### 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.

| Name of Property   |  |  |                |
|--|--|--|----------------|
| (former)   |  |  |                |
| historic name <u>Cove Creek High School</u>  | 1  |  | -              |
| other names/site number <u>Cove Creek El</u>   | ementary School  |  |                |
| 2. Location  |  |  |                |
| street & number <u>207 Dale Adams Road</u>   |  |  | publication    |
| city or town <u>Sugar Grove</u>  |  | n/a vicini   | ity            |
| state <u>North Carolina</u> code <u>NC</u>   | county <u>Watauga</u>  | code 189 zip code  | _28679_        |
| State/Federal Agency Certification   |  |  |                |
| As the designated authority under the National F request for determination of eligibility meets the Historic Places and meets the procedural and provided in the National Register of the National Register of Partifying official/Title  State of Federal agency and bureau  In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register of Partifying official/Title | the documentation standards for recordessional requirements set forth in er criteria. I recommend that this pontinuation sheet for additional continuation between the standards and the standards are set of the standards and the standards are standards. | egistering properties in the National Regis<br>n 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the pro<br>property be considered significant<br>amments.) | perty          |
| Signature of commenting official/Title   | Date   |  |                |
| State or Federal agency and bureau   |  |  |                |
| 4. National Park Service Certification   | Cinneture of the Va  |  | Data of Action |
| I hereby certify that the property is:  entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.  determined eligible for the National Register  | Signature of the Kee   | <del></del>  | Date of Action |
| ☐ See continuation sheet.☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.  |  |  |                |
| removed from the National Register.  |  |  |                |
| other, (explain:)  |  |  |                |
|  |  |  |                |

|   | (form | er)   |      |        |
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| • |       | 0     |      |        |

Name of Property

Watauga Co., NC County and State

| 5. Classification  |  |   |  |                          |
|--|--|---|--|--------------------------|
| Ownership of Property<br>(Check as many boxes as apply)  | Category of Property (Check only one box)  | Number of Res<br>(Do not include pre        | sources within Proper<br>viously listed resources in the | t <b>y</b><br>ne count., |
| <ul><li>□ private</li><li>□ public-local</li><li>□ public-State</li><li>□ public-Federal</li></ul> | <ul><li>□ building(s)</li><li>□ district</li><li>□ site</li><li>□ structure</li><li>□ object</li></ul> |   | 2  | structures               |
|  |  | 1   | 2  | objects                  |
| Name of related multiple p<br>(Enter "N/A" if property is not part                                 | roperty listing of a multiple property listing.)   |   | tributing resources pr                                   |                          |
| n/a  |  | 0   | <del></del>  |                          |
| 6. Function or Use   |  |   |  |                          |
| Historic Functions<br>(Enter categories from instructions)   |  | Current Functions<br>(Enter categories from |  |                          |
| EDUCATION: School  |  | VACANT/NOT I                                | N USE  |                          |
|  |  |   |  |                          |
| 7. Description   |  |   |  |                          |
| Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)                                  |  | Materials<br>(Enter categories from         | instructions)  |                          |
| OTHER: Collegiate Go   | thic   | foundation concr                            | ete  |                          |
|  | ·  |   |  |                          |
|  |  |   |  |                          |
|  |  | other <u>concrete</u>                       |  |                          |
|  |  | stone                                       |  |                          |

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

| (former) Cove Creek High School  | Watauga Co., NC  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| Name of Property   | County and State   |  |  |
| 8. Statement of Significance   |  |  |  |
| Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)  | Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)  Education  |  |  |
| A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.   | Architecture   |  |  |
| ☐ 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.   | Period of Significance<br>1940–1947  |  |  |
| D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield.<br>information important in prehistory or history.  |  |  |  |
| Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)  | Significant Dates<br>1940-1941   |  |  |
| Property is:   |  |  |  |
| ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.   |  |  |  |
| ☐ B removed from its original location.  | Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  n/a  |  |  |
| C a birthplace or grave.   |  |  |  |
| ☐ <b>D</b> a cemetery.   | Cultural Affiliation  n/a  |  |  |
| ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.  |  |  |  |
| ☐ <b>F</b> a commemorative property.   |  |  |  |
| ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.   | Architect/Builder Coffey, Clarence (Architect)   |  |  |
| Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)  9. Major Bibliographical References  |  |  |  |
| <b>Bibilography</b> (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one  | e or more continuation sheets )  |  |  |
| Previous documentation on file (NPS):  | Primary location of additional data:   |  |  |
| <ul> <li>□ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested</li> <li>□ previously listed in the National Register</li> <li>□ previously determined eligible by the National Register</li> <li>□ designated a National Historic Landmark</li> <li>□ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey</li> </ul> | <ul> <li>State Historic Preservation Office</li> <li>☐ Other State agency</li> <li>☐ Federal agency</li> <li>☐ Local government</li> <li>☐ University</li> <li>☐ Other</li> <li>Name of repository:</li> </ul> |  |  |
| #<br>recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #  |  |  |  |

| (former) Cove Creek High School Name of Property   | Natauga Co., NC   |
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| 10. Geographical Data  | County and State  |
| To. Geographical Data  |   |
| Acreage of Property 10.46279   |   |
| UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)                      |   |
| 1 1:7 4:2:9 3:9 0 4 0 1 3 3 4 0 2 2 1:7 4:2:9 6:0:0 4:0 1 3 2 2 0                              | 3 1 7 4 2 0 4 7 0 4 0 1 3 0 8 0  Zone Easting Northing 4 1 7 4 2 9 3 4 0 4 0 1 3 2 0 0   See continuation sheet |
| Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.) |   |
| Ecundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)     |   |
| 11. Form Prepared By   |   |
| name/title North Carolina HPO (see also con  | tinuation sheet)  |
| organization   |   |
| street & number 109 East Jones Street  | telephone _919-733-6545   |
| city or townRaleigh  | state <u>NC</u> zip code <u>27601-2807</u>  |
| Additional Documentation   |   |
| Submit the following items with the completed form:  |   |
| Continuation Sheets  |   |
| Maps   |   |
| A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the p  | property's location.  |
| A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having                                      | ng large acreage or numerous rescurces.   |
| Photographs  |   |
| Representative black and white photographs of the p  | 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 <u>Watauga County</u> , <u>James Ratchford</u> , <u>County</u>                            | Manager   |
| street & number <u>842 West King Street</u>  | telephone <u>828.265.8000</u>   |
| city or town <u>Econe</u>  | state <u>NC</u> zip ccde <u>25607</u>   |
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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 (1924-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

| Santian | number | 7 | Page | 1 |
|---------|--------|---|------|---|
| Section | number |   | Paue |   |

(former) Cove Creek High School Watauga County, NC

### Narrative Physical Description

The 1941 Cove Creek High School is an imposing Collegiate Gothic stone building on the crest of a ten-and-one-half-acre site above Cove Creek in western Watauga County. Designed by architect Clarence Coffey, and built of native materials by local craftsmen, the school was erected by the Works Progress Administration to serve the consolidated school district formed from the communities of the eleven-mile-long Cove Creek Valley. Cove Creek Valley is defined by the creek and Old US Highway 421 that is thought to follow an east-west trading route established by Indians and the early European settlers. Known as "the Egypt of Watauga County" because of its early agricultural and social development, the Cove Creek community became the locus of the surrounding settlements in the mid-nineteenth century with the establishment of the Cove Creek Academy. The community continued to be an educational center throughout the early years of the early twentieth century, and its importance as such was affirmed by its selection by the local school board in 1940 as the location of a new county consolidated school.

The importance of the building to the community and the county is conveyed by its bold, battlemented design. The main (southeast) elevation is seven bays wide and terminates with slightly projecting square stair towers whose roof parapets rise above those of the recessed main block. Symmetrical in composition, the main elevation is dominated by a three-part entrance pavilion defined with cast stone dropped darts that rises in two stages above the stone coping of the crenellated roof parapet. The deeply-recessed, arched, engaged entry announces the (former) Cove Creek High School in decorative cast stone archivolt and surmounting lintel. The slight projection of this pavilion is balanced by those of the towers, and its arch form and cast stone surround set the motif for the corresponding tower entries. All of the entries to the main elevation are gained by shallow concrete stoops set between cast stone-capped stone cheek walls.

The rhythmic fenestration throughout the main elevation is composed of paired openings under cast stone jack arches with keystones on the first floor, and corresponding openings under stone hooded lintels on the second floor. Tripled openings under a stone hooded lintel surmount the main entrance, and coupled arched openings originally filled with wrought iron under hooded lintels mark the second levels of the stair towers. Originally filled with nine-over-nine double-hung wooden sash, many of the openings are now filled with steel-sash replacement sash. The replacement double-leaf wooden main door is surmounted by a multi-pane transom, and the tower entries contain modern steel and plate

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

|          |        |   |      | 2 |
|----------|--------|---|------|---|
| Saction  | number | / | Page | _ |
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(former) Cove Creek High School Watauga County, NC

glass double-leaf doors with plate glass transoms that replaced original wrought-iron gates.

Although the fenestration of the rear (northwest) elevation is irregular, the proportions and details of the openings match those of the main elevation. As on the main elevation, the original wooden sash have largely been replaced. A square stone chimney rises from the basement furnace room. The northeast and southwest side elevations of the stair towers feature second-story windows that match those on the main elevation and arched entries on the first floor that now connect to later buildings.

The central corridor of the first floor is bisected by a transverse corridor off the main entrance. Classrooms, offices, and restroom facilities flank each side of the hall which is finished with plaster walls. Oak tongue-and-groove floors remain, while acoustical tile set in aluminum framing covers the original ceiling. Original metal built-in lockers and iron radiators occupy the hall. Doors in the hall are yellow pine with single wire glass lights.

Classrooms, a science laboratory, and restroom facilities flank the central corridor of the second story which is gained by the east and west stone stair towers. The floor, wall, and ceiling finishes of this corridor are similar to those in the first floor hallway.

In 1952 a one-story, side gabled agricultural building was erected up the hill to the northwest rear of the main building. In 1958 a front-gabled gymnasium was built to the southwest; and in 1981 a flat-roofed, one-story brick media center was built abutting the northeast side elevation. Later the agricultural building was connected to the original building with an enclosed wooden breezeway, and a brick hall was built between the gymnasium and the southwest stair tower. The media center is an addition to the original high school, and the agricultural building and gymnasium are counted as separate, noncontributing buildings.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

| Saction | number | 8 | Page | 1 |
|---------|--------|---|------|---|
| Section | number |   | raye |   |

(former) Cove Creek High School Watauga County, NC

#### Statement of Significance

The (former) Cove Creek High School, a two-story post-Depression era stone building erected in 1941, is sited on a rural lot facing Cove Creek and backed by rolling hills in the Cove Creek community of rural Watauga County. The impressive structure occupies a prominent valley floor and since its construction has served as a focal point for this close-knit Appalachian community. Architecturally, it is a late interpretation of the Collegiate Gothic style designed by Clarence R. Coffey, an apprentice of Frank Lloyd Wright. The building was constructed by local artisans and laborers using stone and wood products harvested from nearby mountains and farms that were processed at local mills. The (former) Cove Creek School is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of education as the only intact example in the county of a school built through the cooperative efforts of local, state, and federal governments working under New Deal-era building programs. It is also eligible for listing under Criterion C as an architect-designed building executed by local craftspeople with native materials, a tradition which began in the mountains of western North Carolina in the late nineteenth century.

#### Historical Background and Education Context

Cove Creek High School was erected in 1941 by the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) in conjunction with the local and state governments to meet the educational needs of a growing rural community. The heritage of the school begins with the earliest origins of education in western Watauga County and the Cove Creek Community. Because early school records were destroyed in the county courthouse fire of 1873, the only information about early educational history emanates from a few documentary photographs, oral histories, church minutes, and other similar sources.

As throughout western North Carolina, in Watauga County "the earliest schools were makeshift schools in homes, subscription schools held after harvest, and Saturday/Sunday school taught by ministers." In 1839, a state law established that each county would pay for one-third of the cost of schools and the state's Literary Fund would pay the remaining two-thirds. In 1841 the law changed and provided that the state pay one-half the cost. Despite the new law and the promise it offered for better schools, education in Watauga County, as in other western counties, was hampered by lack of funds, inferior roads, hostility to academies and church-related schools, and unqualified teachers (Whitener).

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

| . 0                | 2            | (former) Cove Creek High School |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Section number — 8 | Page <u></u> | Watauga County, NC              |

The mission school in Valle Crucis, established by Episcopal bishop Levi Ives in 1842, was most likely the earliest school in western Watauga County; it closed in 1850, reopened in 1895, and finally accepted female students in 1903. A school at Cove Creek, just north of Valle Crucis, was not established until nearly twenty years later. Cove Creek School had its beginnings in 1865 when the community was given permission to hold classes in a log building which housed the Cove Creek Baptist Church with the stipulation that no religious doctrine other than Baptist would be taught. This log building was sold to the community in 1881 when the church built a new chapel. In 1885, a new school building was constructed near the site of Cove Creek Baptist Church and named Cove Creek Academy. In 1900, this building became inadequate and was torn down and replaced with a more substantial structure.

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, small schools were built throughout western Watauga County. North Fork School at Mabel, Zionville School, Phillips School at Sugar Grove, Mast Academy at Mast, and Walnut Grove Institute at Sugar Grove were among the schools in the area. Among the subjects taught were reading, writing, arithmetic, and spelling (Memories of Cove Creek High School).

There were no high schools in the county as late as 1899. Records from 1900 indicate that one-fourth of the population was illiterate and only about two thousand of the county's five thousand white children attended school. The school term lasted less than four months, a term which was increased to six months in 1900 (Memories of Cove Creek High School).

When the earliest school consolidation occurred in the county in 1922, Cove Creek Academy, Walnut Grove Institute, and Phillips School were merged to create Cove Creek School, a facility designed to provide educational opportunities for secondary school students. From 1923 to 1927 students who successfully completed elementary school at Mabel, Valle Crucis, Rominger, Cool Springs, Presnell, Windy Gap, and Pottertown advanced to Cove Creek to take high school courses. Enrollment increased so dramatically that in 1927 a second brick building was erected on an adjacent site; this was the first building constructed specifically to house Cove Creek High School. By the late 1930s, the building could no longer adequately serve the ever-growing student body and plans were made for the construction of a new school (Memories of Cove Creek High School).

The Watauga County Board of Education commissioned architect Clarence R. Coffey to

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

| Section | number   | 8 | Page | 3 |
|---------|----------|---|------|---|
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(fcmer) Cove Creek High School Watanga County, NC

design the new Cove Creek High School. A native of Lenoir in Caldwell County, Coffey left his home at age fourteen. He later studied architecture in Chicago during a period when the city was undergoing an architectural renaissance following the fire of 1871. During this period he worked as apprentice draftsman to Frank Lloyd Wright. He returned to Lenoir in 1933 and established his own firm. He successfully passed the state board in 1937.

In its meeting of June 4, 1939, the Watauga County Board of Education voted to accept Coffey's plans and to proceed with the building of a new high school. The building was to be constructed with labor provided through the W.P.A. on a site one-quarter mile from the old building. The board also approved plans to apply for a loan from the State Literary Fund in Raleigh for the \$25,000 needed to complete the project.

The application was completed and delivered to the State Board of Education on June 30, 1939. They approved and delivered the document to the Local Government Commission on July 1, 1939, for final approval. The state treasurer turned down the application based on the technicality that July 1 constituted a new fiscal year. The case was duly filed in state court which ruled that the contract was binding on June 30, 1939, and that the state treasurer's office should proceed with the funding of the loan. Recollections of a young local attorney sheds light on the process:

I, Wade E. Brown, was designated to present the case before the Supreme Court. At the hearing, the Attorney General made his argument and graciously introduced me as a young attorney from Boone. It was my first case before the Supreme Court. I had for display, a large architect's drawing of the proposed building. Before I could get a chance to get up, one of the members of the court said: 'Come up here, son, I want to see that picture.' I proceeded up to the bench where they asked questions and admired the stone work. By the time they were through, my allotted time to present the case was gone. I felt bad and was afraid I had lost my case, but they knew the law and ruled with me, which was what mattered. Their ruling allowed the money to be released, and the building project went forward (*Memories of Cove Creek High School*).

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

| Saction | number | 8 | Page | 4 |
|---------|--------|---|------|---|
| Section | number |   | Page |   |

(former) Cove Creek High School Watauga County, NC

Superintendent of Watauga County schools, W. H. Walker recalls,

by the suggestion of Clyde Erwin, the state superintendent of schools, and Wade Brown, attorney, we sued the State Board of Education. From the court in Raleigh we appealed to the State Supreme Court and won the case there. Then we went to the Governor who ordered the Director of the Budget to write the check which he did and I carried it back to Boone (*Memories of Cove Creek High School*).

Construction of Cove Creek High School began in the fall of 1940 and was completed in June of 1941 at a cost of \$85,000. The wood framing for the two-story building was sawed by John Ward from hemlock trees harvested from the Floyd Billings farm near Watauga River. Stone quarried from Reeves Billings farm located on Phillips Branch and Ottie Bingham's farm on U.S. 321 covers the exterior and is polygonal mosaic with ashlar masonry (*Memories of Cove Creek High School*).

Numerous local builders and carpenters were involved in the construction. Charlie Hartley (1886-1981) and Orville "Pete" Hagaman (1919-1963) served as supervisors. The stonemasons were Leslie Lyons (1900-1957), Clarence Lyons (1903-1981), and Earl Lyons (1912-1984), with Ben Brewer, Guy Carlton (1911-1990), and Willard Watson (1905-1994) acting as stonemason helpers. Alfred Howard Ward (1903-1960) executed the cast stone work.

Recalling the project, Charlie Hartley remarked, "I wonder lots of times, 'Did I do this?' But there's a building to show. I guess I could pick out a hundred buildings around Boone that I was boss on. But Cove Creek is my pride" (Foxfire 4). Although Mr. Hartley wore a wooden peg leg following an injury sustained in a logging accident, it did not prevent him from overseeing the whole project. Willard Watson, a stonemason helper, commented, "I never worked for a man that treated me no nicer than old man Charlie Hartley...But he got mad at his carpenters over something or 'nother. Walked up the gangway, got about halfway up, and said, 'If any of you damn carpenters don't want to work for me,' he said, 'get your tools and go home'...They stayed with him." (Foxfire 6)

Upon completion of the building, the county was still suffering financial hardships as a result of the Depression and lacked the resources to purchase new furnishings for the school. According to Howard Walker, former Superintendent of Watauga County

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

| Section | number | 8 | Page  | 5 |
|---------|--------|---|-------|---|
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(former) Cove Creek High School Watauga County, NC

Schools, used-furniture had to be purchased from a high school in Salem, Massachusetts. Women in the Cove Creek community refinished the furniture for use in the new building.

W.H. Walker, who served as superintendent from 1934 to 1943 and again from 1946 to 1954, was the leader in the Depression-era school construction program in Watauga County. Walker, who had taken a leave of absence during World War II to serve as a lieutenant in the United States Navy, played a major role in securing the aid of Works Progress Administration in the building of modern stone schools at Bethel, Boone, Blowing Rock, Mabel, Valle Crucis, and Cove Creek, as well as a school bus maintenance garage and a courthouse annex. Walker, who was an alumnus of Cove Creek School, received a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture from Berea College. Before serving as superintendent, he taught science and agriculture and coached basketball at Cove Creek High School. He still resides in the Cove Creek community.

Samuel Ferd Horton, who acted as superintendent during Walker's leave of absence, served as principal of Cove Creek High School from 1923 to 1943 and from 1946 to 1955. In 1923 under his leadership, Cove Creek High School became the first accredited high school in the county, and for a period was the only accredited North Carolina high school west of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Horton and his staff established the first home economics program in the county in 1926 and the first agricultural program in 1929. A business program was instituted in 1932 followed by an industrial arts curriculum in 1940. With the new facility, the range of subjects taught expanded to include English, history, algebra, geometry, biology, chemistry, French and Spanish. Basketball was the primary activity of the school's new sports program. In the early 1950s, a new agriculture building was constructed near the rear of the high school.

In the early 1960s, the movement toward county high school consolidation gained momentum. Voters approved the action and high schools at Cove Creek, Appalachian, Bethel, and Blowing Rock were merged into one school. Watauga High School opened in Boone in the fall of 1965. Cove Creek Elementary occupied the former high school. building. Eventually a gymnasium and library were added to the building and the agriculture building was converted to a lunchroom. Cove Creek High School was abandoned in 1995-96 when a new elementary school was built.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

(former) Cove Creek High School Watauga County, NC

#### Architecture Context

The architectural significance of the (former) Cove Creek High School derives from its survival as the only intact Works Progress Administration school from the post-Depression era in Watauga County and as a building designed by a trained architect, but built by local artisans from local material. The school was built to serve the educational needs of a small rural community in northwestern Watauga County and exhibits the talent and skill of local craftsmen well-versed in the use of native stone.

The Watauga County Board of Education commissioned architect Clarence R. Coffey (1906-1978) to design the new Cove Creek High School. A native of Lenoir in Caldwell County, Coffey left his hometown at age fourteen with his older brother and eventually went to Chicago to study architecture. In 1927, he married Antonette Devereaux of Devereaux, Georgia; the couple eventually had two children, John P. Coffey and Rachel D. Coffey.

Coffey returned to Lenoir in 1933 and established the firm of Clarence R. Coffey, Architect. He later formed the partnership of Coffey and Olson with Bernard Olson. In 1961, Coffey and Grayson Annas formed the partenship of Coffey and Annas. After Annas's death in 1967, the firm became known as Northwest Associates.

Among Coffey's individual commissions were other schools in western North Carolina: Rhodhiss School and Oak Hill School, both in Caldwell County, and Mt. Pleasant School in Avery County. He had several commissions in Lenoir including Ballew Arcade, a moderne commercial building with a carrera glass facade; a furniture store; and an automobile showroom. Among his domestic designs were the home of furniture magnate, J.F. Broyhill, and fifteen low to moderate income houses. Other Watauga County buildings he designed in addition to Cove Creek High School include a tobacco warehouse and theater in Boone (A. Wayland Plaster interview).

The work of Leslie, Clarence, and Earl Lyons, stone masons for Cove Creek High School, was well-known throughout Watauga County. They built stone structures along the Blue Ridge Parkway and executed the stonework for the U.S. Post Office in Boone (NR 1996). From 1928 to 1931, the Lyons' work achieved higher visibility when they contributed their masonry skills to the construction of awe-inspiring Duke Chapel and

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

| Section | number | 8 | Page | 7 |
|---------|--------|---|------|---|
| Section | number |   | Pauc |   |

(former) Cove Creek High School Watauga County, NC

other buildings on the Duke University campus. Among the one hundred locals involved in the Cove Creek project was Howard Ward, who was responsible for creating the stylish concrete lintels, arches, and other decorative work.

The (former) Cove Creek High School is among a handful of structures hand-crafted by native builders in a style befitting the mountains of western North Carolina. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, local stonemasons and carpenters throughout the region worked to create an unique architectural expression which was particularly well-suited to the area's natural environment. In contrast to more common weatherboard or brick structures, the exterior sheathing of these stone, log, and bark-sided buildings contribute to the marriage of the buildings and their settings.

The Lyons represent a departure from the normal work patterns of native craftsmen who typically worked in limited areas of a region building chimneys, rock walls, outbuildings, dwellings and other structures. In the first few decades of the twentieth century, mostly affluent people from outside the mountains of western North Carolina began employing local builders, frequently in combination with professional architects, to build seasonal houses, hotels, and inns in the rustic style. The most prominent example is Linville in Avery County (NR 1979), a resort community containing several bark and log-sided buildings designed by prominent architects, most notably Henry Bacon, but built by local workers.

This favoritism toward stone, saddle-notched log, and bark-shingled buildings was applied to non-resort structures as well. Throughout western North Carolina, early twentieth-century stone dwellings, churches, schools, and commercial buildings attributed to native craftsmen survive. The Ray Wiseman House (NR 1996), a stone Craftsmen bungalow built in 1941 for a local family, represents the stone masonry skills of Ernest Franklin, a member of a family known for their work with river stone in the Altamont community.

W.P.A. schools remain a rare property type in western North Carolina. Among those surviving are Otto School and Cowee School, both in Macon County, and Bald Creek High School in Yancey County. Like Cove Creek, these buildings were constructed of native rock by local workers.

Cove Creek High School is no longer in use, but is at the center of an active preservation

United States Department of the Interior
National Pane Service ve Creek Preservation and Development Inc., a non-profit group, was

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

| Section number $\frac{8}{8}$ Page $\frac{8}{8}$ |
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(former) Cove Creek High School Watauga County, NC

organized in 1996 to find appropriate tenants for the building. In early 1998 a medical clinic is set to occupy thirty five percent of the building.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

|                 |       | (former)                                |
|-----------------|-------|---|
| Section number9 | Page1 | Cove Creek High School<br>Watauga Co NC |

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

(former)

Section number 10/11 Page 1 Cove Creek High School Watauga Co., NC

### Verbal Boundary Description

Watauga County Tax Maps 1972-86
Parcel Numbers .8255; .8876; .6892; .0919 (See accompanying tax map.)

### Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel of ten and one-half acres historically associated with the (former) Cove Creek High School.

### Form Prepared By (Continued)

| Name/Title      | Marian Ward Simpso  | n               |                       |              |  |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| Organization    | Watauga County Hist | orical Society  | Date 15 December 1997 |              |  |
| Street & Number | P.O. Box 153        | Telephone       | 704,297,5905          | _            |  |
| City or Town    | Sugar Grove         | State <u>NC</u> | Zip Code              | <u>28679</u> |  |
| •               |                     |                 | _                     |              |  |
| Name/Title      | W. Hugh Hagaman     |                 |                       |              |  |
| Organization    | Watauga County Hist | orical Society  | _ Date <u>15 De</u>   | cember 1997  |  |
| Street & Number | P.O. Box 328        | Telephone       | 704.297.2416          |              |  |
| City or Town    | Sugar Grove         | State NC        | Zip Code              | 28679        |  |

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Page 1 Cove Creek High School Watauga Co.. NC

### Photographs

- 1-12: Photographer W. Hugh Hagaman 14 February 1997
- 13: Photographer unknown ca. 1948-1950
- 1. Façade, facing northeast
- 2. Façade, facing west
- 3. Façade, facing northwest
- 4. Front entrance, facing northwest
- 5. Gymnasium, facing northwest
- 6. Gymnasium, facing north
- 7. Library, facing west
- 8. Library, facing south
- 9. Agriculture building (cafeteria), facing west
- 10. Hallway and radiator, facing west
- 11. Stairwell at northeast end of building, facing northwest
- 12. Second floor landing of stairwell at southwest end of building, facing southeast
- 13. Ca. 1948-1950 view of facade, facing northwest





