

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC North Carolina School for the Deaf: Main Building

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Entrance at SE corner of U.S. 64 and Fleming Drive

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Morganton

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

10th

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina

CODE

37

COUNTY

Burke

CODE

23

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME State of North Carolina
Department of Human Resources (Charles L. Henderson, ^{Campus} Superintendent)

STREET & NUMBER

N. C. School for the Deaf

N.C. School for the Deaf

Morganton, NC 28655

CITY, TOWN

Morganton

VICINITY OF

North Carolina 28655

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Main Building of the North Carolina School for the Deaf stands south of Morganton on the highest knoll in a group of gently rolling hills. Located in the outskirts of town, the school was built on land suitable for cultivation and indeed there was a farm connected with the school operation until recently. In time the town grew out to the school campus, and the town bypass now marks the north side of the well maintained, tree-studded campus. The main building and its dependency to the rear were the first buildings on the campus and still dominate the large campus, not only by virtue of size but also by location--the tallest building on the highest point on campus.

Resting on a partially raised basement, the monumental high Victorian three-story brick building has a slate roof. There is a five-story tower in the center of the main facade which contains the entrance. The building is "E" shaped with three-story wings extending to the rear (west), the center wing being only one story. The main facade is divided into five portions, a center block and two end blocks with large connectors. The five-bay center of the main facade is a complex composition, projecting in three stages with the tower being the most forward. The center block section has a double hip roof. One roof is parallel with the main facade, and a second hip roof, perpendicular to the main facade is superimposed on the first. The second roof abuts the rear tower wall and projects one bay to the rear before the central arm of the "E" drops to a one story, eight-bay, flat roofed wing.

The center five bays of the main facade are contained between octagonal towers with bell cast roofs. Bartizans topped with spiral caps flank the second and fourth bays, and within each bay is a large gable dormer, the outer roof plane of which is an extension of the upper hip roof. The tower, soaring well above the rest of the building, has a highly ornamented, Romanesque arched entrance beneath a pointed parapet. White stone forms the molded and carved door surround and elaborate corbeled brick work ornaments the parapet.

Buttresses flank the entrance and rise to support a balcony with turned balusters at the fourth level of the tower. Contained between the buttresses are ornamental brick work around a vertical slit window at the second level, and a double window with stained glass fanlight, surmounted by a heavy brick arch with key stone at the third level. The fourth and fifth levels of the tower rise free above the main block. Four-light, double windows under a fanlight and heavy brick arch are behind the balcony. Above the fanlight, a white, oversize masonry keystone with a center roundel, rises to a wide, molded wooden band, from which the fifth level, containing a clock in each face, rises. The clocks are fitted into bull's eye windows with four large key stones. Brick paneled spandrels cradle the clock on its lower corners. Brick panels also occur along the lower edge of the clocks. Bartizans rise along each corner of the fifth level, and each clock is surmounted by a flush gable which fits into an octagonal roof. The mansard-like octagonal roof in turn forms a platform which supports an octagonal drum. There are arched, louvered vents in each face, and small gables over each vent of the drum. The eight planes of the belvedere roof are folded together under a molded finial.

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The center five-bay section is joined by three-bay connector sections to the three-bay, hip roof, end blocks at each corner of the main facade. Set slightly forward, the end blocks have their roof ridges perpendicular to the front of the main facade. These corner block sections are three bays across the front and five bays deep. Arched double windows occur consistently here and generally throughout the building with some variation in surround treatment from floor to floor. Most of the sash has been replaced with aluminum jalousie windows. A bartizan with spiraled cap marks the front corner on each end block, and one large pedimented dormer with an arched window dominates the front roof sections.

Offset slightly inward, the two outer wings of the "E" continue to the rear (west) three more bays before joining the culminating, one bay corner blocks, also with perpendicularly set hip roofs, which are probably two bays wide. (The rear of each wing has been covered by a stair tower.) Spaced along the side roofline are chimneys which have been shortened and capped. Two courtyards are formed by the rear wings. The fenestration around the courtyards is similar to the front and is treated with equally elaborate surrounds. The rear, however, lacks towers, dormers and bartizans.

The interior has been remodeled several times through the years and the wide expanse of porch across the front of the building has been removed. The porch, which had turned balusters and posts with drop pendant brackets, was two stories in the center section and one story across the remainder of the facade.

To the rear is a service building which is a diminutive reflection of the main building. It stretches the length of the main building and has a one story, high hip roof section in the center which has a large, mock gable. The center portion's roof ridge is parallel to the front (east) and there are two story, hip roof blocks at either end that are perpendicular to the front line. This building is also red brick with a slate roof.

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The first building was constructed two blocks northwest of the Capitol and was known as the North Carolina Institution for the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind; its cornerstone was laid on April 14, 1848. The school opened its doors to students in January, 1849. By November, 1850, the school had achieved an enrollment of fifty-four pupils, all of whom were deaf. The basic curriculum was the teaching of trades, principally the craft of mechanical printing. The original school for the deaf at Raleigh remained open during the Civil War. Its 1865 enrollment of eighty-four students was the largest in its twenty-year history. (By 1869 a school for the colored deaf and blind-- said to be the first of its kind in the United States--had been opened, also in Raleigh.)⁶

The 1891 General Assembly enacted legislation providing for the establishment of "a school for the white deaf and dumb children of the state under the corporate name of 'The North Carolina School for the Deaf and Dumb.' to be located upon the grounds donated for that purpose near the town of Morganton." The law also provided for the removal to Morganton of the white deaf and dumb students then enrolled at Raleigh.⁷

A building committee consisting of seven distinguished state leaders selected as the site for the proposed school two 100-acre hilltop tracts known as the Ravenscroft College property. The first lot cost \$6,500, of which the Town of Morganton contributed \$5,000; the second was an outright gift from the town to the state.⁸

In September, 1891, the building committee reported that it had selected from among many designs a plan submitted by Adolphus Gustavus Bauer, a Raleigh architect. Bauer (ca. 1860-1898), a native of Ohio, graduated from West Virginia's Bethany College in 1879 and later studied portrait painting. In 1881 he became associated with Samuel Sloan, a prominent Philadelphia architect. He accompanied Sloan to Raleigh in 1883 and subsequently made his home there. At Sloan's death in 1884, Bauer supervised the completion of the Executive Mansion (which Sloan had begun before his death) and began seeking architectural commissions on his own. (Among these was an addition to the State Agricultural Building to house the State Library, the old Supreme Court room, and the office of the state superintendent of public instruction.)⁹

The 1880s and early 1890s apparently brought great success to Bauer: in September, 1891, he reported to the Manufacturers' Record (Baltimore, Maryland) that he had recently completed plans for \$120,000 worth of new buildings in Morganton alone.¹⁰ (In addition to the School for the Deaf, Bauer designed a major addition to Morganton's State Hospital for the Insane.) He is said to have traveled extensively during these years and to have acquired a reputation as an "architect of repute."¹¹ Said to have been possessed of "an intensely morbid disposition," Bauer often sought complete solitude by locking himself in his room for days at a time. He committed suicide with a pistol on May 12, 1898, in Raleigh, and is believed to be buried in an unmarked grave beside his wife in Raleigh's Oakwood Cemetery.¹²

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Bauer's plan for the School for the Deaf's original Main Building was modeled on that of the Philadelphia Institution, another noted school for the deaf. It was said to have been judged "the best and most economical and in accordance with the institutions of like nature." It specified that the building was to be three stories high, with a basement and a central tower in front. Contracts for excavation were let May 1, 1892.¹³ The building contracts were let in September, 1891, to three Morganton firms: McDowell Brothers, R. K. Presnell, and the Morganton Manufacturing and Trading Company, each of which agreed to deliver 500,000 bricks to the construction site.¹⁴

The first brick was laid May 16, 1892, by two deaf children who were students at the existing facility in Raleigh. The General Assembly's tardiness in appropriating funds sufficient to complete the structure resulted in a protracted construction period. The school opened for its first session on October 2, 1894, with only its first two stories completed.¹⁵ One hundred and four students and eight teachers began the year in the new building, which served as dormitory and classrooms. A Morganton newspaper declared that the institution was "one of North Carolina's noblest works and reflects credit upon her name."¹⁶

The new facility was widely regarded as one of the finest of its kind in the nation. On October 31, 1895, the school was honored by a visit from Dr. Edward M. Gallaudet, president of Gallaudet College for the Deaf at Washington, D.C. (the only liberal arts college in the world exclusively for the deaf), who visited the classes and addressed the staff and student body. Another early visitor was Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, who likewise expressed an interest in the school.¹⁷

The school was an immediate success in terms of student enrollment: between December, 1894, and December, 1896, 204 students were in attendance.¹⁸ The rapid influx of students resulted in the need for a second building to be used for classrooms. This structure was begun on May 31, 1898. Returning to Morganton to attend the dedication of the new building, Dr. Gallaudet declared "that a more meritorious exhibition of the methods of teaching the deaf he had never witnessed either in Europe or America."¹⁹ The second building, known as West Hall, was completed and opened in September, 1899. (It was destroyed by fire in February, 1938.)

From the date of its founding the North Carolina School for the Deaf has undergone almost continual growth, both in its student population and its physical facilities. Schooling for students from elementary through high school has provided both academic and vocational²⁰ training. The enrollment had grown to approximately 350 by 1945 and to 565 by 1969. Today the campus comprises approximately ten buildings in addition to the 1894 Main Hall.

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FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Charles L. Coon, The Beginnings of Public Education in North Carolina: A Documentary History, 1790-1840 (Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Printing Company, 2 volumes, 1908), I, 110.
- ² The Education of the Deaf in North Carolina (Morganton: North Carolina School for the Deaf, 75th Anniversary Edition, 1969), 3, hereinafter cited as Education of the Deaf.
- ³ Laws of North Carolina, 1844-1845, c. XXXVII.
- ⁴ Education of the Deaf, 4.
- ⁵ Laws of North Carolina, 1846-1847, c. XLVIII.
- ⁶ Education of the Deaf, 4-5.
- ⁷ Public Laws of North Carolina, 1891, c. 399.
- ⁸ Education of the Deaf, 9-10.
- ⁹ "HE WAS TIRED OF LIFE," News and Observer (Raleigh), May 13, 1898, p. 4, hereinafter cited as Bauer obituary; Jane Hall, "Hall Marks," News and Observer (Raleigh), July 8, 1962, sec. I, p. 11, hereinafter cited as "Hall Marks."
- ¹⁰ Morganton Herald, September 24, 1891, p. 3.
- ¹¹ Bauer obituary, News and Observer (Raleigh), May 13, 1898, p. 4.
- ¹² Ibid., "Hall Marks", News and Observer (Raleigh), July 8, 1962, sec. I, p. 11.
- ¹³ Education of the Deaf, 10.
- ¹⁴ "PLANS ACCEPTED," Morganton Herald, September 10, 1891, p. 3.
- ¹⁵ Education of the Deaf, 11; "DEAF AND DUMB SCHOOL," Morganton Herald, September 27, 1894, p. 3.
- ¹⁶ "DEAF AND DUMB SCHOOL," Morganton Herald, September 27, 1894, p. 3.
- ¹⁷ Education of the Deaf, 11.
- ¹⁸ Education of the Deaf, 13.
- ¹⁹ "THE CORNER-STONE LAYING," Charlotte Daily Observer, June 1, 1898, p. 3.
- ²⁰ Education of the Deaf, 32.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Charlotte Daily Observer. "THE CORNER-STONE LAYING," June 1, 1898.

Coon, Charles L. The Beginnings of Public Education in North Carolina; A Documentary History, 1790-1840. Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Printing Co., 2 vol., 1908.

Education of the Deaf in North Carolina. Morganton: North Carolina School for the Deaf, 75th Anniversary Edition, 1969.

Hall, Jane. "Hall Marks." News and Observer (Raleigh), July 8, 1962.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A

11	7	4	3	7	7	2	0	3	9	5	3	9	6	0
ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING							

B

1	7	4	3	7	4	7	0	3	9	5	3	9	6	0
ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING								

C

1	7	4	3	7	5	2	0	3	9	5	4	0	8	0
ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING								

D

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING								

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Description by C. Greer Suttlemyre, Survey Specialist
Significance by Robert F. Topkins, Survey Specialist

ORGANIZATION DATE
Division of Archives & History, Historic Preservation Section

STREET & NUMBER TELEPHONE
109 East Jones Street 829-4763

CITY OR TOWN STATE
Raleigh North Carolina 27611

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE X LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Laws of North Carolina, 1844-1845.

Laws of North Carolina, 1846-1847.

Morganton Herald. September 24, 1891; "PLANS ACCEPTED," September 10, 1891; "DEAF AND DUMB SCHOOL," September 27, 1894.

News and Observer (Raleigh). "HE WAS TIRED OF LIFE," May 13, 1898.

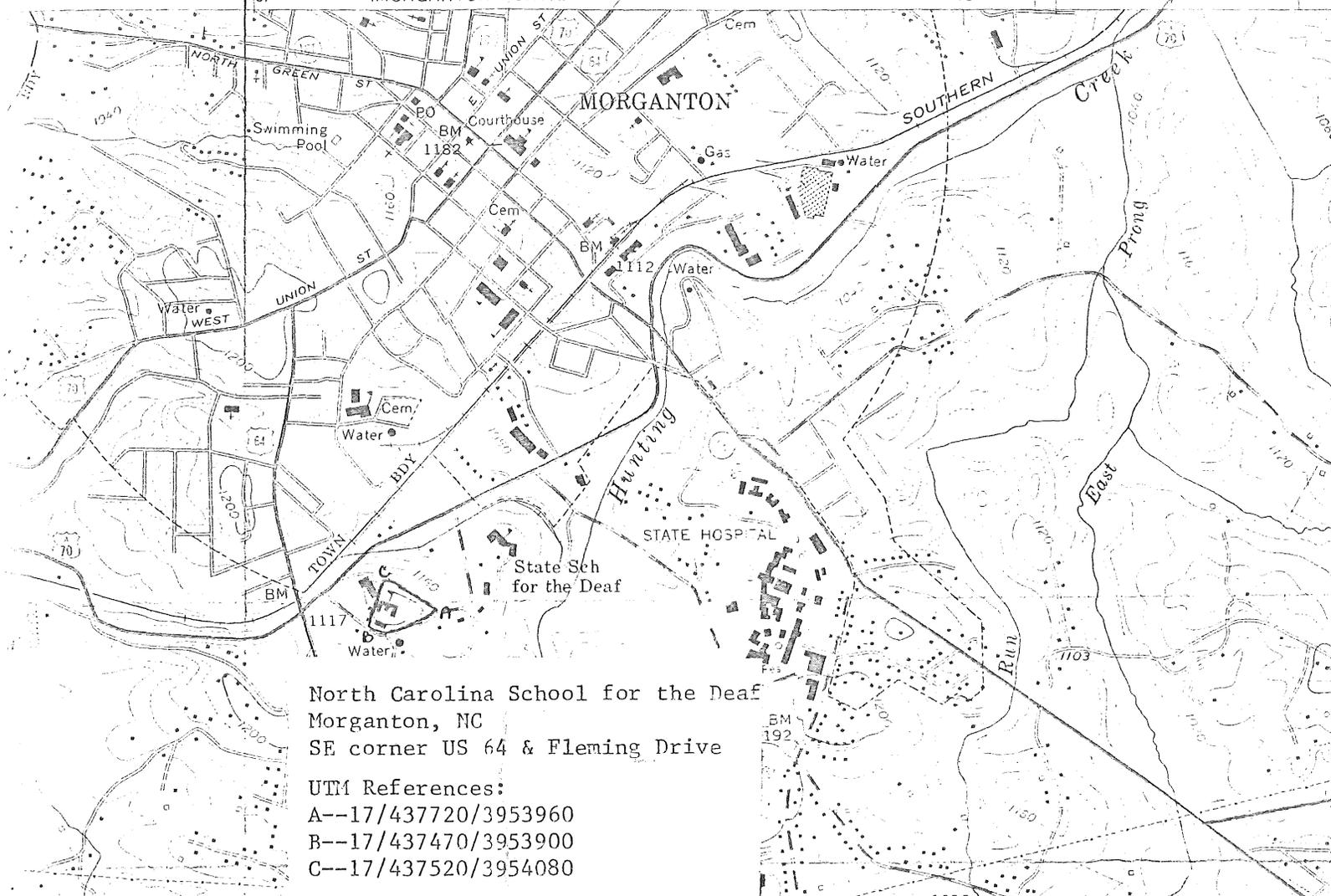
Public Laws of North Carolina, 1891.

15.24 MI
1.5 MI

LENOIR 15 MI
GAMEWELL 10 MI
4655 I SW
(MORGANTON NORTH)

40' 3 MI

0.2 MI. TO U.S. 64 &



North Carolina School for the Deaf
Morganton, NC
SE corner US 64 & Fleming Drive

UTM References:
A--17/437720/3953960
B--17/437470/3953900
C--17/437520/3954080

