

State of North Carolina  
Division of Archives and History

Burke COUNTY

# INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

Morganton South QUAD

Historic Resources of Morganton

XX MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR        THEMATIC NOMINATION

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC

Avery Avenue School

AND/OR COMMON

Catawba Valley Legal Services

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

200 Avery Avenue

NA NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Morganton

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

NA VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina

037 CODE

Burke COUNTY

023 CODE

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

### CATEGORY

       DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

       STRUCTURE

       SITE

       OBJECT

### OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

       PRIVATE

       BOTH

### PUBLIC ACQUISITION

       IN PROCESS

       BEING CONSIDERED

NA

### STATUS

OCCUPIED

       UNOCCUPIED

       WORK IN PROGRESS

### ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

       YES: UNRESTRICTED

       NO

### PRESENT USE

       AGRICULTURE

       COMMERCIAL

       EDUCATIONAL

       ENTERTAINMENT

       GOVERNMENT

       INDUSTRIAL

       MILITARY

       MUSEUM

       PARK

       PRIVATE RESIDENCE

       RELIGIOUS

       SCIENTIFIC

       TRANSPORTATION

OTHER Legal office

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Burke County %Steve Ericson  
Burke County Planner

STREET & NUMBER

Parker Road Human Resources Center, Box 219

CITY, TOWN

Morganton

NA VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina 28655

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Burke County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

South Green Street

CITY, TOWN

Morganton

STATE

North Carolina 28655

## 6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Suzanne Pickens Wylie

ORGANIZATION

Preservation Consultant

DATE

July 31, 1986

STREET & NUMBER

3301-T Park Road

TELEPHONE

(704) 527-1610

CITY OR TOWN

Charlotte

STATE

North Carolina 28209

## 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		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Avery Avenue School, believed to have been designed by Charles Christian Hook, a prominent Charlotte architect, was constructed in 1923 as the first separate high school building for Morganton. The property was used as a school until 1957 when it was converted to offices for Burke County. In 1982 the building was renovated for Catawba Valley Legal Services. Although modern tinted windows were installed at this time and the inside was completely remodelled, the school still retains sufficient integrity to illustrate its architectural significance to Morganton and its educational significance to Morganton as the city's first separate high school. In addition, the building is important as Morganton's oldest remaining, intact educational building.

The Avery Avenue School is a two-story, brick, crescent-shaped building with a full basement. An unusual polygonal center section features a pyramidal roof covered in mission tile and topped by a small belfry. This section is flanked by symmetrical flat-roofed wings.

Ornamentation on the building is highly eclectic and difficult to categorize. The center section displays a cornice crested with acanthus leaves and a frieze of zigzag mosaics. The main entrance is in the first story of this section and is surrounded by a simplified Tuscan order architrave that also frames a window above the door. Fenestration in the wings consists of bands of five windows with simple stone surrounds. The basement level on the sides and rear is of stone and features bands of five small windows. Small one-story sections span the space between the center section and wings, cornice and frieze level. The bands of windows in the wings are topped by centered panels of multi-colored mosaics and terra cotta heraldic symbols. Larger versions of those panels decorate the ends of the wings nearest the center section. Terra cotta urns punctuate the corners of the wing roofs. The rear of the building features a continuous band of twelve windows on the second story and a one-story, projecting rectangular wing that held the auditorium. The side wings have single windows on the first and second stories and single windows that light the stairwells.

Originally constructed to contain eight classrooms and a small auditorium, the interior was completely remodeled during its conversion to offices. Only the end stairwells remain intact.

Resources Count: 1 Building

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

\_\_\_\_\_ NATIONAL

\_\_\_\_\_ STATE

  X  

LOCAL

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

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SPECIFIC DATES	ca. 1923 - 1926	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	believed to be Charles Christian Hook
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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Avery Avenue School, located on the corner of Avery Avenue and Bouchelle Street, was constructed in 1923 as the first separate high school building in Morganton. The school is believed to have been designed by Charles Christian Hook, a prominent Charlotte architect, and is architecturally unique in Morganton. The crescent-shaped, brick building features a very unusual polygonal center section with a pyramidal roof covered in mission tile and topped by a small belfry. Ornamentation is highly imaginative and eclectic and includes a cornice bordered with acanthus leaves and a frieze of zigzag mosaics. Fenestration in the wings is topped by centered panels of multi-colored mosaics and terra cotta heraldic symbols. Larger versions of those panels decorate the ends of the wings at the center section. The school was designed to contain eight classrooms and a small auditorium. The interior space has been completely renovated for modern office space. The Avery Avenue School is also significant in the history of education in Morganton as the first separate high school building and as the oldest school building remaining intact in the city today. The construction of a separate high school building rather than expansion of existing graded school facilities represents a progressive decision to accommodate the special and different needs of elementary and secondary school students. The school is the second building constructed by the Morganton School District, created in 1905. The original 1906 graded school building is no longer standing, therefore the Avery Avenue School is the earliest educational building extant in the city. The period of significance ends with its conversion to an elementary school in 1926 when a new, larger high school was built.

## CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. The Avery Avenue School is significant in the history of education in Morganton as the first separate high school building in the city. This represented a progressive attitude on the part of the school board, recognizing that secondary school students had specialized needs that could not be met on a graded school campus. The building is also the oldest educational building in the city.
- C. The Avery Avenue School is significant in architecture for its unusual design and eclectic and highly imaginative ornamentation. In addition, the building is believed to be the design of Charles Christian Hook, a prominent North Carolina architect.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Avery Avenue School, constructed in 1923, is architecturally significant in Morganton as a very unusual building stylistically and because it is believed to be the design of Charles Christian Hook, a prominent Charlotte architect. The school is also important in the history of education in Morganton as the first separate high school building.

The need for new school space was first noted in 1920. The 1906 Morganton Graded School was filled to capacity and school officials were faced with the question of whether to add on to the existing facility or to build a new building.

Recognizing that the educational needs of elementary and high school students were very different, the school board decided to construct a new separate secondary building. This decision represents progressive thinking on the part of the school district and was a major advancement in education in Morganton.

The board contracted with an architect, believed to be Charles Christian Hook, to design the building. The school was completed and occupied in 1923. Unfortunately, the board had not reckoned on the tremendous population growth Morganton saw in the 1920s. Within a few short years the Avery Avenue School was filled beyond capacity. A new high school was constructed on College Street in 1926 and the Avery Avenue School was used for additional elementary classroom space, a use it served until 1957. After that the school was used for a variety of purposes including Catawba Valley Legal Services. The second floor of the building is currently being renovated for additional office space. The school is the oldest educational building surviving in the city.<sup>122</sup>

The Avery Avenue School is a very unusual building that defies being placed in a stylistic category. The building is crescent shaped with a central polygonal section sporting a green tile polygonal roof. Applied terra cotta ornamentation is highly imaginative and eclectic. The design of the building was very controversial in 1923 and has remained so throughout the years.

(For footnotes, see Cover Form, Item number 9.)

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

See Cover Form, Section 9.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately .94 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 7	4 3, 7 8, 6, 0	3, 9 5, 6 0, 0, 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the Avery Avenue School National Register nomination is shown as the red line on the accompanying Burke County Tax Map #42-2 drawn on a scale of 100 feet to the inch. The boundary includes the lot on which the school is located and excludes surrounding modern construction.

