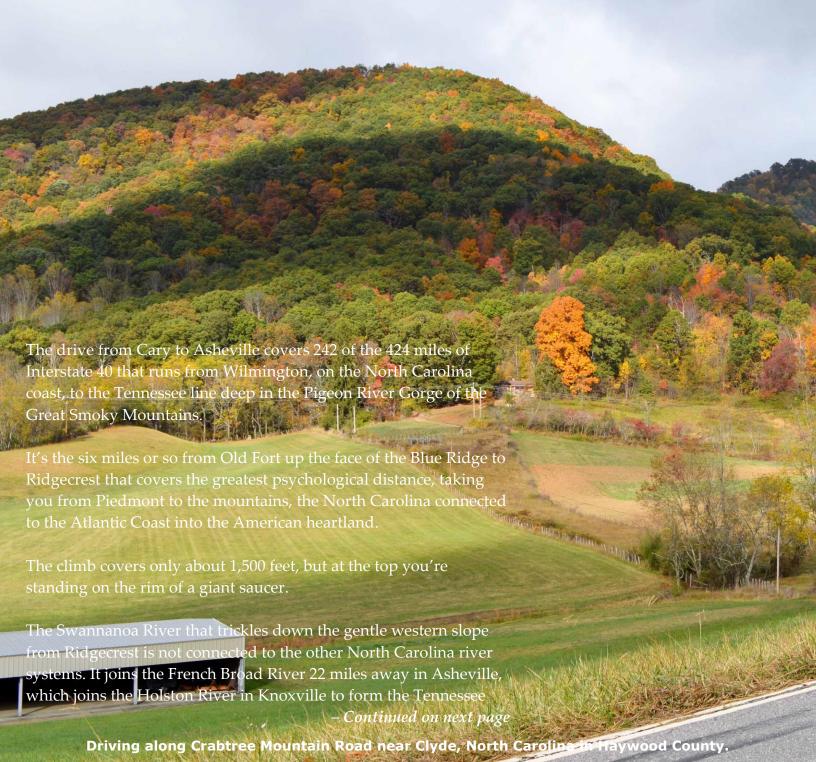
## THE ASHEVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES Asheville, North Carolina 20-22 October 2016 Asheville's red-roofed Grove Park Inn peeks between the golf course trees as dark storm clouds and a blazing maple battle for attention overhead. More about this 106-year-old hotel on the last page.

## Crossing the line



## Crossing the line

- Continued from previous page

River, which joins the Ohio River at Paducah, Kentucky, which joins the Mississippi at Cairo, Illinois and finally reaches ocean below New Orleans.

This saucer – the Mississippi River watershed – stretches from Ridgecrest, via the Arkansas River, to beyond Pikes Peak in Colorado. Via the Missouri River it reaches to the tops of the tallest mountains in Glacier National Park of northwestern Montana. The watershed covers 1.2 million square miles.

When I was the police reporter for the *Asheville Citizen-Times*, there was hardly a week that I wasn't called out to cover a wreck caused by a tractor-trailer rig that reached the rim of the saucer and lost its brakes on the way to Old Fort.

Sometimes it went over the side of a cliff. Sometimes it took out a car or two. Occasionally it reached one of the runaway ramps, where it bogged down in deep sand, frequently saving the driver.

Over the past 40 years the road has been improved and the Asheville where I lived has grown and changed.

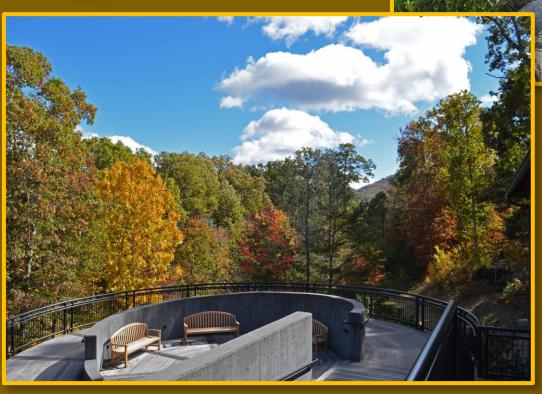
The one-room apartment, built on stilts on the side of Sunset Mountain, which I rented for \$67.50 a month, furnished, has been replaced by a three-level, 3BR, 2½-bath house on stilts in the same footprint. Zillow estimates you could buy it for \$462,860.

Whatever the price, you're still peeing in the Gulf of Mexico.

The paper plant in downtown Canton puffs away in the valley of the Pigeon River.

North Carolina Arboretum in Pisgah National Forest, an affiliate of the University of North Carolina





Frederick Law Olmsted
(1822-1903), above, was
the father of American
landscape architecture.
He's best known for the
gardens on the Biltmore
Estate in North Carolina,
of which this arboretum
was once a part, Central
Park in New York City,
Golden Gate Park in San
Francisco and the master
plans for the campuses of
the University of
California, Berkeley and
Stanford University.



The view from the terrace of the Grove Park Inn is south across the city of Asheville and the French Broad River Valley to the Blue Ridge.

## The Grove Park Inn

As the 19<sup>th</sup> Century faded into the 20<sup>th</sup>, much of Asheville's appeal was the cool mountain climate and its supposed healing qualities.

Railroad heir George Washington Vanderbilt II of New York finished his Biltmore Estate on the south

side of town in 1895 with 33 bedrooms for his guests seeking respite from the city (my newsletter from that Asheville visit is here http://bit.ly/2eAxwKK).

Patent medicine king Edwin Grove of Tennessee finished the Grove Park Inn's 200 rooms on the north side of town in 1913 to be a place where people like he, who suffered from chronic hiccups, could recover. He razed several of Asheville's TB sanitariums to clear sufficient land and built the walls five feet thick from granite boulders to keep it cool inside. The hundreds of rooms added in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century are cooled by other means. Here's a video history: <a href="https://youtu.be/3xKDa1EKYyw">https://youtu.be/3xKDa1EKYyw</a>.



One of the two fireplaces at either end of the Grove Park Inn lobby.