

1919

VLR 2/21/89  
NRHP 12/21/90

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Henderson Building / Southwestern State Hospital  
other names/site number (DHL 119-4)

2. Location

street & number East Main Street N/A not for publication  
city, town Marion N/A vicinity  
state Virginia code 52 county Smythe code 173 zip code 24354

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	1	0 buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0 structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	0	0 objects
		1	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

*A. Bryan Mitchell*  
Signature of certifying official  
VA Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

SEP 29 1989  
Date

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in my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  see continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
HEALTH CARE/ Hospital

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
HEALTH CARE/ Hospital

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian

foundation stone

Late 19th and 20th century Revivals:

walls brick

Classical Revival

roof asphalt

other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**SUMMARY DESCRIPTION**

The Henderson Building at Southwestern State Hospital in Marion, Smythe County, remains the focal point of southwest Virginia's only historic mental health complex. Constructed in 1887, the structure was significantly remodeled in 1930-31, at which time the three-story brick building received its dominate classically-detailed two-story front portico. Prominently positioned on axis with the entrance to the hospital, the Henderson Building continues to serve as the main administration building of the complex.

**ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS**

A drive flanked by entrance piers leads from East Main Street to the circular approach in front of the Henderson Building. A fountain is located at the center of the circle of lawn formed by the approach drive. This road, Hospital Street, joins Circle Drive that leads around the rear of the this main administration building to the numerous other structures comprising the hospital complex. The building is located in a campus-like setting, facing northwest toward open lawn located between it and East Main Street.

The design competition for the building was won by the MacDonald Brothers of Louisville, Kentucky. When completed in 1887, the administration building had four stories with a 118 foot high central clock tower. The tower was removed around 1930 as it was considered unsafe due to deterioration. The tower was replaced with an octagonal rotunda which required modification to the upper floor, resulting in the existing attic story. It was also at this time that the impressive classically-detailed front portico was added and minor modifications made to the interior.

Following the completion of the central administrative building, three radiating three-story ward wings were added, which, upon their completion, resulted in the overall building having the Kirkbride plan. A corridor twenty feet wide and seventy-five feet long connected the building to the wings at the rear. These wings and corridor were removed in the mid-1980's to accommodate new wards currently under construction.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Health/Medicine  
Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance  
1887-1939  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates  
1930-31  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
E.H. Henderson

Architect/Builder  
1887-McDonald Brothers, Louisville, KY,  
architects: Lewman & Sweeney, builders.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Southwestern State Hospital was constructed as part of Virginia's effort to provide expanded mental health care and services to its citizens in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Henderson Building, the administrative center of the hospital, was erected in 1887 and remodeled in 1930-1931. The Henderson Building remains today the most significant example in the region of a late-nineteenth-century structure relating to the history of mental health in Virginia.

**JUSTIFICATION OF CRITERIA**

The Henderson Building at Southwestern State Hospital is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. It is eligible because of its association with the history of mental health care in Virginia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The first institution in the New World designed for the treatment of the mentally ill was opened in Williamsburg, Virginia, in 1773. Now known as Eastern State Hospital, it was followed by Western State Hospital, in Staunton (1828), Central State Hospital (for blacks), in Petersburg (1885), and Southwestern State Hospital, in Marion (1887). The hospitals were constructed and maintained as public corporations, and in 1911 individual boards were established to manage each one, as well as the training schools that were being developed. Over the years the original structures at Eastern State Hospital and Central State Hospital have been demolished; only Western State Hospital and Southwestern State Hospital retain any of their early buildings.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Blalock, Joseph R. "Southwestern, Marion, Va., 1883-1959." Mental Health in Virginia. Summer 1959. pp. 46-49.

Smyth County News. 3 March 1927.

"Southwestern State Hospital." Mental Health in Virginia. Winter 1962-1963. pp. 23-25.

Southwestern State Hospital of Virginia (Marion). Annual Reports. 1913-1946. Richmond: Superintendent of Public Printing, 1915-1946.

Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks. Survey File 119-4.

See continuation sheet

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 Smyth Co. Historical Society
- Specify repository:  
 VA Division of Historic Landmarks  
 Richmond, VA 23219

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property less than one

UTM References

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is located within the area encompassed by State Route 217, also known as Circle Drive, in the Town of Marion, Smyth County, Virginia.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the extant historic core of the Henderson building and excludes adjacent new construction.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title John Salmon, Historian/ Julie Vosmik, Architectural Historian

organization VA Division of Historic Landmarks date February 1989

street & number 221 Governor St. telephone (804) 786-3143

city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23219

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Stylistically, the building reveals a combination of influences attributable to two periods of construction. The 1887 structure was designed with typical Italianate features, but presently the Classical Revival portico dominates and the octagonal rotunda and attic floor contribute a Byzantine flavor.

The structure, of three stories with an attic level, is symmetrical. Despite its two phases of construction, each elevation is consistently and similarly detailed. The core of the plan is a hip-roofed rectangle surmounted by the octagonal central rotunda. The front of this core, which is greater in height than the rest of the building due to the attic level, has two slightly projecting bays each with discreet hipped roofs that meet end slope of the central roof. A second hipped roof covers the three-story portion of the building, which has two slightly projecting cross gables at the two rear corners. There are six interior brick chimneys, three per each side of the building. One each penetrates the end slopes of the principal and secondary hipped roofs and the rear slope of the cross gable.

The building is entirely of brick laid in six-course American bond with pencilled joints. The brickwork throughout is of extremely high quality. The foundation is rusticated coursed limestone and the watertable is dressed limestone. Stringcourses delineating the floors are formed by projecting brick courses. Dressed-stone shouldered-flat arches are located above each of the six-over-six double-hung windows. The cornice of the building is simple, beneath which are brackets of projecting brick. This decorative brickwork is found on both the 1887 and 1930 portions of the building. Five-light circular windows are found in the attic story and the clerestory of the rotunda, while elliptical windows are located in the ends of the rear cross gables.

The facade (southwest elevation) is dominated by the 1930 two-story portico that extends across the entire front and around each corner of the central mass of the building. This portico is constructed of dressed Indiana limestone and brick. The Ionic arcade of the second level and Doric colonnade of the first level echo the nine bays of the front elevation, with the central entrance demarcated by flanking paired columns on each level. The corners of the portico are marked by pedimented pavilions of stone and inlaid-brick with square supporting corner columns. A stone entablature detailed with dentils, triglyphs and modillions separates the two levels. A dentilled cornice embellishes the second level which is finished with a balustrade positioned between the stepped stone walls above the pavilions. The portico roof, which is flat and balustraded, functions as an open terrace. An inscribed tablet is positioned in the center of the balustrade and two carved cartouches are positioned in the wall below. The floors of the first two levels are covered with block tiles.

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The center core of the facade is formed by the eight-bay three-and-a-half story section. With its attic level, rotunda and slightly projecting three-bay corners, this section dominates the flanking three stories. The entrance to the building is central and arched. Glass and a modern door infill what originally was an open and recessed entrance vestibule. Modern doors replace the originals of the entrance which originally were double wood-paneled doors with a transom. Paired doors on the second floor allow access to the portico. This elevation retains a pair of entrance light fixtures with round globes supported by standards of cast iron Ionic columns and four wall-mounted globe fixtures with scrolled brackets on the third level.

The rear (northeast) elevation is symmetrical with a pattern of fenestration identical to the front facade. Its walls are scarred by the removal of the connecting wing recently removed. The connection to the new facilities is under construction but incomplete.

The two side elevations are identical, with six windows per upper floor and a first floor center entrance, all positioned in the wall of the lower three-story section. Three windows are grouped together at the rear cross gable projection.

The interior plan and details are consistent throughout the building. While the corridor and room arrangement is generally intact, some of the rooms and ends of corridors have been subdivided by the addition of partition walls. As originally built, the basement contained kitchens and pantries, the first floor had nine rooms devoted to offices and the upper floors each had eight rooms. There was one bathroom per floor. Ceilings in some of the corridors and most of the rooms have been lowered, fluorescent light fixtures and exposed sprinkler system added and wood doors replaced with metal. The wood stair to the left of the entrance has been enclosed and the elevator beside it modified. This turned stair has a square newel and turned balusters.

The plan of each floor consists three corridors of equal length radiating from the octagonal full-height rotunda space, with wider open space toward the front of the building. The interior is well illuminated, as the rotunda is covered with a glass skylight beneath which is the clerestory of three circular windows per each side. Arched openings lead from the rotunda to each corridor, off of which all rooms are located and at the end of which are secondary entrances on the first floor and offices on the upper two floors. One of the corridors of the second floor has been entirely enclosed. Balconies connect the corridors of the upper floors. The flooring on the first level is terrazzo which replaces the original tile, while the upper floors are wood covered with linoleum. Walls throughout are plaster. The balcony of the second and third floor

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has a wood-paneled facing, while the narrower attic floor balcony is supported by decorative wood brackets. Each has an identical railing of turned balusters and newels. A wood door of vertical boards is the sole access to the upper balcony.

Originally open space, the front corridor of the second floor has been enclosed for an office. Double wood doors lead from this space to the second floor loggia of the portico. This space on the third floor has a single door to the roof of the portico, as well as a wood stair leading to the uppermost balcony. This door has the only remaining six-light transom in the building.

Currently new construction is taking place to the sides and rear of the Henderson Building. The new facilities, which are one story and constructed of compatible materials, will be connected to the historic administration building only at the rear. The design of the new wings is low-scale to ensure that the Henderson Building continues to be the focal point of the hospital complex. Minor alterations to the Henderson Building are planned for 1989 and include the repair of chimneys, roof, windows, brickwork and some interior remodeling.

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The need for a state mental hospital for whites in Southwest Virginia became apparent by the early 1880s, because of overcrowded conditions at Eastern State Hospital and Western State Hospital. During the General Assembly session of 1883-1884 a commission was appointed to locate a site for a new hospital; Marion, in Smyth County, was selected, and the General Assembly of 1884-1885 voted the funds necessary to begin construction.

The main building (the present-day Henderson Building) was completed by 12 February 1887 and the first two patients arrived in May. By 1896 a series of connected patient wards had been constructed to the east and west of the main building in two long wings, to complete the main hospital complex.

The Henderson Building was named for Dr. E. H. Henderson, who was superintendent of the hospital from 10 October 1915 until his death on 25 February 1927. He had served as first assistant physician between December 1908 and his promotion to superintendent. Under his administration, according to his obituary, "great improvements had been made to the grounds, buildings, and general service. . . . New buildings, including a power plant, and quarters to house the Davis Clinic for war veterans, were built under his direction."<sup>1</sup> Henderson's name was given first to the south wing of the complex, which was under construction at the time of his death, but gradually it was applied principally to the administration building.

During the 1930-1931 fiscal year alterations were made to the Henderson Building that gave it its present appearance. The most obvious change was to the facade, where the current porch was added. The 1931 annual report of the institution described the porch as

extending throughout the entire width of the Administration Building, is of the Colonial type of architecture; is two stories, constructed of Indiana limestone with brick inlay and floored of block tile. . . . It became necessary to remove the old tower which had become dangerous incident to disintegration of materials used more than forty years ago. In its stead a dome was constructed, which harmonizes with the general plan.<sup>2</sup>

As the needs of the hospital changed over the years new buildings were constructed and older ones were altered or demolished. In the mid-1980s the wings of the Henderson Building were razed to allow the hospital to better meet the mental health requirements of the citizens of the commonwealth. The Henderson Building remains today the most significant



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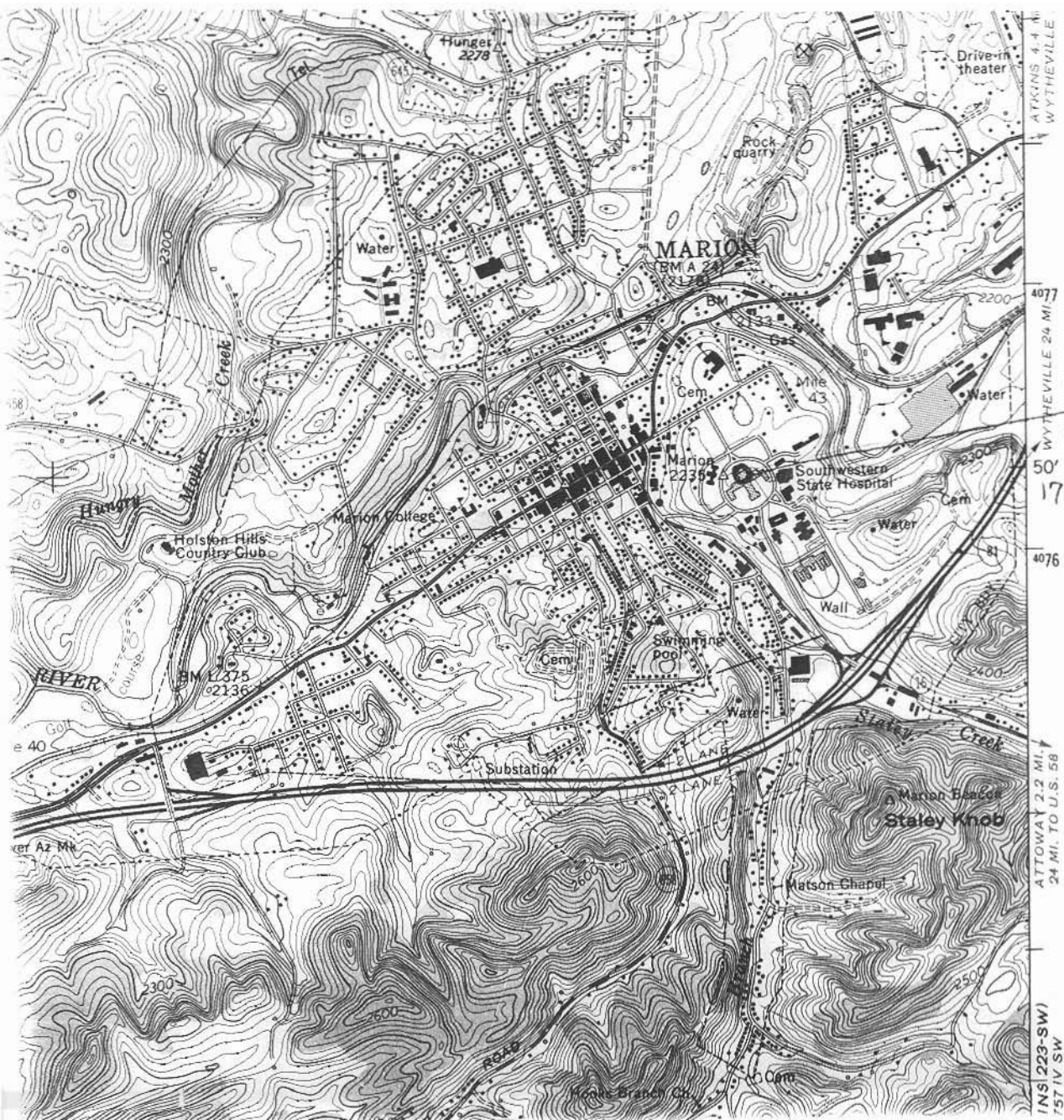
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example in the region of a late-nineteenth-century structure relating to the history of mental health in Virginia.

### ENDNOTES

1. Smyth County News, 3 March 1927, p. 1.
2. Southwestern State Hospital of Virginia (Marion), Annual Report, 1930-1931 (Richmond: Superintendent of Public Printing, 1932), 6.



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WYTHEVILLE 24 MI.  
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ATTOWAY 2.2 MI. 24 MI. TO U.S. 58  
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HENDERSON BLDG.  
SW STATE HOSPITAL  
MARION, VA  
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