

## SUMMARY OF PROPOSED NATIONAL REGISTER/GEORGIA REGISTER NOMINATION

Name: Pine Tree Tea Room

Location: 1659 Lake Rabun Road, Lakemont, Rabun County

Description: Pine Tree Tea Room is in the northeast Georgia mountains, near Lake Rabun. In the early-20<sup>th</sup> century, the Georgia Power and Railway Company created six lakes as part of a project to provide electricity through hydropower. Today, the Pine Tree Tea Room is the only extant lakeside restaurant, community gathering place, and dance hall dating to the early history of these northeast Georgia lakes. From Lake Rabun Road, the Pine Tree Tea Room appears to be one story; however, it is built on the hillside with a basement level located below grade. The building's façades retain the original board and batten. The main space has a hipped roof with shed roofs covering perimeter porches utilized for outdoor dining. An original stone arch covered by a projecting gable marks the principal entrance to the tearoom. Upon entering the arched opening, one steps onto a full-length porch supported by stone clad columns. The interior is dominated by an open dining area which retains historic wood floors, wooden door and window frames, painted beadboard wainscoting, plaster walls above the wainscoting, and beadboard ceilings. A built-in bar forms an L at the east side of the dining area. The room is flooded with light from the three walls of windows. Original features remaining on the exterior include the stone foundation, stone retaining wall, stone columns, 6/6 double hung wood windows, wood screen doors, and paneled wooden doors. The building underwent restoration through consultation with the National Park Service, completed in 2024.

Acreage & Boundary Explanation: Less than one acre. The historic and legal property boundary.

Period of Significance: 1926-1973

NR Criterion & Area of Significance: Criterion A, Entertainment/Recreation

Statement of Significance: The Pine Tree Tea Room is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of entertainment/recreation as a surviving 1926 restaurant building in Lakemont, Rabun County with a history of providing not only meals, but also hosting social gatherings and entertainment. In 1926, the Pine Tree Tea Room opened as the Rabun Cafe and for many years it served as the only restaurant on Lake Rabun. In addition to serving regular daily meals, on Saturday nights the dining room was used for dances by pushing the tables and chairs to one side. Although the restaurant was originally built to serve the guests of the Lake Rabun Hotel, directly across Lake Rabun Road, it soon emerged as a community destination for residents of Lake Rabun and beyond. A 1927 *Atlanta Constitution* advertisement for the Lake Rabun Hotel noted that among its amenities were boating, fishing, swimming, and dancing, as well as offering a separate dance hall with meals and music provided by the famous Georgia Orioles Orchestra. The restaurant operated as the Pine Tree Tea Room for more years than any other during the period of significance.

Suggested Level of Significance: Local

Sponsor: The nomination is sponsored by the building owner nomination materials were prepared by Richardson Preservation Consulting, LLC.

