

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Cool Springs High School

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 382 West Main Street N/A not for publication

city or town Forest City N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Rutherford code 16.1 zip code 28043

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey Brown SHPO 6/2/99
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- Ownership options: private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

- Category options: building(s), district, site, structure, object

Table with columns for Contributing and Noncontributing resources, listing counts for buildings, sites, structures, and objects, with a Total row.

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

-0-

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

EDUCATION/storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

- Materials list: foundation (Brick), walls (Brick, Cast Stone), roof (Asphalt), other (Metal, Glass)

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet.

Cool Springs High School
Name of Property

Rutherford County, North Carolina
County and State

3. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Education

Social History

Period of Significance

1924-1949

Significant Dates

1924

1925

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Asbury, Louis Humbert--architect

Kistler, H. A.--builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

North Carolina Division of Archives and History
Raleigh, NC

Cool Springs High School
Name of Property

Rutherford County, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.44 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

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3	9	1	0	7	3	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Davyd Foard Hood

organization _____ date 29 September 1998

street & number Isinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Road telephone 704/462-4331

city or town Vale state N.C. zip code 28168

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Rutherford County Board of Education

street & number Attn: Mr. Roger Petty, Superintendent
219 Fairground Road telephone 704/286-2757

city or town Spindale state N.C. zip code 28390

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Cool Springs High School

Narrative Description

Cool Springs High School, a two-story-on-basement Classical Revival-style brick building designed by Louis Humbert Asbury and completed in 1925, stands at 382 West Main Street in Forest City. The school grounds, comprising approximately 2.44 acres, are made up of two parcels; the larger of the two tracts was conveyed in 1875 to the trustees of Burnt Chimney Academy and was the site of a private school here for many years while the smaller parcel, acquired in 1943, was apparently purchased because the extreme southeast end of the school had been built on the neighboring Owens family lands. The long history of this site being used for educational purposes explains, in part, the survival of the old grove of mostly oak trees which shade the grass-covered school lawn and grounds to the present. Documentary photographs of the school made in the 1920s indicate that even then these trees were of substantial size. A granite marker, erected in 1950 in the front west corner of the lawn, commemorates Catharine and Robert Harrill who conveyed the land to the academy trustees in 1875. The school lot fronts to the southwest onto West Main Street (US 74 Business), and it is bounded on the southeast by Wingo Street, and on the northeast by its common boundary with Cool Springs Cemetery which is marked by School Street, a simple paved lane that is located on school property. On the northwest side, the boundary is shared by the cemetery and then carries diagonally across the path of Cemetery Street to West Main Street.

Cool Springs High School stands today in a mixed-use setting at the western edge of the downtown commercial district of Forest City. In 1925, when the school building was opened for use, West Main Street was lined with houses, and its neighborhood was largely residential except for Cool Springs Cemetery. The town's principal cemetery evolved from the church-related burying ground that was in existence here by 1855, when the land was deeded to trustees of the congregation that is now First Baptist Church. The school building is located about three blocks west of the Forest City Baptist Church/First Baptist Church (NR, 1989) at 301 West Main Street. The church and the school are important landmarks in the civic landscape of Forest City and its two principal Classical Revival-style buildings.

The exterior of Cool Springs School, a large imposing brick building erected on a T-shaped plan, survives today as completed and dedicated in 1925 except for the replacement of its window sash with one-over-one metal sash in 1983. Its symmetrical elevations are laid up in common-bond wire-cut red brick; window and door openings, the broad expanses of the elevations, and other features are enlivened with decorative brick courses and cast-stone dressings. Cast stone is also used for the portico frontispiece, string courses, and on the parapet of the main block. The building has two blocks making up the "T" plan. The principal block, with its long façade looking southwest to West Main Street, forms the top of the "T." It contains classrooms, the

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(first) story, and classrooms and the school library on the second story. Projecting, cast-in-place cement staircases occur at the southeast and northwest ends of this block and provide access to the basement level and recessed landings at each end of the main level which give onto interior stairwells linking all three stories of the building. This main part of the building is covered with a parapet composition-on-deck-roof. The stem of the "T" is a large gable-end ell which contains the gymnasium in the basement level and the auditorium on the main and upper levels; the ell is covered with an asphalt-shingle roof. In the 1950s or 1960s, small hipped-roof one-story brick enclosures were erected on the rear northeast end and northwest side elevations of the ell to shelter entrances into the gymnasium.

The southwest façade of Cool Springs school is symmetrically composed and has bands of grouped window openings reflecting the interior arrangement of classrooms; four such groupings of five window openings, two on either side of the entrance, indicate the four classrooms ranked across the façade center on the main and second stories. As was typical of the period these tiered bands are divided by recessed-field piers, an architectural device used to enliven and enhance such wide elevations with many windows. The façade is dominated by the shallow four-column Tuscan portico with echoing pilasters which shelters the central entrance. The arched doorway, enframed by a soldier-course surround with cast stone dressings, is fitted with paired doors below a multi-pane transom; the replacement doors have large glazed panes above molded panels. The school bell is mounted on the wall above the entrance and below paired windows on the second story. The classically-detailed entablature crowning the portico has circular and rectangular panels in the frieze reflecting the placement of the columns and intervening spaces. Symmetrical window openings to either side of the portico illuminate offices on the first story and library spaces on the second story. The walls to either side of the portico, with corresponding window openings on all three levels, are enlivened with a cast stone water table which incorporates the lintels of the basement openings, painted cast-stone or cement sills for the main and second story windows, and a full entablature with a cast stone architrave and cornice at the top. This treatment is generally consistent on all elevations of the building; however, there is some minor variety and differentiation reflecting a hierarchy of importance from the front to the sides to the rear of the building. As was typical of the period, the ends of the façade project forward and serve to both enframe the elevation and complement the central portico. Their blind faces feature panels of Flemish-bond brickwork enclosed by frames of paired end and stretcher courses.

The southeast and northwest side elevations of the main block are virtually identical in their appearance and treatment and they repeat the ordering of architectural elements seen on the façade. Here staircases in the center of each elevation incorporate a secondary flight of steps descending to the basement entrances below the principal flights which rise from ground level to the recessed landings at the main level. These landings occur at each (southeast and northwest)

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end of the first-story corridor. Paired doors open into the first story corridor and like doors open in the northeast side of the landings onto stair towers which link all three levels and are illuminated by double window openings on all three levels. These stairwell windows occupy the bay immediately northeast (right) of the recessed landing on the southeast elevation and the pendant space on the block's northwest side. The remainder of this wall here and on the northwest side is blind. To the left (and southwest) of the landing on the southeast side elevation there are bands of five windows, per story, which are fitted in a shallow projecting bay; this treatment occurs on the pendant northwest side.

The symmetrical rear elevation of the main block has a five-part arrangement dominated by the auditorium ell occupying the center section. The projecting end sections of the elevation are wider than their corresponding projections on the façade and they contain bands of five window openings at each level. There is a corresponding tier of window openings on the main wall of the rear elevation with double window openings immediately beside the ell on each side. Here, below these windows, at the points where the ell joins the wall of the main block, there is a sheltered stepped entrance into the basement gymnasium on the southeast side and a stairwell descending to the boiler room on the opposite (northwest) side of the ell.

The ell, housing the gymnasium in the basement and the auditorium above, has virtually identical southeast and northwest side elevations which are dominated by a quartet of tall arch-headed window openings above shorter windows, in protected wells, which illuminate the gymnasium. Originally containing many-paned sash windows illuminating the auditorium, these openings (and their original sash, it is believed) have been covered with inexpensive exterior sheet paneling. Faux buttresses rise between these windows. The northeast end bay on each side contains an arch-headed doorway opening into passages giving onto the auditorium and its stage and single windows on the main level which illuminate dressing rooms in the rear corners of the ell, on either side of the stage; openings above these windows contain louvered vents. The door on the southeast side of the ell is fitted with a handicap access ramp which is partially mounted on its original stoop; the stoop on the northwest side is partially deteriorated. The rear northeast gable end of the ell is mostly blind except for single window openings in the outer bays, also illuminating the dressing rooms in its corners. Paired faux buttresses are used to give definition to the blind expanse of wall. A small brick enclosure, covered by an asphalt-shingle hipped roof shelters an entrance to the gymnasium, and a like enclosure shelters a third exterior entrance to the gymnasium on the ell's northwest side. These inobtrusive features are additions, probably from the 1950s or later.

The interior of Cool Springs High School survives little altered, a fact that is all the more remarkable given its continuous use by thousands of students over the seventy-two academic years from 1925-1926 to 1997-1998. Only two significant changes have been effected to the

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fabric or plan of the school. New oak flooring was laid over the original wood classroom floors probably because of wear and to conceal the holes left when the original student seating, which was bolted to the floor, was replaced by movable desks. When the school was built the only individual restrooms for both boys and girls were located in the basement, with proximity to the gymnasium. In the later 1950s or 1960s, the former first-aid room on the first floor was fitted up as a girls' restroom and the southeast end of the adjacent classroom was partitioned off to form a boys' restroom. On the second story the home economics kitchen, above the first aid room, became a girls' restroom and the adjoining home economic classroom to the northwest was partitioned to provide a boys' room. Except for changes in paint colors on the plaster walls, ceilings, and woodwork, and the installation of modern lighting, the interior otherwise remains intact. In the classrooms, the black and (later) green boards and bulletin boards are enframed with molded metal surrounds which are not original; these metal frames and boards were added in the later 1950s or 1960s when the original black slate boards were removed.

The front doors of the school open into a cross-shaped entrance hall and corridor with floors of terrazo and painted plaster walls and ceilings finished with a tall chair rail. Inside the doors steps rise to the main level of the hall; here corridors extend to the southeast and northwest through the axial center of the building with classrooms on each side. Directly opposite the front doors the northeast arm of the cross hall widens and takes on the appearance of a lobby in front of a trio of symmetrically-placed doorways opening into the auditorium. These door openings are fitted with original paired six-pane-above-two-panel doors below tall five-pane transoms. Flanking the entrance hall, in the front southwest arm of the cross plan, are two small offices that were originally occupied by the high school principal and the superintendent of the Cool Springs Township schools. A bronze tablet is mounted on the hall wall beside the doorway opening into the southeast office. It bears the following inscription:

COOL SPRINGS
HIGH SCHOOL
Erected 1925
School Commissioners
R. L. Reinhardt, chairman E. E. Smart
W. S. Moss Terry Moore
R. E. Biggerstaff, secretary
Louis H. Asbury, architect H. A. Kistler, contractor
J. W. Eaks, supt.

The door openings to these offices, as well as the classrooms, janitor's closet, and restrooms, etc., are enframed with simple boards with applied molded backbands. They hold original six-pane-above-two-panel wood doors below three-pane transoms; doors and enframements of this

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type appear throughout the building on nearly all the passage openings. These offices have wood floors, wood baseboards and chair rails, and plaster walls and ceilings. The office on the southeast side of the entrance hall, probably used by the township superintendent, is outfitted with a small lavatory, with its original wall-hung sink and toilet, and a walk-in safe with a black metal door inscribed "Victor Safe & Lock Co., Cincinnati, O." in gilt lettering. The safe retains its original open wood shelving on its northwest wall. The pendant office on the northwest side is of similar finish and has a small closet and small lavatory. A series of six classrooms, three on either side of these offices, are ranked across the front of the building and all measure thirty by twenty-one feet in size; these dimensions hold for all of the classrooms except the chemistry lab. The symmetrical tier of classrooms and related spaces on the rear, northeast side of the corridor, originally contained four like classrooms, the first aid room, and the teachers' lounge. The girls restroom (former first aid room) is positioned on the northwest side of the lobby arm of the hall while the teachers' lounge is in the pendant space on the southeast side. The finishes and fixtures of the girls' restrooms are modern. The teachers' lounge has carpet over its wood floors, and plaster walls and ceiling; an original series of thirteen wood closets for teachers are ranked along the northwest wall and fitted with three-panel doors. As noted above, the "middle" classroom on the back side of the northwest end of the building has been partitioned to provide a boys' restroom. The other, larger, room which resulted from this partitioning is used for book storage.

The classrooms on the main level, as well as most of those on the second story, are consistently finished. The floors are oak and the walls and ceilings are painted plaster. The baseboards and door surrounds are molded wood. Each classroom retains its original two-compartment teacher's closet for supplies, etc.; they are fitted with double-leaf three-panel doors. The individual rooms have black and/or green boards and bulletin boards in mostly molded metal frames; some classrooms have additional green writing or bulletin boards with wood frames. All of the classrooms retain their steam radiators and their ventilating fixtures for fresh air which connect with small louvered vents below their windows.

The plan and finish of the second story are identical to the first story except in two regards. Here the space above the front entrance hall, the two flanking administrative offices, and the adjacent front classroom to the northwest is occupied by a large rectangular library measuring fifty-five by twenty-one feet and a library office. The shelving in the library and its fixtures have been replaced over time as the high school building was used successively as a junior high and middle schools; however, the original entrance with paired six-pane-above-two-panel doors and six-pane transom remain in place. In the library office an original two-part cabinet unit, with glazed doors on the wall-hung cabinets, remains in place on its northeast wall. The other variant in the second-story plan is that the space above the teachers' lounge and a part of the adjacent classroom to the southeast on the first story is occupied by a book room and storage room for the

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larger chemistry lab, measuring thirty-six by twenty-one feet. The instructor's desk and a sink unit which remain in the chemistry lab are either original equipment or were installed in 1938, when some new equipment, including charts, were added to the room.

The basement level also retains its original plan and most of its architectural finish. When the building was built there were three classrooms of standard size at each (southeast and northwest) end of the main block. Occupying the space across the front of the building, between these classroom blocks, was (moving northwest to southeast) a storage room, kitchen, and cafeteria. When the 1997-1998 school year ended all of the rooms across the southwest front of the building, except for the classroom in the west corner of the building, had been incorporated into the kitchen and cafeteria operation with conventional doorways cut into the partition walls to link the rooms; that single, west classroom has been simply partitioned with wall board to provide four small office spaces. All of these rooms have tile floors and painted plaster walls and ceilings. The original tier of rooms across the northeast rear of the basement, between single classrooms at each end, remains intact as well. They comprise, moving from northwest to southeast, the original boys' restroom, a fuel room, the boiler room with the aforementioned outside access and a doorway opening into the fuel room, the original dressing/shower room, a passage linking the main corridor with the gymnasium, a small classroom (that might have once been used as the girls dressing room), and the girls' restroom. Of this group, the girls' restroom remains the most intact except for the replacement of its two wall-hung sinks, and the survival of its original stalls and fixtures is unusual in an educational building of this period. The room has a terrazzo floor and baseboard and painted plaster walls and ceiling. In the center of the room is a double tier of ten metal stalls while seven additional metal stalls are ranged along the northwest wall. The seventeen white toilets are labeled "MAJOCA-Philadelphia," Model #442, manufactured by Haines, Jones & Cadbury Company of Philadelphia; they are fitted with black "Olsonite" seats. The dressing room has a cement floor, plaster walls, and exposed terra-cotta tile blocks visible on the ceiling. A simple metal screen separates the shower area on the northeast end of the room where metal piping remains in place to serve the several shower heads; the room is now used for janitorial storage. The boys' restroom has finishes and fixtures dating over a period of time; however, an original enamel wall-hung trough urinal remains in place on the southeast wall.

The school gymnasium and auditorium are located in the ell which projects to the northeast from the center of the school's rear elevation; these two spaces survive remarkably intact to the present, and they recall important features of scholastic life in the inter-war period. The gymnasium is a two-level space and located in the basement and sub-basement of the ell; it is illuminated by tall windows, protected by masonry wells, on both sides of the basement level. The original exterior entrance (on the southeast side of the ell) and a student entrance from the basement of the main block both open onto the upper (basement) level of the space which forms

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a balcony overlooking the playing floor on the sub-basement level. An interior brick staircase descends to the playing floor. In the winter of 1952 the gymnasium was condemned for basketball games because it had only one exterior (fire/safety) exit. Subsequently, exterior doors and staircases were installed on the northeast end of the ell and the northwest side; both are protected by sheds and open onto the balcony viewing area and the playing floor. The brick walls of the gymnasium are unpainted while the six concrete pier supports and balcony railing are painted; the playing floor is oak and the balcony is floored with pine.

The auditorium is probably the most intact and most important of the building's interiors; it survives as the finest, best-preserved public meeting/performance hall of its period in Rutherford County. It occupies the first and second story levels of the ell. The principal access is the trio of doors in the main first-story hall which open into the back of the auditorium where cement staircases on either side provide access to the balcony; doors on both the southeast and northwest sides also provide access to the auditorium, its stage, and dressing rooms while serving as safety exits. There is also access to the balcony from the second story of the school. The simple classical interior decoration of the auditorium includes oak flooring, which slopes from the southwest to the northeast, molded baseboards and chair rails, painted plaster walls and ceiling, and original Adamesque light fixtures; the walls are dominated by the tall arch-headed window openings, now infilled, and Tuscan pilasters which define the bays and rise to support molded beams carrying across the ceiling. The double-aisle plan features three tiers of original laminated wood auditorium-style seating with "CSHS" inscribed on the aisle-ends of the decorative metal support frames. An elevated stage is centered on the northeast wall and flanked by door openings; its rounded-corner frame is molded. The oak-floored stage, in turn, is flanked by dressing rooms with conventional original finish. The balcony level, across the southwest rear of the auditorium, has the same style seating as on the main floor and an enclosed projection booth.

Commemorative Marker

1950

Noncontributing object

This early history of this site is commemorated by a grey granite rough-finished tablet-like marker located in the front west corner of the lawn. A smooth-finished rectangular panel on its southwest face has the following inscription:

In Memory of
Robert McBrayer Harrill
and
Catherine Suttle Harrill

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Who Gave This Property To The
Trustees of Burnt Chimney
Academy For The Erection Of
A Public School On The 6th
Day Of January In The Year Of
Our Lord 1875
Erected in 1950

This marker is noncontributing only because of its age.

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Summary Paragraph

Cool Springs High School, an imposing and well-preserved Classical Revival-style brick building, has been a landmark in Forest City, the largest town in Rutherford County, since its completion in 1925. Standing on a site first used for a school in the mid 1870s, Cool Springs School holds local significance in the areas of architecture, education, and social history, and satisfies National Register Criteria A and C. Designed by Charlotte architect Louis Humbert Asbury and erected by H. A. Kistler, it opened for students on 14 September 1925. Cool Springs was one of three schools erected in Rutherford County exclusively for high school students in 1924-1925, during the early years of the school consolidation movement in North Carolina. These three schools remained the county's high schools until 1959, when the first of a new series of high schools, Chase, was erected during a second phase of school consolidation and rebuilding in Rutherford County. Cool Springs School remained a high school through the 1961-1962 academic year, and it was successively a junior high school and middle school until May 1998 when it ceased to be used for instructional purposes.

Standing a few blocks west of Forest City (First) Baptist Church, Cool Springs High School and the church are the two principal Classical Revival-style buildings in the town and important reflections of Forest City's growth in the opening decades of the twentieth century. Its local significance in the areas of architecture, education, and social history are intertwined in the circumstances of its construction. Between 1900 and 1920 the population of Forest City doubled from 1,090 to 2,312 residents; in 1922 the town erected an imposing new school, designed by James Mackson McMichael, to house all its students in grades one through eleven. As that building was being completed and first used, the town's population continued to swell--it would nearly double to 4,068 in 1930--and the school consolidation movement made great strides in Rutherford County which became a recognized leader in public education in the 1920s and 1930s. A consolidated school advocated by local leaders was approved by voters in Cool Springs Township on 24 May 1924, and this second major modern school building was completed in Forest City within three years of the earlier building which became the city's elementary school. Designed by Mr. Asbury, an architect with broad experience in school design, Cool Springs School embodied modern principles of scholastic architecture; it survives today as an important, intact example of his educational designs and a reminder of the civic, educational, and social aspirations of the citizens of Forest City and Cool Springs Township. Occupying a site used as a school in the 1870s, it is to be renovated as the administrative offices of the Rutherford County School System.¹

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Historical Background, Education, and Social History Context

The Cool Springs High School building, operated as a public school from the fall of 1925 through the spring term in 1998, is an impressive Classical Revival-style brick building which occupies a site long used for public education in Forest City. The tract on which the school stands, augmented by the purchase of a lot on the east side in 1943, was set aside for educational purposes in 1875. On 6 January 1875, Catharine M. Harrill (1845-1920) and Robert M. Harrill (1837-1914) conveyed to the trustees of Burnt Chimney Academy a nearly square lot of 2.75 acres "... lying on the north side of the road leading from Rutherfordton to Shelby about five miles from Rutherfordton" (Rutherford County Deed Book 88: 95-96). The purchase price was \$7.50. The trustees named in the deed were men whose families would remain prominent in Forest City to the present: Thomas Wilkins, C. B. Justice, James Webb Davis, J. B. Blanton, W. D. Harrill, and G. T. Bostic(k).

This deed transaction occurred between important events in the history of the place first known as Cool Spring, later as Burnt Chimney, and finally as Forest City, the largest town in Rutherford County, through the course of this century. The establishment of a (Baptist) church and burying ground here in the antebellum period was the first step toward the establishment of the town. On 26 May 1855, John Bostick conveyed "unto the said eldership of the Church at Cool Spring a certain piece or parcel or tract of land for the use of said Church including the Meeting house and burying Ground lying in the County and State aforesaid" (Rutherford County Deed Book 46: 347). That parcel of about 3.25 acres lay to the north of the present school site and formed the core of the burying ground which continues as Cool Spring Cemetery to the present. The present First Baptist Church (NR, 1989) was built in 1915 on the south side of West Main Street a couple of blocks closer to the commercial center of town.

Although the term "Cool Spring(s)" survived as the name of the township and as the name given the town's new high school in 1925, the community came to be known by another name in the mid-nineteenth century. According to local tradition the name Burnt Chimney derives from a burnt chimney which was left standing when a fire destroyed the dwelling of James McArthur that stood on land which became downtown Forest City. The burnt chimney apparently became a landmark on the road (later US 74) between Rutherfordton, the county seat of Rutherford County, and Shelby, the county seat of Cleveland County, to the east. It was such a landmark that the place was incorporated as Burnt Chimney by action of the North Carolina General Assembly on 27 February 1877 (Griffin, 341-342). Dr. Guilford E. Young (1844-1914) was the first mayor of the new town. After a time community residents grew dissatisfied with the name and sought a new name for the town. Sarah Jane Eaves Davis (1842-1908), the wife of Professor James Webb Davis (1837-1895), suggested Forestdale as a name, honoring her son Forest

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Tolliver Davis (1867-1957); the town commissioners held to the use of "Forest" and added "City." Burnt Chimney became Forest City in 1887.

The change in name occurred as a sequence of events propelled Forest City from a small village to the largest town in Rutherford County. The impetus for this growth was twofold: industry and railroads. In 1887 the Wilmington, Charlotte and Rutherford Railroad (subsequently known as Carolina Central and later a part of the Seaboard Railroad) was built to Forest City. By 1890 Forest City was a stop on the Georgetown and North Carolina Narrow Gauge Railroad (later a part of the Southern Railroad) between Camden, South Carolina, and Marion, North Carolina. The Carolina, Clinchfield and Ohio Railroad was completed in 1909 (HERITAGE, 27-28). In 1890 Rutherford County had a population of 18,770 persons; the population of Forest City was then 419 while Rutherfordton (and apparently its township) was more than four times larger with a population of 1,904 residents; by 1900 the population of Forest City would grow to 1,090 citizens while that of the county seat would fall to 880.

In 1897 the fortunes of Forest City were forever changed when Raleigh Rutherford Haynes (1851-1917) and Simpson Bobo Tanner (1854-1924), fathers of the textile industry in Rutherford County, completed the Florence Mills in Forest City, a major textile plant with 12,200 spindles; the mills were named for Mr. Haynes' eldest daughter Florence (see Cliffside School, NR 1998). Other industrial, commercial, and financial investment followed soon thereafter in the opening decades of the twentieth century. By 1910 the population of Forest City grew to 1,592 citizens and it increased to 2,312 persons in 1920. The growth during the decade when Cool Springs High School was built, between 1920 and 1930, was even more pronounced; in the later year Forest City had a population of 4,068 residents, a figure more than double Rutherfordton's population of 2,020.

In Forest City, the development of educational facilities mirrored the town's industrial and commercial development while serving the increasing numbers of students whose parents worked in the mills, stores, lumber yards, and other enterprises in the bustling community. In or about 1875, the year the trustees of Burnt Chimney Academy acquired this property, they erected a school which served the community for a now unknown period of time; one source describes the building as rectangular, measuring thirty by forty-five feet (HERITAGE, 23). No doubt it was operated along the traditional lines of private, community-supported academies throughout North Carolina. A first step in the movement to provide comprehensive public education in North Carolina in the following years was the passage of an act by the General Assembly on 10 March 1881. The act to "Revise and Consolidate the Public School Law and Make More Efficient the System of Public Instruction in the State" incorporated the State Board of Education, named the county commissioners a school board for their respective county, directed each county school board and county magistrates to name "one resident of their county, of good

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moral character and of liberal education, who shall be styled the county superintendent of public education," and ordered the boards to establish school districts in their county (Griffin, 349). On 6 June 1881, the county magistrates and school board elected Adin Lynch Rucker (1842-1917) as the first superintendent of public instruction in Rutherford County. He served until the end of 1888 and was succeeded in 1889 by James Webb Davis (1837-1895) who held the post until his death (Griffin, 350).

The history of public education in Forest City was represented in a brief article headlined "Forest City Public Schools" and published in the FOREST CITY COURIER on 14 November 1924. Two nineteenth century schools were noted; however, their relationship to the Burnt Chimney Academy at this site was unexplained. The community's first school is said to have been a one-room log building which stood "near the site of the new High school building, which is now in the first stage of construction."

Necessity then compelled the town to erect a second school building, for more room was needed. This was built on West Main Street. It consisted of two rooms and two teachers. Later, one more room and teacher were secured.

The next building was erected between 1907 and 1909. It was a two story brick structure. The first floor consisted of four medium-sized rooms and a hall. On the second floor was a small auditorium. Later, two rooms were added upstairs and a small two-room brick building was built on the grounds. Several years later, a wooden school house was put up to accommodate the increasing number of pupils. The entire plant at this time consisted of eight class rooms and one hall.

But Forest City continued to grow and an eight-room school building became hopelessly inadequate. So in 1921 the erection of the present commodious and attractive building was begun. It is a large three-story brick building consisting of twenty-six class rooms, a library, music room, rest rooms, office, lunch room, laboratory and a large auditorium. Mr. B. L. Smith was our first superintendent on moving into the new building. His tireless efforts in behalf of the school helped make possible the present plant.

The brick and frame school buildings mentioned above, dating from 1907, 1909, and thereafter, stood at the corner of North Broadway and Trade Streets, a short distance north of Main Street, Forest City's principal east/west avenue. The school erected in 1922 was originally to have been built on that site; however, the building designed by Charlotte architect James Mackson McMichael proved to be too large for the site and a new elevated site, on the (Old) Carolee Road and south of Main Street, was selected (FOREST CITY COURIER, 9 and 16 February 1922). John P. Little & Son of Charlotte received the contract to erect the building which was much

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acclaimed in the local press and became the first modern school building erected in Forest City with a full range of classrooms and related facilities for grades one through eleven. A photograph of it appeared above the article published in the FOREST CITY COURIER on 14 November 1924.

Even as the new school was being erected, the school consolidation movement was gaining important civic and legislative support in North Carolina. In 1923 the General Assembly enacted legislation providing for school consolidation and new, higher standards for public instruction. On 4 June 1923 the Rutherford County School Board adopted a county-wide school consolidation plan. In Forest City the idea was advanced by the Kiwanis Club and a group of town leaders who foresaw the population growth that would occur in the decade of the 1920s. On Saturday, 24 May 1924, an election was held in Cool Springs Township on the matter of erecting a new consolidated high school for the township and the levying of a special tax to raise the funds for its construction and initial operation. Of the one thousand people registered to vote in the township, including the towns of Forest City, Alexander Mills, and Bostic, 568 voted in favor of the new facility while 231 voted against it; as was then the practice, the 201 citizens who did not vote in the election were counted as opposed, so the final tally was 568 in favor of the new consolidated high school and 432 against it (THE SUN, 29 May 1924).

School consolidation proposals and projects were being advanced in other sections of Rutherford County through strong local leadership and regional prosperity in the textile industry; in the space of two years three consolidated high schools were approved, completed, and occupied in September 1925. In the winter of 1923-1924 civic leaders in Rutherfordton joined with like-minded people in Spindale, a textile mill village between the county seat and Forest City, and the village of Ruth to endorse a special school tax district to raise revenues to erect a new consolidated high school. The election on 26 January 1924 overwhelmingly supported the proposal. Hugh Edward White, an architect in Gastonia, prepared the plans for the new Rutherfordton-Spindale Central High School (NR, 1993), which was built by the Palmer-Spivey Construction Company of Charlotte. It was occupied by students on 14 September 1925, the same day that students entered Cool Springs High School. In southeast Rutherford County, civic leaders in the mill towns of Henrietta and Caroleen also pressed for consolidation and the creation of a special school tax district to support the construction of a joint high school to serve senior students in their schools. An election was held and voters approved the new tax and consolidation. Twin High School was erected in 1924-1925 at Avondale, midway between the two mill villages; it opened with grades seven through eleven attending school there for the first time on 9 September 1925. These three high schools, Rutherfordton-Spindale Central, Twin, and Cool Springs, remained the only three schools operated exclusively as high schools in Rutherford County for over thirty years. In 1959 Chase High School was completed in southeast Rutherford County and became the first of a new series of larger consolidated schools in the 1960s.

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Cool Springs High School was erected by the township school board under the auspices of the School Board of Rutherford County whose local powers grew during the consolidation movement. The five-member board of commissioners oversaw the planning and construction of the new high school: Robert Lee Rinehardt (1888-1940), chairman, served as mayor of Forest City from 1931 until his death; Willie Smith Moss (1878-1952) was a merchant, banker, and served as mayor of Forest City from 1919 to 1921; E. E. Smart was a prominent figure in Bostic; Robert E. Biggerstaff (1872-1936) was a local businessman and secretary of the board; and Terry Moore of whom little is now known.

Soon after the voters in Cool Springs Township approved the new high school, architectural plans for the building were sought, and the design submitted by Charlotte architect Louis Humbert Asbury was selected. James Mackson McMichael, the architect of the 1921-1922 Forest City School, also prepared plans for the proposed Cool Springs School. Mr. Asbury had designed residential, commercial, and religious buildings for clients in Forest City, beginning in 1913, and his Cliffside School (NR, 1998) was then but three years old. In his job book, in the Louis Asbury Collection in the J. Murrey Atkins Library at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, the design of the school is listed as commission #583 and bears the date of 20 August 1924. Whether that is the date for the commission or the date of the finished drawings is not known: the drawings do not survive. The contract for the construction of the school was let to Henry Alfred Kistler, a prominent contractor, of Lincolnton. On 8 December 1924, as work on the school was advancing, the tract deeded to the trustees of the Burnt Chimney Academy in 1875 was conveyed by the Forest City Graded School and the town of Forest City to the Board of Education of Rutherford County (Rutherford County Deed Book 128: 374-375).

Construction work on Cool Springs High School continued through the winter, spring, and summer of 1924-1925 and was nearing completion in August 1925; the graded (elementary) schools in Forest City, Alexander, and Bostic opened their fall term on 31 August but the opening of the high school was delayed for two weeks (FOREST CITY COURIER, 20 August 1925). An article in the FOREST CITY COURIER on 10 September 1925 announced the plans for opening the school and the textbooks for required and elective courses.

Monday September 14th all the high school pupils will meet in the Forest City Grammar Grade School auditorium. At this meeting instructions will be given for the first few weeks of school. About 10 o'clock the high school students will go over to the new high school building for class assignments. The high school building will not be completed at this time but it becomes necessary to open school anyway. Enough of the building will be completed in order to begin work. School will have to begin in the new building since the grammar grade building will not accommodate the high school this year.

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Plans to formally open the school in October were delayed "since the auditorium chairs will not be installed until the first week in November" (FOREST CITY COURIER, 29 October 1925).

A front-page article in the FOREST CITY COURIER on 12 November 1925 announced the ceremonies:

The magnificent new high school of Cool Springs Township will be formally opened to the public and dedicated on next Monday evening, Nov. 16th. The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock and the citizens of the township are most cordially invited to go through the building and inspect the various departments before the program. The beauty of the building and completeness of the equipment will be a revelation to the community. No high school in the state is better fitted to do good work. Each of the ten departments is equipped with the standard material and they will all be open for the inspection of the citizens. The faculty and students urge the visitors to avail themselves of the opportunity to see the building and equipment.

The formal dedication will begin at eight o'clock. Music by the grammar grade glee club, by the high school glee club and by the faculty quartette will be one feature of the evening. A new concert grand piano has been placed in the auditorium. It is a Balwin, a standard make and is a very fine instrument. It was used in the Stevens meeting at High Point and the school authorities regard themselves as very fortunate in securing it.

In its next issue, a week later on 19 November, the FOREST CITY COURIER printed a long article on the dedicatory ceremonies together with accounts of the speeches by Clyde Atkinson Erwin (1897-1952), the county superintendent of schools, and Dr. J. Henry Highsmith, the state inspector of high schools.

Upon its completion, Cool Springs High School immediately became a civic landmark in Forest City, and it remained in use as the public high school for the town and township through the 1961-1962 school year. During this period additional nearby property was acquired for educational and athletic use. On 17 February 1925 the Rutherford County Board of Education acquired a small parcel a short distance to the northwest of campus and on the west side of present-day Cemetery Street (Rutherford County Deed Book 129: 392). This tract, located in the southwest corner of Cemetery and First Streets, comprised lots #92 through #97 of the O. B. Biggerstaff property. This property was purchased to provide a playing field for high school students. A second purchase, during World War II, was for a different reason; at some point, probably in the late 1930s or early 1940s, the school board came to realize that the extreme east end of the high school building had been erected on the lot adjoining the old Burnt Chimney Academy tract. (This is indicated by the presence of the broken line on the Rutherford County

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Tax Map accompanying this nomination.) On 21 August 1943, four sisters, the daughters and heirs of William M. Owens, conveyed the rectangular lot on the east side of the school property and in the northwest corner of West Main and Wingo Streets for \$2,700 to the Rutherford County Board of Education (Rutherford County Deed Book 183: 348-349).

In the post-World War II period the school's programs expanded. The twelfth grade was added to the curriculum in the school year of 1946-1947. As the student body grew and athletic programs became increasingly important in scholastic life, the gymnasium and its simple dressing/shower room became unsatisfactory for physical education and both boys' and girls' team athletics. Two improvements eventually met the pressing need. On 3 November 1949, the Rutherford County Board of Education acquired a rectangular parcel on the west side of Cemetery Street, adjoining the lots purchased in 1924 (Rutherford County Deed Book 208: 407-408). In 1958 this lot became the site of a new modern one-story brick gymnasium for Cool Springs High School. The need for a large modern athletic playing field was also pressing. On 24 January 1953, the Willis Towery Post No. 74 of the American Legion, Inc., sold the American Legion Memorial Ball Park, located to the northeast of the high school and on the east side of Wingo Street, to the Rutherford County Board of Education (Rutherford County Deed Book 219: 278-279). The ball park, then a relatively new facility, had been used for high school athletic contests for several years.

During the late 1950s and the early 1960s a second major wave of school consolidation efforts occurred in North Carolina and Rutherford County. East Rutherford High School, an entirely new facility on East High Road in eastern Rutherford County, about three miles east of Forest City, was completed in 1962. High school students in grades nine through twelve at Cool Springs joined their fellow high school students from Ellenboro School, and Sunshine School in Bostic at East Rutherford High School for the fall term of 1962. The former Cool Springs High School building was used that term, and through the 1969-1970 school year, as a junior high school for grades six through eight; beginning in 1970-1971 the school housed only grades seven and eight. In 1988 the school was designated as Cool Springs Middle School and it continued in use as a middle school through the 1997-1998 school year. During the summer of 1998 much of its classroom equipment was distributed to other schools in the county and the building was abandoned for instructional purposes. Middle school students who would have walked through its doors for the seventy-third continuous year instead entered East Rutherford Middle School at Bostic which had been enlarged to accommodate the Forest City students. Cool Springs High School, placed into service on 14 September 1925 and last used for instruction on 28 May 1998, is to be renovated and rehabilitated for use as the administrative offices of the School Board of Rutherford County.

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Architectural Significance

The choice of Louis Humbert Asbury as the architect of Cool Springs School, one of three buildings erected in Rutherford County solely for high school instruction in 1924-1925, reflected Asbury's decade-long association with clients in Forest City and his skills as a school designer which were demonstrated at Cliffside Public School (NR, 1998), completed in 1921 in southeast Rutherford County. During a long and prolific career beginning in Charlotte in 1908, Mr. Asbury designed an important series of residences, commercial, industrial, and financial buildings, churches and schools for clients in Rutherford County from 1913 to 1950 (and perhaps even later). Jacob Franklin Alexander, members of the Haynes family, and the Rutherford County government were his principal employers here.

Mr. Asbury designed at least three buildings for Jacob Franklin Alexander (1859-1925), a wealthy lumberman, industrialist, and philanthropist who was born near Forest City (Griffin, 375-376). In 1913 Mr. Alexander, then still a bachelor, commissioned a new house (Asbury Com. #137) from Mr. Asbury which he erected on East Main Street; he married Kathleen Young (1890-1939), the daughter of his business partner Dr. Guilford E. Young, in 1915, and the (now lost) Classical Revival-style house remained the home of his widow. In 1913 Mr. Alexander and Dr. Young donated the land on which the Forest City Baptist Church (NR, 1989) was erected to designs by another Charlotte architect, James Mackson McMichael (1870-1944), and they paid for one-half the construction costs for the new building. The question of why these concurrent Alexander-related projects were designed by two different architects remains unexplained except for the fact that McMichael enjoyed a regional reputation as a specialist in church architecture (Forest City Baptist Church NR nomination). McMichael and Asbury would compete as architects for projects in Forest City through the 1920s. Mr. Asbury's third building erected on Forest City's Main Street was the Farmers Bank and Trust Company building (Asbury Comm. #194, 101 West Main) of 1915; Jacob F. Alexander organized the bank that same year and served as its president. In 1919 Mr. Asbury received his final commission from Jacob F. Alexander, a hotel (Asbury Com. #359) whose history is unconfirmed.²

There can be little doubt that the early Alexander commissions and their appearance prompted a sequence of additional projects in Rutherford County. In 1914, Mr. Asbury designed a church (no longer standing) for the town's Methodist Episcopal congregation (Asbury Com. #161) which was built at the corner of East Main and North Broadway. Alterations and additions to the office building of the Cliffside Mills (Asbury Com. #246), were commissioned by Charles Henry Haynes in 1917. Two years later Mr. Asbury designed the Farmer's Hardware Company store building (Asbury Com. #344, 110 West Main) and the C. C. Moore & Company store (Asbury Com. #354), both in Forest City. In 1920 he designed a house (Asbury Com. #408) for Grover

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Cleveland Haynes (1884-1950) which was built in Cliffside, a textile mill village owned by the Haynes family.

By 1920 when Charles Henry Haynes, president of Cliffside Mills, commissioned the design of Cliffside Public School, Louis H. Asbury had been designing school buildings for Piedmont North Carolina counties (Stanly, Mecklenburg, Gaston, Iredell) for eight years, and he had enjoyed varied commissions from the Stonewall Jackson Manuel Training and Industrial School at Concord (Cabarrus County) since 1908. His design of the Cliffside Public School, planned to provide educational facilities for students of all grades in the mill village, surely recommended him to the building committee for the new Cool Springs school. The Cliffside school was completed in 1921 and dedicated in 1922; in that later year Asbury designed a bank building (Asbury Com. #478) erected at Caroleen (near Cliffside) and a residence for J. H. Thomas (Asbury Com. #507, 344 East Main) in Forest City. In the spring of 1924, as voters in Cool Springs Township were considering the idea of a consolidated high school, Mr. Asbury completed the design of a new brick county home for Rutherford County (Asbury Com. #570); it was a tripartite brick building with separate blocks for white and colored citizens flanking the superintendent's residence in the center (THE SUN, 29 May 1924). Finally, as Mr. Asbury was completing the design for Cool Springs School, he was also completing drawings for the Rutherford County Court House (Asbury Com. #620); the contract for the court house was awarded on 8 September 1924 (Griffin, 502).

Henry Alfred Kistler (1864-1928), the builder of Cool Springs High School, was a prominent contractor and builder of Lincolnton, North Carolina. He was born in Catawba County on 6 January 1864 to John Larkin and Frances McCaslin Kistler. Henry Alfred Kistler came to Lincolnton with his parents in 1884, and thereafter they figured in the life of the Lincoln County seat. Mr. Kistler was described as a "Prominent Contractor" in his obituary published in the LINCOLN COUNTY NEWS on 15 October 1928.

Many of the business buildings and public buildings of Lincolnton area monuments to his skill as a building contractor. He was in charge of the construction of the new Country (sic) Courthouse, Commercial Bank & Trust Co., Post Office Building, Lincoln Hospital, First National Bank building, the Lutheran Church and other buildings here.

The account of his professional career concluded with the statement, "He also erected stately buildings in other towns, the new High School building at Forest City being among these."³

The design of the Cool Springs High School follows the conventions of modern school design of the early 1920s and its elevations were finished in the Classical Revival style of the earlier Cliffside Public School; however, there were certain differences in this building which was one

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of the first erected in Rutherford County specifically as a high school. In addition to the usual classrooms, library, offices, teachers' lounge, and a spacious auditorium, Asbury provided attractive lecture and laboratory spaces for science instruction and a substantial gymnasium with a small dressing room which retains its shower area. Because the original plans for the building do not survive and some modest alterations have been effected to the interior, it is impossible to describe the specific facilities he provided for four new departments added to the high school curriculum when the school opened in September 1925: home economics under Miss Lillie Maude Bell who also taught a class to adult women; agriculture; commerce (typewriting, shorthand, bookkeeping) under Miss Huggins who also taught a later-afternoon class for local business people; and music under Miss Mary Wilder who also directed the school glee club.

Cool Springs School retains a remarkable degree of integrity for a building that has remained continuously in use as a public school for seventy-two academic years, from the fall term of 1925-1926 through the spring term of 1997-1998. On the exterior the only appreciable, visible change has been the replacement of the original window sash with metal sash, an alteration in 1983 that has occurred on virtually every school building of this period that remains in use. The interior plan and finish of the school also remain largely intact; the only change of note to the plan has been partitioning of some rooms to provide restrooms for both boys and girls on all three stories of the building. When the building was built and for many years, at least into the 1950s, there were separate restrooms for both sexes only in the basement. The girls' restroom in the basement, a surprising survival, retains its original metal stall partitions and toilets. Over time some of the spaces in the basement have been refitted for changing educational and enrollment needs; the cafeteria, with some early shelving and cabinetry, was expanded through the decades. During this long period the gymnasium, in the basement of the ell, has survived as has the original dressing/shower room nearby; the construction of the new gymnasium in 1958 relieved the pressure to substantially alter spaces for athletics or to make additions to the original 1925 building.

The classrooms on both the main and second stories, as well as those in the basement, also survive with an impressive degree of integrity. Although oak flooring was laid down over the original flooring, probably when the original student desks that were bolted to the floor were replaced, the glazed and paneled doors with transoms, together with their molded surrounds remain as do the teacher's closets in each room. The rooms also retain the original ventilating fixtures which provided fresh air and ventilation. The black and green boards and bulletin boards mostly have metal frames which are believed to date to the removal of the original black slate boards in the later 1950s or 1960s. In other rooms, including the chemistry lab original (or very early) equipment survives in place, the safe remains in the superintendent's office, the rank of individual closets for teachers remains in the former lounge, and original cabinetry survives in the librarian's office on the second floor, among other original features and fixtures. The most impressive space in Cool Springs School is the auditorium which survives today as the most

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intact historic public assembly room in Rutherford County. Although the tall arch-headed window openings have been closed up, their form survives in a space that is still illuminated by its original light fixtures, and where the original laminated wood seating installed in November 1925, with "CSHS" inscribed on its metal ends to the aisles, remains in place.

In the 1920s Rutherford County was at the forefront of the school consolidation movement; Cool Springs High School, one of the first three buildings erected specifically as high schools in Rutherford County, and surely one of the earliest such buildings in North Carolina to survive with integrity, is evidence of the leadership by prominent citizens and local officials, including Clyde Atkinson Erwin (1897-1952), superintendent of public instruction in Rutherford County from 1925 to 1934, when he was appointed state superintendent of public instruction, a post he held until his death. Of these three high school buildings erected in 1924-1925, Cool Springs High School remains the most imposing and intact. Rutherfordton-Spindale Central High School was damaged by a fire in April 1938 and the interior of its west wing was rebuilt to designs by V. W. Breeze of Shelby. Twin High School at Avondale, distinguished by a handsome portico, is a smaller building with fewer original facilities than were provided by the Cool Springs building. It is also an eloquent reminder of the design abilities of Louis Humbert Asbury; until May 1998, when it ceased to be used for instructional purposes, his Cool Springs School and Cliffside School were among a small number of the oldest public school buildings in North Carolina in continuous use. Each remains a landmark in its community and Rutherford County.

Endnotes

1. The primary and secondary sources used in the preparation of this nomination are cited in parentheses in the text. This nomination also reflects the generous assistance of Miss Evelyn Carswell and Mrs. Bobbie (Walker) St. Clair, graduates of the Class of 1952, who organized the All-Class Reunion of 1996. Miss Carswell compiled COOL SPRINGS HIGH SCHOOL, 1926-1962, a history of the school which includes a list of all its teachers and students during the period from its opening on 14 September 1925 through the senior class graduation in spring 1962.
2. The Asbury-designed hotel was possibly built by Mr. Alexander in St. Petersburg, Florida, where he is known to have owned a hotel and other investments. At Mr. Alexander's death in 1925 he left a sizable bequest to the town's Baptist Church. Both Mr. McMichael and Mr. Asbury completed design proposals (no commission number) for a sizable memorial educational building addition; Mr. Asbury's proposal survives in the Louis Asbury Collection. However, the church leaders awarded the commission to the little known firm of Casey and Fant of Anderson, South Carolina, which produced a conventional Classical Revival-style building as the Alexander Memorial.

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3. All of the buildings cited above survive today; however, the Commercial Bank & Trust Company building, on the square in Lincolnton, has been terribly remodeled and now houses an office of NationsBank. His own residence, now the home of his great-grandson Michael Bowden, stands at 317 S. Laurel Street in Lincolnton. The Lincoln County Court House and Emmanuel Lutheran Church are listed in the National Register (1979 and 1994, respectively), as is St. Luke's Church and Cemetery (1992); a brick veneer was laid over the frame elevations of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, probably under Mr. Kistler's supervision and while his company was building the court house in 1922. Six years later, on Friday afternoon, 12 October 1928, he was buried in the church cemetery.

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- Griffin, Clarence W. HISTORY OF OLD TRYON AND RUTHERFORD COUNTIES, NORTH CAROLINA, 1730-1936. Asheville: Miller Printing Company, 1937.
- W. Ross Hill, "Rutherford County Schools," in ESSAYS ON NORTH CAROLINA HISTORY, compiled by Clarence Griffin (Forest City: Forest City Courier, 1951), 189-214.
- LINCOLN COUNTY NEWS: 15 October 1928.
- Rutherford County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Rutherford County Court House, Rutherfordton, North Carolina.
- Rutherford County School Board Minute Book, Office of the Rutherford County School Board, Spindale, North Carolina.
- Rutherfordton-Spindale Central High School (Rutherford County) National Register Nomination, 1993.
- THE SUN (Rutherfordton), 29 May 1924.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cool Springs High School, Rutherford County, North Carolina

Section number 10 Page 23

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is Lot #2 of Block #8 on Rutherford County Tax Map 216 (Cool Springs Township) submitted with this nomination. The property PIN number is 16-16028.

Boundary Justification

The tract of 2.44 acres, described above, comprises the parcel conveyed in 1875 to the trustees of Burnt Chimney Academy and, in turn, conveyed by the Forest City Graded School and the town of Forest City to the Board of Education of Rutherford County in 1924 and the parcel conveyed by the Owens sisters in 1943 to the Board of Education of Rutherford County. This parcel has proved to be smaller in size than the approximate 3.75 acres conveyed in the above deeds; however, it reflects the aggregate boundaries of the two tracts.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Cool Springs High School, Rutherford County, North Carolina

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Photographic Schedule

The following information applies to all of the photographs submitted with this nomination.

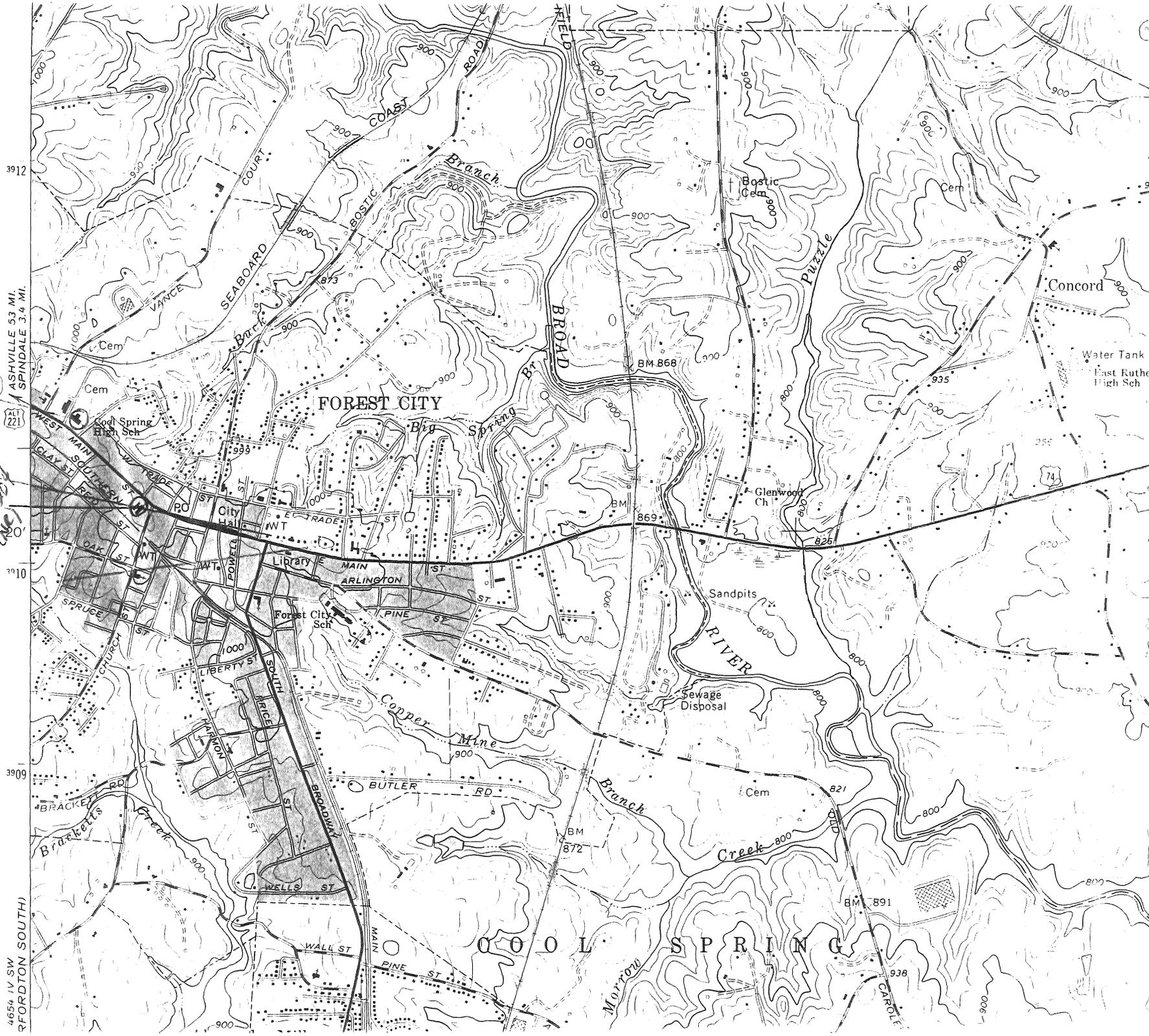
1. Name of property: Cool Springs High School
2. Location: Rutherford County, North Carolina
3. Name of photographer: Davyd Foard Hood
4. Date of photograph: 10 August 1998
5. Location of original negatives: North Carolina Division of Archives and History
109 East Jones Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2807
6. Description of views:
 - A. Overall view of school and lawn, looking north across West Main Street.
 - B. View of southeast end of main block, showing both façade and southeast elevation, looking north.
 - C. Rear view of school, showing northeast elevation of main block and northwest side and rear (northeast) gable end of gymnasium/auditorium ell, looking south.
 - D. Entrance hall, showing doors into offices and trio of doors into auditorium, looking northeast.
 - E. View of auditorium, from stage, looking southwest.
 - F. First-story classroom, showing typical finish, looking north.

Forest City Quad

RI-21574(17)

Main St. HD RF-344(SL)

RF-3216(1)



3912

ASHVILLE 53 MI.
SPINDALE 3.4 MI.

74 221

3910

3909

4654 IV SW
RFORDTON SOUTH

FOREST CITY

COOL SPRING

