

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: North Carolina
COUNTY: Burke
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: Bellevue
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: On S.R. 1419, 0.3 mi. north of the junction of S.R. 1421 and S.R. 1419			
CITY OR TOWN: Morganton vicinity		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Tenth The Hon. James Broyhill	
STATE North Carolina	CODE 37	COUNTY: Burke	CODE 023

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Mr. W. Clark Erwin	STATE North Carolina
STREET AND NUMBER: P. O. Box 3256	
CITY OR TOWN: Spartanburg	
STATE: South Carolina	
	COUNTY: Burke
	CODE: 39

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Burke County Courthouse	
STREET AND NUMBER: Green Street	
CITY OR TOWN: Morganton	STATE: North Carolina
	CODE: 37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:	
DATE OF SURVEY:	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:	
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE: CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE
North Carolina
COUNTY
Burke
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Bellevue is an imposing plantation house set on a hill with a commanding view of the valley on three sides. The house is of brick, laid predominantly in Flemish bond, and rests on a stone foundation. The main block is two stories high and six bays wide, and an original one-story wing to the east set flush with the main block is three wide bays long. Surmounted by handsome flat arches, the windows have molded architraves, molded sills, and contain nine-over-nine sash at the first level and nine-over-six at the second. At the basement level flat-arched openings contain grilles with diagonally placed vertical bars. A one-story porch (a replacement) with paired posts at the corners shelters the entrances in the two central bays of the main block. A simple balustrade encloses the roof of the porch, serving a gallery door in the west central bay. The doors at both levels have six flat panels; those at the first level have four-light transoms. Beneath the eaves of the gable roof of the main block is a brick corbel cornice. A single-shoulder exterior end chimney occurs at the west gable end of the main block and is flanked by attic windows with four-over-four sash. The east gable end of the main block has two interior end chimneys flanking a central attic window. The wing, originally half the depth of the main block, has an exterior double-shoulder chimney. The wing has been enlarged to the rear with brick and frame additions which more than double its size. The rear of the main block is five bays wide, with two bays in the east half, and three bays in the west. A recessed porch is engaged under the main roof in the three westernmost bays. Originally a two-tier porch, serving an entrance in the third bay from the west at each level, the porch is now a full two stories high.

The interior of the main block of the house follows a Quaker-style plan with one large room to the west and two to the east. An enclosed stair rises along the west side of the central partition wall and is entered through doors at the rear of the east and west rooms. The second floor follows roughly the same plan as the first. A hall to the east of the stair opening; leads to one large room to the west; two rooms to the east; and a small room at the north end of the hall.

The well-executed interior trim is of the Federal period. In all of the major rooms on both floors molded architraves, chair rails, and cornices occur. Doors have six flat panels. Much of the hardware is original. The first-floor west room has a flat-paneled wainscot, corner blocks on the architraves, and a handsome three-part mantel composed of paired reeded engaged colonnettes and a molded shelf which carries around the frieze blocks. The central tablet of the mantel is ornamented with a sunburst carved in relief and quarter sunbursts at the corners. This pattern is repeated on the end blocks. A simpler version of this mantel occurs in the east front room. Single engaged colonnettes support the three-part frieze which features applied sunbursts on the frieze blocks and rosettes on the two intervening faces of the frieze. The mantel in the east rear room, similar to those in the wing and second floor of the house, is composed of an architrave surrounding the fire opening, a flat-paneled frieze, and a molded shelf.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
North Carolina	
COUNTY	
Burke	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

7.

The wing has two unconnecting rooms which opened to the rear, or exterior, before it was enclosed with additions which now serve as kitchen and service areas. The east room of the wing has been connected by a door to the west front room of the main block.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1826

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Bellevue is an important member of the Catawba Valley group of Federal period brick houses, distinguished by its excellent brickwork, interesting variation of the Quaker plan, and unusual full-height rear porch. It is of local historical significance because of its long association by the Erwin family, who settled the area.

Bellevue was completed in 1826 by James Erwin (1775-1848) on property his father, Alexander Erwin (1750-1824) had conveyed to him. Alexander Erwin was a "partizan soldier" in the American Revolution and was one of the commissioners who laid off the town of Morganton. James Erwin called his home "Erwin's Delight," but his son, Colonel Joseph J. Erwin (1811-1879), changed the name to "Bellevue," by which it is still known today. Joseph, a kinsman and longtime friend of Governor Zebulon B. Vance, "was a fine model of the old-time Southern gentleman, appearing best in his own home, which he made the seat of refinement and a Christian Courtesy." He served as clerk of the superior court for many years and subsequently at different times in the general assembly. Governor Graham designated him during his term as one of his aides; his rank as colonel came from this appointment. One of his sons, William Allen Erwin, compelled at an early age because of the Civil War to work away from home, went on to become one of the state's leading textile magnates. Another son, Joseph Ernest Erwin (1867-1954), bought Bellevue from the heirs of his father's estate. He and his wife, who was the daughter of Chief Justice Walter Clark, resided at Bellevue for many years. Their son, W. Clark Erwin, currently owns Bellevue.

In The Early Architecture of North Carolina, Thomas Waterman cited several features that give Bellevue considerable architectural importance. Particularly interesting is its place in the development of the Quaker plan, with the use of a two-story loggia or porch to the rear of the great room. Waterman cited Prospect Hill (destroyed) as the prime example, with Bellevue and Pleasant Valley of Burke County the only other known uses of this feature. He also notes the twin entrances of Bellevue as indicative of the French influence seen in the Catawba Valley houses--upriver from the Santee River in Huguenot-settled South Carolina. These unusual features, as Waterman remarked, are complemented by the fine brickwork, which has a "clean-cut quality" that is "singularly satisfactory."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Research by Charles Greer Suttlemyre, Jr., survey specialist; architectural description by Bruce MacDougal, Head, Research and Restoration. Ashe, Samuel A., ed. Biographical History of North Carolina from Colonial Times to the Present. Greensboro, North Carolina: Charles L. Van Noppen, 1907.

Burke County Records, Burke County Courthouse, Morganton, North Carolina, Office of the Register of Deeds (Subgroups: Deeds, Wills).

Burke County Records, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina (Subgroups: Deeds and Wills).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	35 ° 47 ' 23 "	81 ° 43 ' 03 "		0 ' ' "	0 ' ' "	
NE	35 ° 47 ' 23 "	81 ° 42 ' 03 "				
SE	35 ° 46 ' 28 "	81 ° 42 ' 03 "				
SW	35 ° 46 ' 28 "	81 ° 43 ' 03 "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 450 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Survey and Planning Unit

ORGANIZATION: Division of Archives and History

DATE: 17 September 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:
109 East Jones Street

CITY OR TOWN: Raleigh

STATE: North Carolina

CODE: 37

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: H. G. Jones

Title: Director, Division of Archives and History

Date: 17 September 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE North Carolina	
COUNTY Burke	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

9.

Henderson, Archibald, and Wooten, Bayard. Old Homes and Gardens of North Carolina. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press (published under the auspices of the Garden Club of North Carolina) 1939.

Waterman, Thomas T., and Johnston, Frances B. The Early Architecture of North Carolina. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 1947.

