

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes  no

Property Name: Church Creek Black School Inventory Number: D-739

Address: 4669 Golden Hill Road (MD 335) Historic district:  yes  no

City: Church Creek Zip Code: 21622 County: Dorchester

USGS Quadrangle(s): Church Creek

Property Owner: Commissioners of Church Creek Tax Account ID Number: 200029

Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 216 Tax Map Number: 051

Project: MD 16: Brannock Neck Road to South of MD 335 -- Church Cr Agency: MD SHA

Agency Prepared By: A&HC for MD SHA

Preparer's Name: Wendy Zug-Gilbert Date Prepared: 09/20/2002

Documentation is presented in: Project Review and Compliance Files

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation:  Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

*Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:*

Name of the District/Property: \_\_\_\_\_

Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible:  yes  no Listed:  yes  no

Site visit by MHT Staff  yes  no Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

The Church Creek Black School is a one-story, frame structure on brick piers. Its simple, unadorned, front-gabled form is typical of rural late nineteenth-century schoolhouses. The structure measures approximately 25 by 40 feet and is sheathed with simple weatherboard. The roof is covered with wooden shingles and has a raking cornice that ends in open eave returns on the gable ends. A brick chimney at the rear gable end carried smoke from a stove near the back wall. Three nine-over-six sash windows are located on each side wall. A single wooden door with divided lights occupies the façade (west gable end). This resource is located within the Church Creek Survey District (D-654), which is recommended not eligible for the National Register.

The Church Creek Black School is recommended eligible under National Register Criteria A and C for its historical significance and architectural integrity. Built as an African-American school after the Civil War, it is the only remaining educational facility in Church Creek. It is an important local vestige of Reconstruction-era rural education facilities, built in response to the 1872 state legislation establishing free public schools for African-American children. Its simple, functional form and lack of architectural detailing are indicative of a rural vernacular building tradition, making it an excellent example of an unaltered rural nineteenth-century schoolhouse. Occupying the same lot within the borough since its construction, the building is an important component of the Church Creek streetscape. Its connection with the local African-American community is reinforced through its common name,

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

MHT Comments:

*Jan Jan... ✓*  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

6/28/06  
Date

*[Signature]*  
Reviewer, National Register Program

6/29/06  
Date

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the 'Black School.' Even after the county school system abandoned the structure, the schoolhouse continued to symbolize the value of community education.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria: \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D Considerations: \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D \_\_\_ E \_\_\_ F \_\_\_ G

MHT Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**DORCHESTER COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET**

**SURVEY NO.:** D-739

**NAME:** Church Creek Black School

**LOCATION:** 4669 Golden Hill Road (MD 335), south of intersection with MD 16

**DATE:** 1872-1877

**ACCESS:** Private

**DESCRIPTION:**

The Church Creek Black School (noted as Church Creek School No. 2 on historic maps) is located on the east side of Maryland Route 335, south of its intersection with Maryland Route 16. Currently, the building sits vacant at the back of its small half-acre lot, but local informants claim it is in the process of being sold to a private owner. The schoolhouse has a simple, unadorned, front-gabled form that is typical of rural late nineteenth-century schoolhouses. The one-story structure measures approximately 25 by 40 feet and is sheathed with simple weatherboard, sits on brick piers, and has a wood-shingle roof. The building appears to have been constructed after state legislation was passed to establish free schools for African-American children in 1872.

The Church Creek Black School is located within the Church Creek Survey District (D-654), which has been recommended not eligible for the National Register.

**SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Church Creek Black School is recommended eligible under National Register Criteria A and C for its historical significance and architectural integrity. Built as an African-American school after the Civil War, it is the only remaining educational facility in Church Creek. It is an important local vestige of Reconstruction-era rural education facilities, built in response to the 1872 state legislation establishing free public schools for African-American children. Its simple, functional form and lack of architectural detailing are indicative of a rural vernacular building tradition, making it an excellent example of an unaltered rural nineteenth-century schoolhouse. Occupying the same lot within the borough since its construction, the building is an important component of the Church Creek streetscape. Its connection with the local African-American community is reinforced through its common name, the 'Black School.' Even after the county school system abandoned the structure, the schoolhouse continued to symbolize the value of community education.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. **D-739**

## 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Church Creek Black School (preferred); Church Creek School No. 2

other \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Location

street and number 4669 Golden Hill Road (MD 335) \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Church Creek \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity

county Dorchester

## 3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Church Creek Commissions

street and number PO Box 52 telephone n/a

city, town Church Creek state MD zip code 21622

## 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dorchester County Courthouse liber PLC 151 folio 457

city, town Cambridge tax map 051 tax parcel 216 tax ID number 09-200029

## 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in National Register District
- Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Recorded by HABS/HAER
- Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<u>1</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	_____ sites
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	_____ structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	_____ objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	_____ Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
			<b>Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory</b>
			<u>0</u>

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## 7. Description

Inventory No. D-739

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### Condition

excellent       deteriorated  
 good             ruins  
 fair               altered

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Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Church Creek Black School (noted as Church Creek School No. 2 on historic maps) is located on the east side of MD 335, south of its intersection with MD 16.<sup>1</sup> The school building sits back off the road at the rear of its small half-acre lot. Currently, the building sits vacant, but local informants claim it is in the process of being sold to a private owner.

The Church Creek Black School is a one-story, frame structure on brick piers. Its simple, unadorned, front-gabled form is typical of rural late nineteenth-century schoolhouses. The structure measures approximately 25 by 40 feet and is sheathed with simple weatherboard. The roof is covered with wood shingles and has a raking cornice that ends in open eave returns on the gable ends. A brick chimney at the rear gable end carried smoke from a stove near the back wall. Three nine-over-six sash windows are located on each side wall. A single wooden door with divided lights occupies the façade (west gable end).

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<sup>1</sup> The Church Creek Black School is located within the Church Creek Survey District (D-654), which has been recommended not eligible for the National Register.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. D-739

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates

Architect/Builder

unknown

Construction dates 1872-1877

Evaluation for:

National Register

Maryland Register

not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

### Significance

The Church Creek Black School is recommended eligible under National Register Criteria A and C for its historical significance and architectural integrity. Built as an African-American school after the Civil War, it is the only remaining educational facility in Church Creek. It is an important local vestige of Reconstruction-era rural education facilities, built in response to the 1872 state legislation establishing free public schools for African-American children. Its simple, functional form and lack of architectural detailing are indicative of a rural vernacular building tradition, making it an excellent example of an unaltered rural nineteenth-century schoolhouse. Occupying the same lot within the borough since its construction, the building is an important component of the Church Creek streetscape. Its connection with the local African-American community is reinforced through its common name, the 'Black School.' Even after the county school system abandoned the structure, the schoolhouse continued to symbolize the value of community education.

### Historic Narrative

The Church Creek Black School dates between 1872 and 1877. Dorchester County Tax Assessment information suggests that the school was constructed in 1880; however, its appearance on Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson's 1877 atlas proves it was constructed prior to that date. It was one of Church Creek's two schools. The White School (which appears as School No. 1 on historic maps) was initially located along the south side of MD 16 outside the eastern limit of the borough and was later replaced by a second school that was built on the north side of MD 16 within the borough limits. The Black School (shown as School No. 2 on historic maps) was built on the east side of MD 335 to the south of its intersection with MD 16 inside the borough limits. Several of the town's older citizens attended this school well into the twentieth century.

Following the Civil War, African-Americans accounted for approximately half of Dorchester County's total population (Flowers 1982:229). This was a result of slave-operated tobacco production that dominated the local agricultural market into the nineteenth century. By the time of the Civil War, most slaves had been freed and were living throughout the state. On Maryland's Eastern Shore, small pockets of settlement were dispersed throughout the rural landscape.

Like other Chesapeake Bay communities, anti-slavery sentiment was alive but not prevalent within Church Creek. After the Civil War, the county's most outspoken abolitionist, local merchant Daniel T. Orem, built a residence in which he established a free school for African-American children on the third floor. In general, prior to the war, children received an education at the expense of their parents. It was unlikely that African-American children of that period attended school at all. Most were too poor to afford an education and instead worked on family farms or were hired out locally. In 1864, Maryland passed legislation to establish free public schools for "white" children (Flowers 1982:214). It was not until 1872 that legislation was passed to establish free schools for African-American children. The Church Creek Black School was likely established after this legislation.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-739

## Church Creek Black School

### Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

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#### Historic Narrative (continued)

The Church Creek Black School served the community throughout the early twentieth century. A local informant indicated that several of the town's older inhabitants remembered attending the schoolhouse (Richardson 2002). Little additional information could be collected on this structure. A closing date for the school was not ascertained, but local integration of schools did not begin until 1954 (Flowers 1982:216). Apparently, the schoolhouse was used as a doctor's office after its tenure as an educational facility (Richardson 2002). In 1967, the structure was sold to the Church Creek Commissioners by the Dorchester County Board of Education for \$5 (Dorchester County Deed Book PLC151:457). The building currently stands vacant, although it is supposedly in the process of being sold to a private owner.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. D-739

Dorchester County Deed and Tax Assessment Records, Dorchester County Courthouse, Cambridge, MD.

Flowers, Thomas A.

1982 *Dorchester County, Maryland: A History for Young People*. No publisher listed. Book on file at Dorchester County Public Library, Cambridge, MD.

Lake, Griffing & Stevenson

1877 *An Illustrated Atlas of Talbot and Dorchester Counties, Maryland*. Philadelphia, PA.

(continued)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of surveyed property 0.5 acre  
Acreeage of historical setting 0.5 acre  
Quadrangle name Church Creek, MD (1982)

Quadrangle scale: 1:20,000

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The recommended boundary for the Church Creek Black School (Dorchester County Tax Map 51; Parcel 216 – Church Creek) is as follows: Beginning at a point on the east side of MD 335 (which is the southeast corner of the described parcel); then northeast for 143 feet to a point (NE corner); then northwest for 155 feet to a point (NW corner); then southwest for 163 feet to a point along the east side of MD 335 (SW corner); then southeast 151 feet along the east side of MD 335 to the point of beginning.

The boundary was drawn to encompass the entire half-acre parcel, which has been the extent of the school's property since its construction.

## 11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Wendy Zug-Gilbert		
organization	Archaeological and Historical Consultants, Inc.	date	September 2002
street & number	101 N. Pennsylvania Ave., PO Box 284	telephone	(814) 364-2135
city or town	Centre Hall	state	PA

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

**Maryland Historical Trust  
Maryland Inventory of  
Historic Properties Form**

Inventory No. D-739

**Church Creek Black School**

**Continuation Sheet**

Number 9 Page 1

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**Major Bibliographical References (continued)**

Richardson, Johnny

2002 Conversation with Johnny Richardson, Church Creek citizen. August 20, 2002.

Richardson, Ronnie

2002 Conversation with Ronnie Richardson, Church Creek citizen and postmaster. August 20, 2002.

**PRESERVATION VISION 2000: THE MARYLAND PLAN  
STATEWIDE HISTORIC CONTEXTS**

**I. GEOGRAPHIC REGION:**

- X EASTERN SHORE (ALL EASTERN SHORE COUNTIES AND CECIL)
- WESTERN SHORE (ANNE ARUNDEL, CALVERT, CHARLES, PRINCE GEORGE'S, ST. MARY'S)
- PIEDMONT (BALTIMORE CITY, BALTIMORE, CARROLL, FREDERICK, HARFORD,, HOWARD, MONTGOMERY)
- WESTERN MARYLAND (ALLEGANY, GARRETT, WASHINGTON)

**II. CHRONOLOGICAL/DEVELOPMENTAL PERIODS:**

- RURAL AGRARIAN INTENSIFICATION (A.D. 1680-1815)
- AGRICULTURAL-INDUSTRIAL TRANSITION (A.D. 1815-1870)
- X INDUSTRIAL/URBAN DOMINANCE (A.D. 1870-1930)
- MODERN PERIOD (A.D. 1930-PRESENT)
- UNKNOWN PERIOD ( PREHISTORIC; HISTORIC)

**III. HISTORIC PERIOD THEMES:**

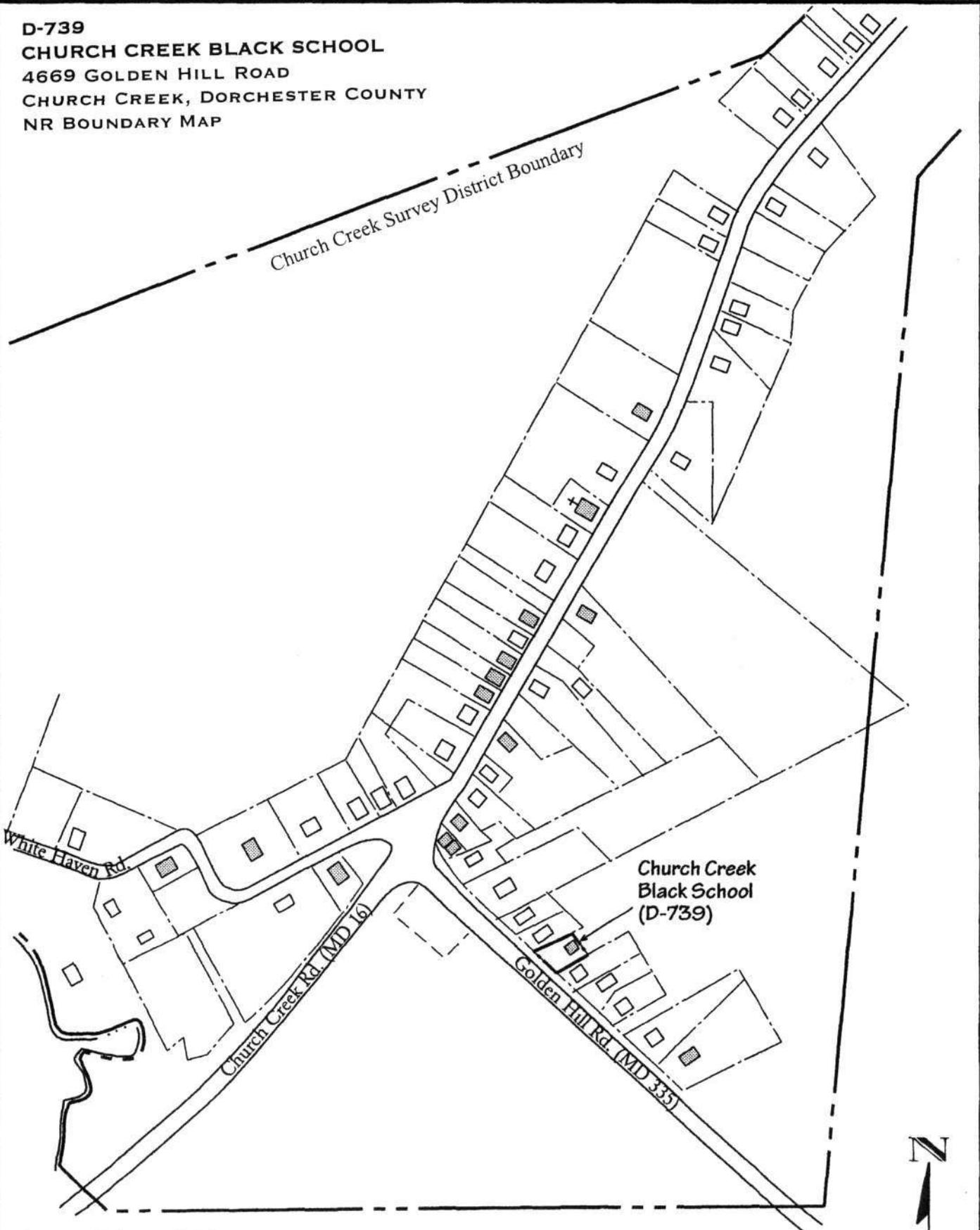
- AGRICULTURE
- X ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE, ARCHITECTURE, AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
- ECONOMIC (COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL)
- GOVERNMENT/LAW
- MILITARY
- RELIGION
- X SOCIAL/EDUCATIONAL/CULTURAL
- TRANSPORTATION

**IV. RESOURCE TYPE:**

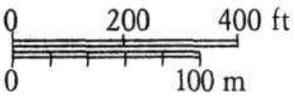
CATEGORY: building  
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: rural  
HISTORIC FUNCTION(S) AND USE(S): education (schoolhouse)  
KNOWN DESIGN SOURCE: none

D-739  
CHURCH CREEK BLACK SCHOOL  
4669 GOLDEN HILL ROAD  
CHURCH CREEK, DORCHESTER COUNTY  
NR BOUNDARY MAP

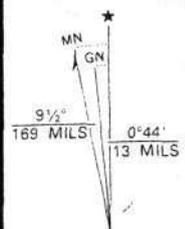
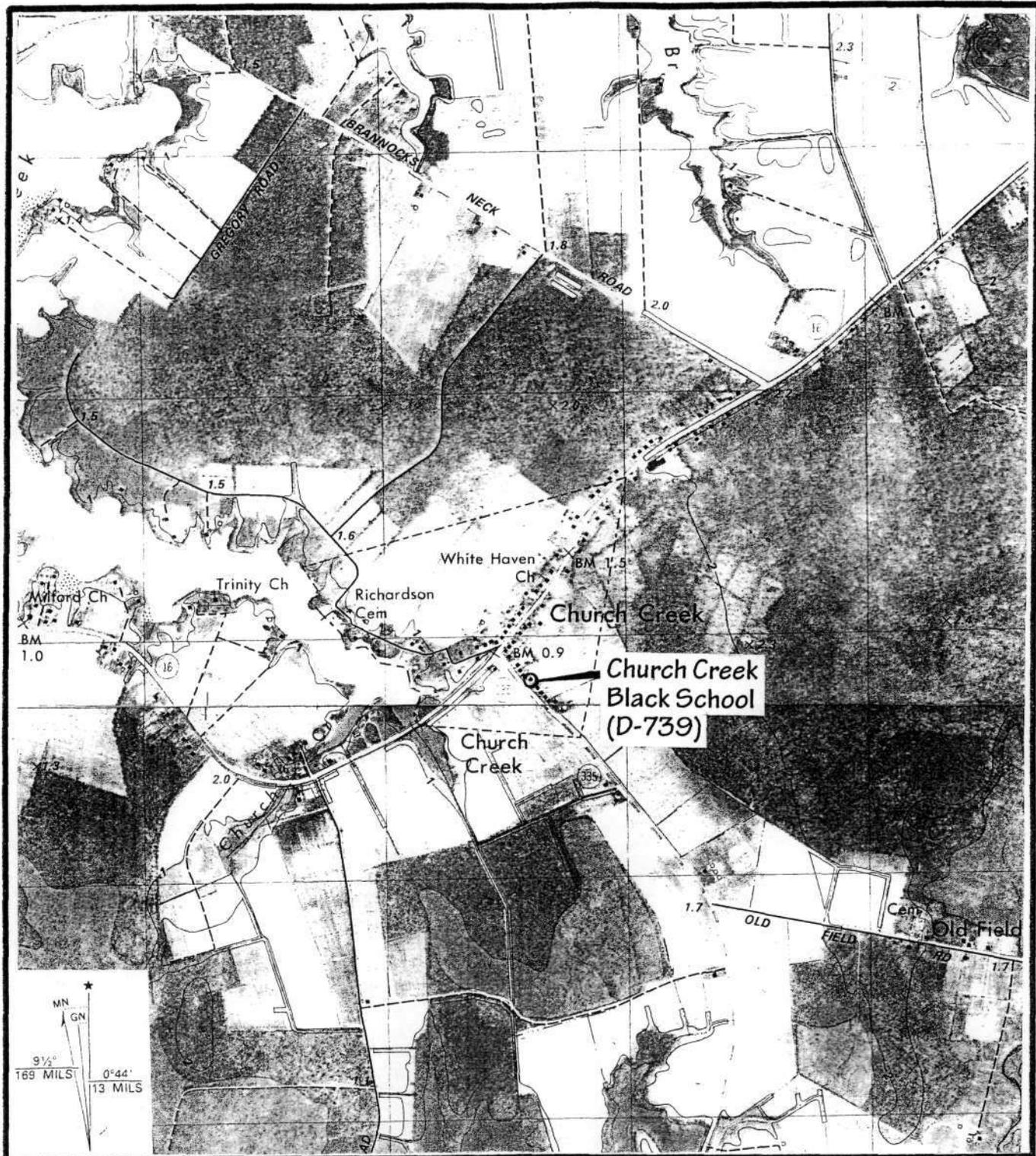
Church Creek Survey District Boundary



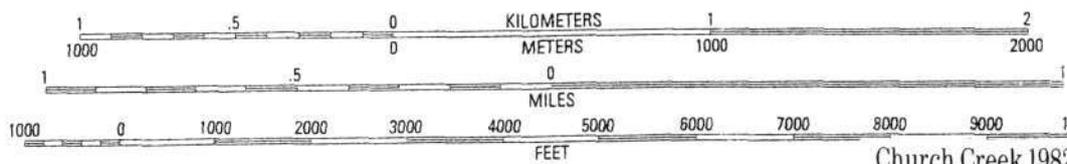
Church Creek  
Black School  
(D-739)



D-739



CONTOUR INTERVAL 1 METER SCALE 1:24 000



Church Creek 1982, Golden Hill 1981, MD



D-739

Church Creek Black School

Dorchester Co, MD

Wendy Zug-Gilbert

Sept 2002

Maryland SHPO

facade & SE elevation, facing N

lot 2



D-739

Church Creek Black School

Dorchester Co, MD

Wendy Zug-Gilbert

Sept 2002

Maryland SHPO

facade + NW elevation, facing E

2 of 2