

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes   
no

Property Name: Muirkirk School Inventory Number: PG: 62-20  
Address: 7813 Muirkirk Road City: Beltsville Zip Code: 20705  
County: Prince Georges USGS Topographic Map: Beltsville  
Owner: American Legion Wm. F. Smith Post 235 Is the property being evaluated a district?  yes  
Tax Parcel Number: 66 Tax Map Number: 14 Tax Account ID Number: 1010040295  
Project: US 1 MD 201 Corridor Study Agency: FHWA/SHA  
Site visit by MHT staff:  no  yes Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is the property is located within a historic district?  yes  no

If the property is within a district District Inventory Number: PG: 62-23  
NR-listed district  yes Eligible district  yes Name of District: ROSSVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT  
Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource  yes  no Non-contributing but eligible in another context  yes  
If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district) Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible  yes  no

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: Project Review and Compliance Files

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*  
The former Muirkirk School is presently used by the American Legion as the William F. Smith Post #235. It is not an individually eligible structure, but is a contributing resource to the Rossville District and as such is eligible under Criteria A and C for the National Register of Historic Places. No research was conducted under Criteria B or D.

Prepared by: Anne E. Bruder, SHA Arch. Hist. Date Prepared: 08/26/2002

<b>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW</b>	
Eligibility recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility not recommended <input type="checkbox"/>
Criteria: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	Considerations: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G <input type="checkbox"/> None
MHT Comments	
<u>Andrew Lewis</u> Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	<u>3/27/03</u> Date
<u>[Signature]</u> Reviewer, NR Program	<u>3/17/03</u> Date

Circa 1922

P.G. #62-20  
Muirkirk School  
7813 Muirkirk Road, Beltsville, Md.  
Priv/Unocc/Meeting/Fair

The Muirkirk "colored" school is a one-story, frame gable-roofed building. The windows on the north (main) facade have been covered over, leaving the central doorway as the only opening in this north facade. The east and west gable ends each have two small windows. The building is presently covered with patterned brown synthetic shingles.

This one-room school was built in 1922 in response to the need at that time for a school to serve the Black children of Rossville. (In earlier years, from immediately after the Civil War, classes for Black students had been held at Queen's Chapel and Abraham Hall.) A building committee, consisting of three black land-owners in the Rossville community, was appointed in April 1922, and the 20' x 36' one-story building was constructed just across the public road from Rossville. This school operated until ca. 1950, when, together with many other small Black schoolhouses, it was sold at auction. It was purchased by the American Legion Post #235, and has served as a meeting place since that time. It is significant because of its close ties with the Black community of Rossville for over 60 years, as an educational and later as a social/service oriented institution.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Muirkirk School

and/or common #2 "Colored" School, District #1

### 2. Location

street & number 7813 Muirkirk Road \_\_\_ not for publicationcity, town Beltsville \_\_\_ vicinity of / Muirkirk congressional district 5state Maryland county P.G.

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Am. Legion

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

name American Legion Post #235

street & number 7813 Muirkirk Road telephone no.:city, town Beltsville state and zip code Maryland

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. P. G. County Courthouse liber 2318street & number Main Street folio 473city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title P. G. County Inventory of Historic Sites

date 1974 \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state  county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records History Division, M-NCPPC 4811 Riverdale Road

city, town Riverdale state Maryland

## 7. Description

Survey No. P.G. 62-20

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input 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 of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

Muirkirk "colored" school was a one-room school: a one-story, frame gable-roofed building. The windows on the north (main) facade have been covered over, leaving the central doorway as the only opening in this north facade. The east and west gable ends each have two small windows.

The building is presently covered with patterned brown synthetic shingle.

## 8. Significance

Survey No. P.G. 62-20

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Black History

**Specific dates** 1922 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D  
and/or  
Applicable Exception:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Level of Significance:  national  state  local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The first school for Black children of the Rossville community was constructed in 1867 by Charles Coffin, the owner of the Muirkirk Furnace, and employer of many residents of the surrounding area. At least in the early years of its operation, this school served both white and Black children - the white children in the morning, and the Black children in the afternoon, with a combined session on the Sabbath. This school building was acknowledged in 1867 to be the finest in the county. Its exact location is as yet uncertain.

Primary classes for Black children soon come to be held in Queen's Chapel, a log structure built in 1868 as a "place of public worship and school house for the colored people." After Queen's Chapel burned in the 1890's, the school was held in Abraham Hall, the social center of the Rossville community.

By 1919, the need was felt for a new school building to serve the Black community of Muirkirk, and the Board of Education purchased a seven-acre tract for that purpose. Although the Muirkirk school was included in the Board's plans at this time, it was not until 1922 that bonds were issued for the building of the Muirkirk, Chapel Hill, Fletchertown and Ducketttsville schools.

A building committee for the Muirkirk school was appointed in April 1922, including William Tolliver, Edward T. Gross, and Harry Ross, Black landowners well-known in the Muirkirk community. A 20' x 36' one-story school house was erected just across the public road from Rossville; the seating capacity was 48 (in one room), heat was provided by a wood stove, and water was available from a well just across the road in Rossville. The Black teacher who had been trying to maintain a school for black children in Lewisville, was

was transferred to the new Muirkirk school, where there were many Black children in need of a school building; and the formerly Black school at Lewisville became the school for the 30 - 40 white children in that area who had had no school building.

Muirkirk school was closed in 1950, and together with many other small Black schools, was auctioned in November of that year. It was purchased a few years later by the American Legion Post #235, whose members included many long-standing residents of Rossville. It has been the meeting place for the American Legion since that time. It is significant because of its close ties with the Rossville Black community for over 60 years, both as an educational and later as a social/service oriented institution.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. P.G. 62-20

P.G. Co. Deeds: #2318-473; #1319:391; #147:401  
P.G. Public School, Archives, Plant Maintenance Office, File #2-1C  
Interviews with Muirkirk residents; Board of Education Journals 1921;  
Board of School Commissioners Journals 1865-1903; Freedmen's Bureau Papers

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A          
Zone Easting Northing

B          
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl

organization History Division, M-NCPPC date May 1983

street & number 4811 Riverdale Road telephone 779-2011

city or town Riverdale state Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory 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  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438





P. G. #62 - 20

Muirkirk School  
Prince George's County, Md.  
Susan G. Pearl  
April 1983  
North Elevation  
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.