship of the is still evident.

The first floor consists of the central stair hall, with two bedrooms to the east and the living and dining rooms to the west. There are two small baths located within the two-story wing at the rear. The den (former porch) is located to the north of the main block of the house, and the kitchen is located to the west of the main block. Crown molding, unusual in its design and likely hand-crafted remains in all of the rooms. The wide-board heart pine floors exhibit evidence of hand planning. The staircase newel post is tapered, and along with the narrow balusters and rounded banister, creates a unique design that still retains evidence of hand planning in its construction and on the stair treads. In the bedroom on the east side of the house, the mantel is relatively plain and simple, with a paneled section just below the shelf with decorative molding. The fireplace surround is painted stone. The mantel in the living room is more elaborate, with a bracketed shelf with cornice molding, a panel below the shelf, and pilasters. Walls throughout the first floor are plaster or sheetrock, and ceilings are plaster. The ceiling in the entry hall has a wood grid below the plaster. The front door is four-panel, with a transom, and the entry into the stair hall, likely originally the front door, retains the original transom lights.³

³ The current owners have been told by local residents that the entry to the house originally might have been on the north side, where a road was located, but this has not been documented.

The second floor consists of the stair hall with four bedrooms, two on each side, and two baths within the two-story wing at the rear. There is a room on the south end, as noted, which likely was a former porch, with weatherboard siding remaining on three walls, and different siding in evidence where the south wall was enclosed. Doors are four-panel, with simple surrounds and the original hardware. Floors here are also the wide-board heart pine, and both crown and picture molding remain in all of the rooms, although not as elaborate in design as on the first floor. An unusual feature is that the picture molding, on both floors, is set within the plaster walls, rather than applied to the surface. The mantel in the bedroom on the east side is simple in design, with a plain shelf, a recessed panel, and some decorative scrollwork. The mantel on the west bedroom also has a recessed panel and some decorative molding along the shelf. The door onto the upper level porch retains its original transom and sidelights.

The attic has a central stair hall with one room on each side. The attic is finished space, with the finely crafted staircase extending up onto this level. Floors are wide heart pine, and walls and ceilings are plaster. There is one two-panel door opening into the bedroom, with original hardware.

The Columbus Mills Pace House was listed as a contributing building in the West Side Historic District (NR 2001). At that time, the changes to the exterior of the kitchen wing, the addition to the kitchen on the west, the addition of vinyl siding, and the enclosure of the porch at the rear had already been completed. The stone outbuilding, along with another frame outbuilding, remained. Before the current owners bought the property the frame outbuilding had been torn down. The current owners, since 2017, have replaced the windows throughout the house, remodeled the interior of the kitchen wing, added the deck at the rear, and are in the process of building a one-story addition at the rear northeast corner of the house. They also built the current garage and added the storage building.

Outbuilding. ca. 1872-1873.

Located southwest of the house, this one-story stone building with a side-gable, shake roof, has a recessed porch on either end. Facing south, there are two bays on the south elevation, one of which is an enclosed door that has a window added in the upper portion, and the other being a five-panel wood door. There are fixed-light replacement windows on the north elevation, deeply recessed, with wood sills. The porches are located on the east and west sides, with the roof supported by narrow wood posts and no balustrade. In the West Side Historic District, this building was noted as a well house. According to the current owners, this building was used as a carriage repair for those traveling along what is now Fifth Avenue West. It is the only remaining historic outbuilding.

Non-historic garage. ca. 2018

Located at the northwest corner of the property, this wood frame, one-and-one-half-story building has a steep side-gable roof, front-gable dormers, and several garage bay openings on the south elevation.

Non-historic storage shed. ca. 2018

Located to the east of the garage, this wood-frame, gambrel-roof storage shed is clad in T1-11 siding.

Historic Background

Built ca. 1872-1873, the house at 813 Fifth Avenue West was built for Columbus Mills Pace and his wife Leona Allen Pace. Columbus Mills Pace was born on September 9, 1845, in Saluda, North Carolina, also in Henderson County, to Leander J. and Louvina Morris Pace. As a young man, at the age of sixteen, Columbus Mills joined the Confederate Army and did not return to Henderson County until 1865, when the war ended.⁴ He then finished his education at Mountain Page near Saluda, followed by studies at Blue Ridge Academy.⁵ Pace studied law, but he was never an attorney. In 1868 Pace was elected to and was sworn in as Clerk of the Superior Court for Henderson County, a position he continued to hold for fifty-seven years, until his death in 1925. In the early 1870s, Pace also served as a Commissioner in Hendersonville.⁶

Known as “Judge” by everyone in Henderson County, Pace presided over many different types of cases throughout his career, overseeing the execution of untold numbers of wills, orders, and judgments.⁷ In addition to his work as Clerk of the Superior Court, Pace was involved in real estate development in Hendersonville. He began acquiring land in the 1870s, according to Henderson County Deed records, including a large amount of acreage west of downtown around Fifth Avenue West. Over time Pace sold much of his original land holdings for smaller subdivisions in the current West Side neighborhood.⁸ Pace was also a partner in the development of Laurel Park in the late 1880s, with William A. Smith. Together the partners opened the “dummy line” trolley that ran along Fifth Avenue to Laurel Park. In its early years, Laurel Park was a summer recreation community that included ball fields, picnic areas, hiking

⁴ Patton, Sadie Smathers. *The Story of Henderson County*, Asheville: Miller Printing Company, 1947, p. 244.

⁵ Patton, Sadie Smathers. *The Story of Henderson County*, Asheville: Miller Printing Company, 1947, p. 244.

⁶ Patton, Sadie Smathers. *The Story of Henderson County*, Asheville: Miller Printing Company, 1947, p. 237.

⁷ “Columbus Mills Pace Was Life-time Clerk of Court”, *The Times-News*, July 29, 1938.

⁸ Bowers, Sybil Argintar. *West Side Historic District*. National Register Nomination, 2001, p. 7-37.

and riding trails, an observation tower, a casino, and two man-made lakes. Pace and Smith began selling home lots in 1911, and sold all of their interest in the property in 1922.⁹

“Judge” Pace married Leona Allen (- 1929) on October 24, 1872. While some records, including the *West Side Historic District* National Register nomination (NR2001), note that the house at 813 Fifth Avenue (formerly Broad Street) was built in the 1860s, this seems unlikely since Pace was away at the war and did not even begin acquiring property in Hendersonville until the 1870s. It is more likely that the house was built ca. 1872-1873, when he married. It is not known if there was an architect involved in the design of the house, but the house exhibits a high level of skilled craftsmanship. With his prominent position in the county, it is highly likely that Pace employed the best carpenters and craftsmen available. The area west of downtown Hendersonville was not mapped before 1922, but Sanborn maps at that time indicate the house form as basically square in configuration, with a porch on the south side, a porch and one-story wing at the northeast corner, and a one-story wing with a porch extending to the west of the house. This wing likely was used as a kitchen since it was separate from the main body of the house and originally included a chimney on the west side which is still in place. Five outbuildings were part of the property, but only the use of the largest building at the southwest corner of the house is known. The current owners were informed by local residents that this was in use originally for repairing carriages. The house configuration and number of outbuildings did not change through the last available Sanborn map from 1949. Physical evidence in the house, as noted in the architectural description, would indicate that the original configuration might have been a U-shape configuration on both levels on the south side of the house, with rooms to the east and west of a porch. This may have been built for ventilation through the house, with these porches later enclosed as the family grew.

Columbus Mills and Leona Pace had nine children, several of which died at a young age. Children included Campbell Herbert (1873-1875); Otis Leroy (1876-1952); Nina Belle (1878-1919); Lalla May (1881-1973); Claude Morris (1883-1947); Cora Lee (1886-1887); Merritt Hodges (1888-1889); Clara Leona (1890-1924); and Neva Pauline (1893-1966).¹⁰ Columbus Mills Pace died at his home in 1925. In respect to him on the day of his funeral, all stores in Hendersonville closed, and hundreds gathered at his residence on Fifth Avenue West to honor him in a service. His body lay in state at the courthouse before he was interred in Oakdale Cemetery.¹¹

⁹ Helsley, Alexia Jones and Dr. George A. Jones. *A Guide to Historic Henderson County, North Carolina*. Charleston: The History Press, 2007, p. 72.

¹⁰ *The Heritage of Henderson County, North Carolina, Volume I*. Hendersonville: Genealogical Society, 1985, pp. 219-220.

¹¹ “Stores Close in Respect to Late Judge C. M. Pace”, *Asheville Citizen-Times*, March 28, 1925.

After Columbus Mills Pace died in 1925 his widow Leona continued to live in the house on Fifth Avenue West until she passed on July 15, 1929.¹² Deed records note that in 1934, daughter Lalla May Pace Hawkins (1881-1973), wife of A. Homer Hawkins (1879-1948), a local merchant and jeweler in Hendersonville, bought out all interest in her father's original properties in Hendersonville from her remaining siblings or their spouses, and became sole owner of 813 Fifth Avenue West and other properties in town that had been owned by her mother Leona Pace upon her death in 1929. Lalla Hawkins bought one-fifth interest from Claude M. and wife Clingman Pace; one-fifth from O. L. and wife Amanda Pace; one-fifth from Neva Pace Bass and husband O. E. Bass; and one-fifth from deceased sister Nina Pace Rhodes' husband Claude Morris Rhodes. Apparently, all properties had been equally divided among the living children when Leona Pace, heir to Columbus Pace, died.¹³

City directories note that the house remained vacant from 1929 – 1942.¹⁴ From 1943-1944 there were some renters in the house, Miss Betty L. Macy, employed at Ecusta Paper Corporation, and Mrs. Katherine W. Quinn, widow of Edwin Quinn, Jr., along with several children.¹⁵ None of the Pace children lived in the house after their mother died, and in 1944 Lalla and A. H. Hawkins sold the house to Harold C. Chamison (1892-1969) and Darline E. Chamison (1894 – 1967).¹⁶ Harold Chamison worked as a mechanical engineer, and his wife Darline operated the house as a boarding house from 1945 – 1957, calling it Locust Lodge. The Chamisons had two daughters, Alice Elizabeth, and Sara Ellen. The home reverted back to a single family residence by 1958.¹⁷ Sara Ellen lived in the house until her death.¹⁸

The house remained in the Chamison family until June 19, 2006, when it sold out of the estate of daughter Sara Ellen Chamison to AT 128 LLC.¹⁹ AT 128 LLC only owned the house for a few months, selling it on November 8, 2006 to Ruth and Robert Self. The Self family owned the property until the current owners bought it in 2017.²⁰

¹² "Mrs. C. M. Pace Dies In Hendersonville", *Asheville Citizen-Times*, July 16, 1929.

¹³ Henderson County Deed Book 208, p. 73. March 20, 1934.

¹⁴ Hendersonville City Directories 1926-1927; 1937-1938; 1941-1942; 1945-1946; 1948-1949; 1956-1957.

¹⁵ Hendersonville City Directory, 1943-1944.

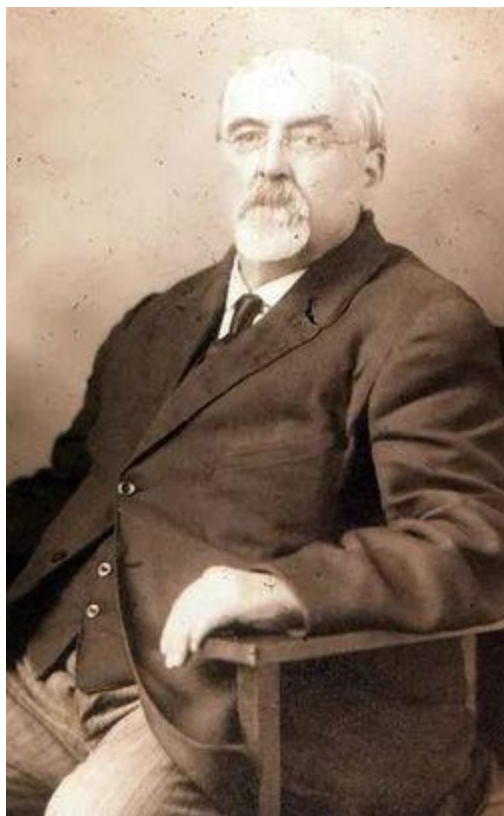
¹⁶ Henderson County Deed Book 252, p. 149. June 1, 1944. Chamison birth and death dates from death certificates on Ancestry.com

¹⁷ Hendersonville City Directory 1958.

¹⁸ Email from current owner to Sybil H. Argintar, July 16, 2026. Information from a family descendent who visited the home.

¹⁹ Henderson County Deed Book 1278, p. 350.

²⁰ Henderson County Deed Books 1296, p. 198 and 3128, p. 603.



Columbus Mills Pace



Lalla May (Pace) Hawkins



Alfred Homer Hawkins

ST N. 5TH AV.

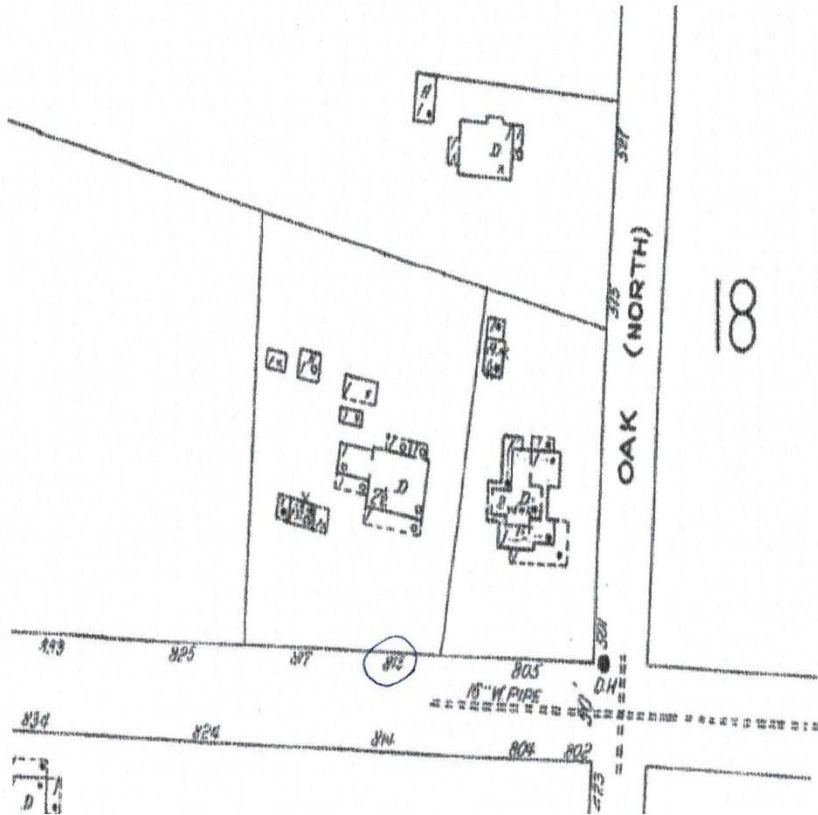
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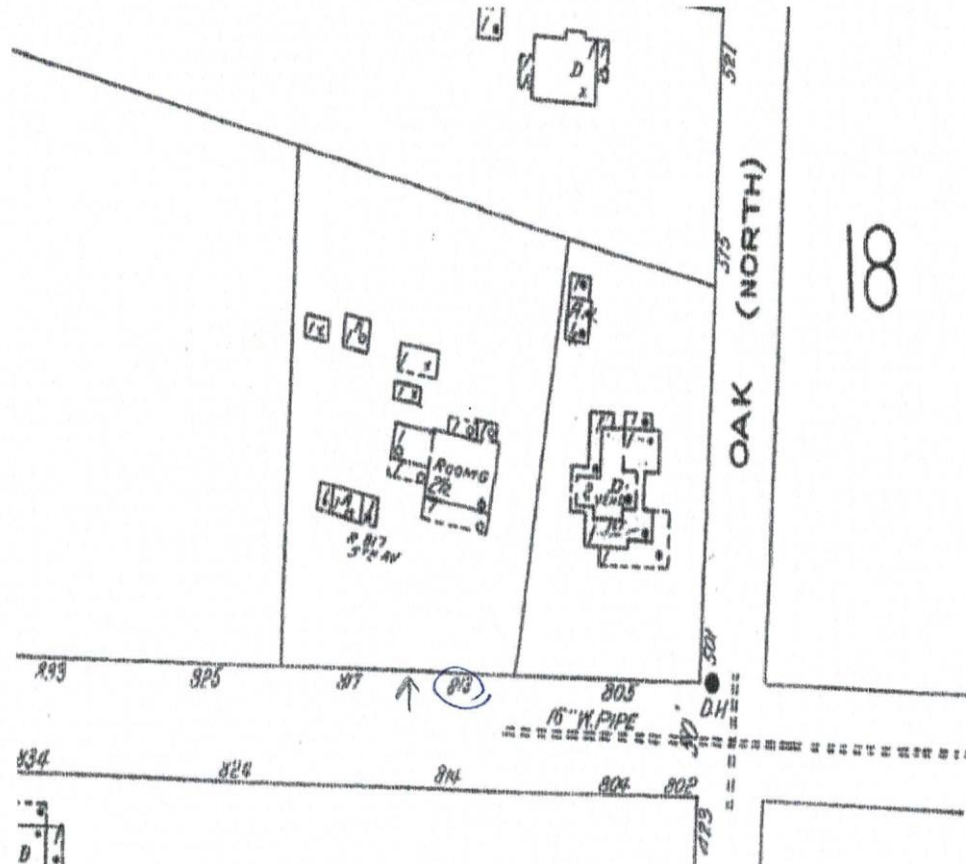
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ProQuest® Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970
Hendersonville Sept. 1926, Sheet 17



1926

ProQuest® Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970
Hendersonville Sept. 1926-July 1949, Sheet 17



1949

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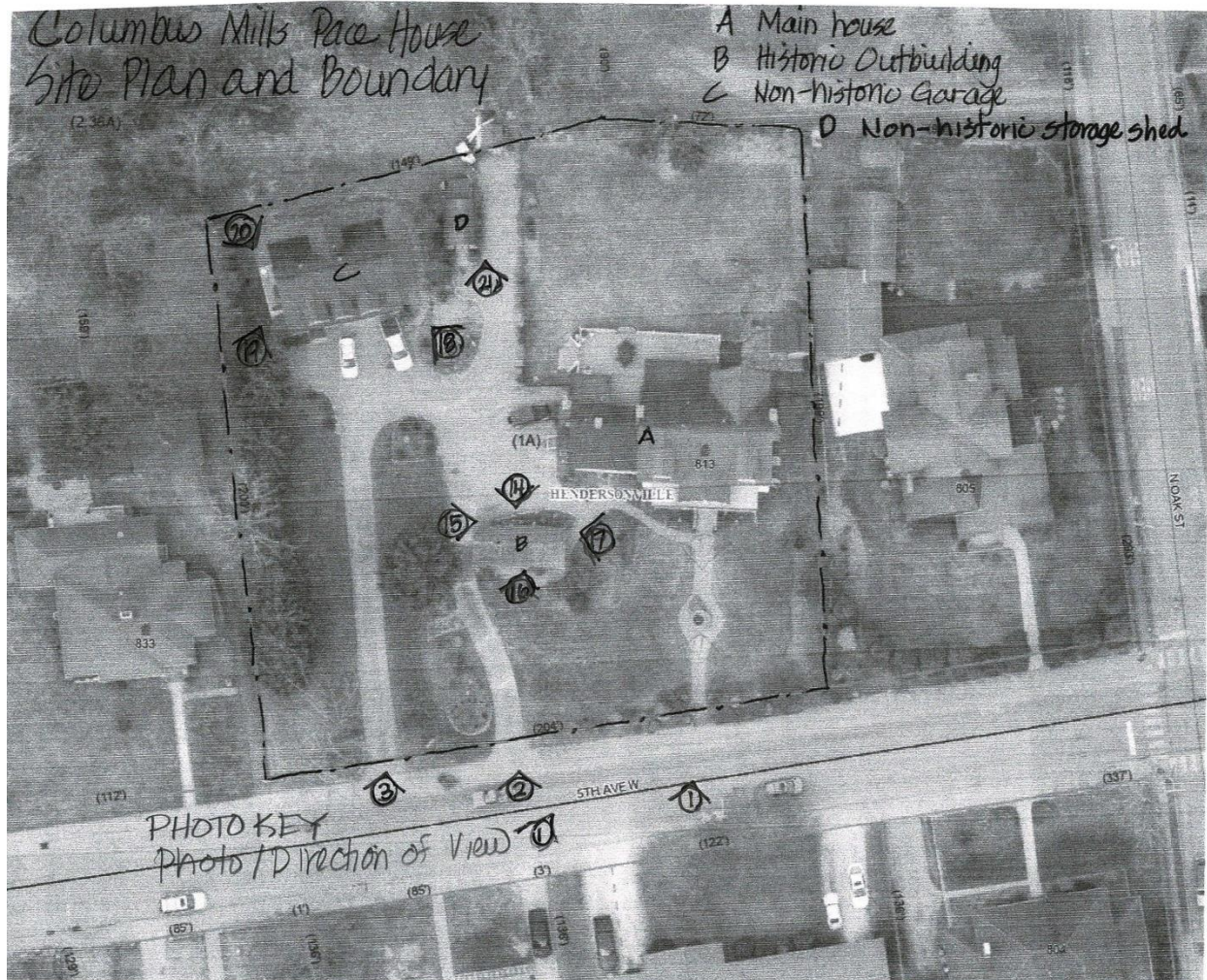
Supporting Photographs

NOTE: Photos are for internal review only. Not for public access, per request by owner.

Photos are submitted as a separate PDF document and on a thumb drive

Photo keys to site and floor plans are included here.

Site Plan Photo Key



First Floor Plan Photo Key

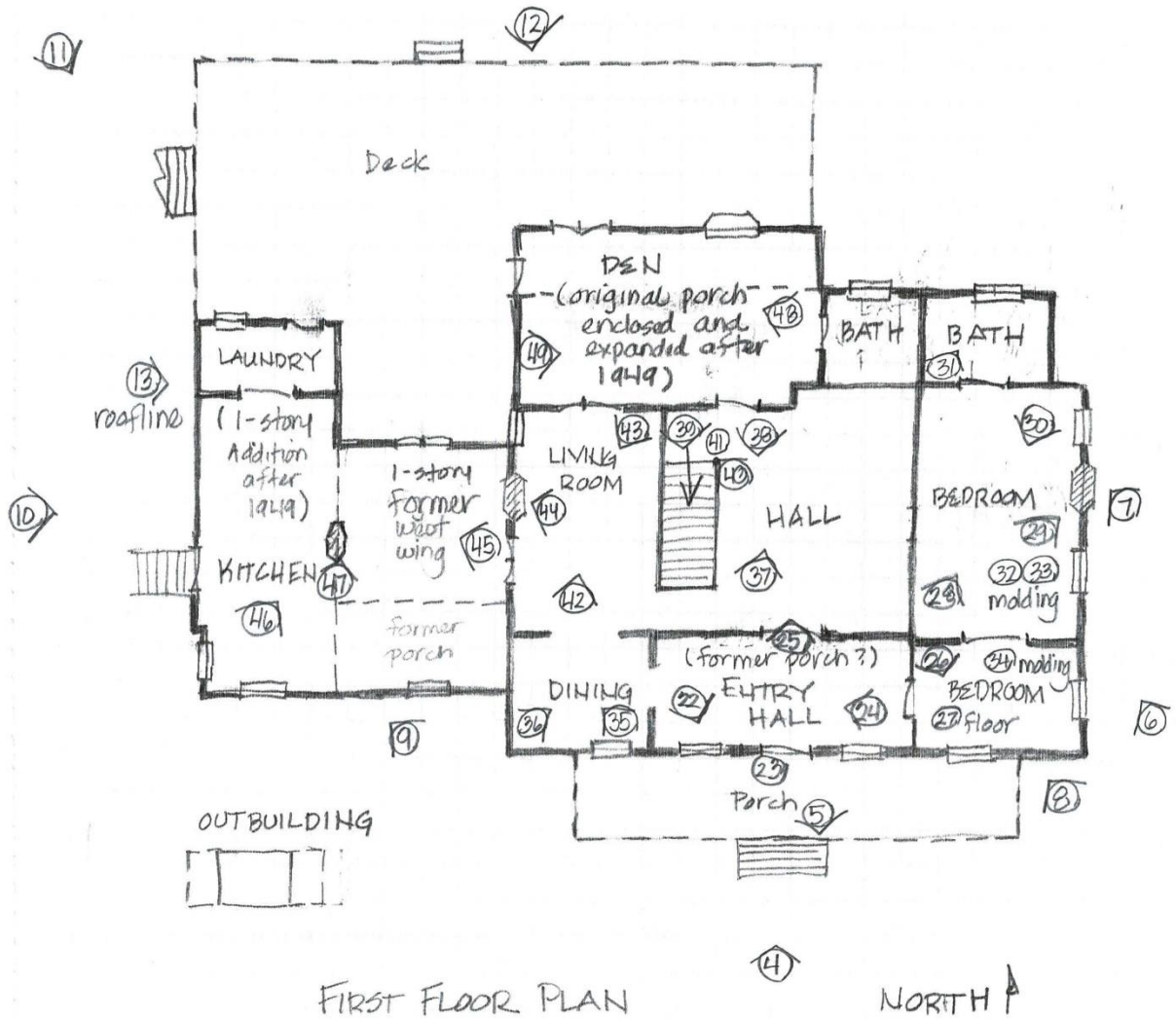
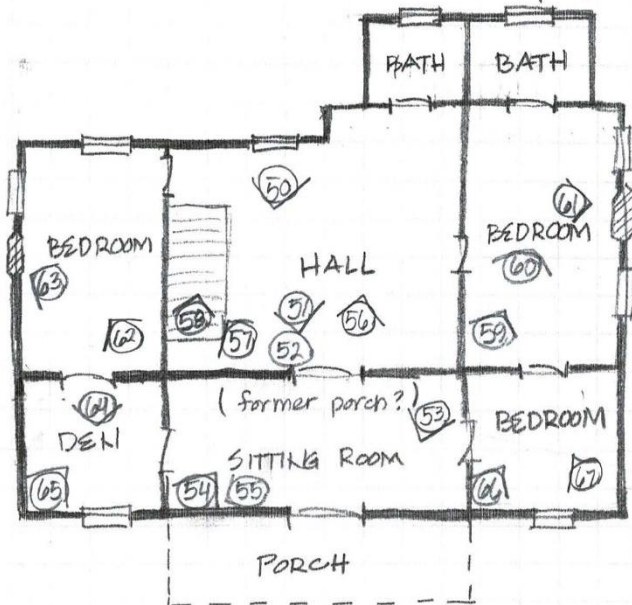


Photo Key
Photo/ Direction of View ①

Second Floor Plan Photo Key



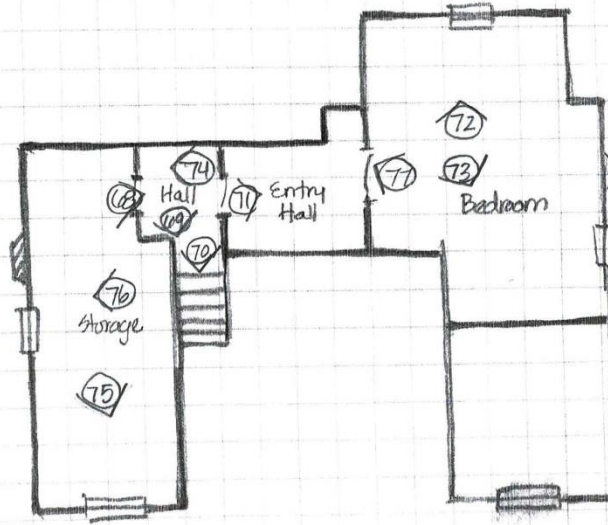
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

NORTH ↑

Photo Key

Photo/ Direction of View ①

Attic Plan Photo Key



ATTIC FLOOR PLAN

NORTH ↑

PHOTO KEY
Photo / Direction of View ↗