

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

Inventory No. PG: 66-35 - 4

Page 1 of 1

Name of Property: University of Maryland, College Park  
Harrison Laboratory

Location: U.S. Rt. 1, College Park

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Per a 2014 Memorandum of Agreement between the University of Maryland and the Maryland Historical Trust the headhouse known as Harrison Laboratory was demolished to make way for a new Hotel and Conference Center.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. PG166-35 - 4

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

historic Harrison Laboratory at the University of Maryland

other Harrison Laboratory Headhouse

## 2. Location

street and number U.S. Rt. 1, University of Maryland \_\_ not for publication

city, town College Park \_\_ vicinity

county Prince George's

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

name State of Maryland, University of Maryland

street and number Department of Facilities Planning, 2310 Service Building telephone (301) 405-2222

city, town College Park state MD zip code 20742

## 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber folio

city, town Upper Marlboro tax map 33 tax parcel various tax ID number various

## 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: University of Maryland Determination of Eligibility Form (2012)

## 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing <span style="float: right;">Noncontributing</span>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<u>1</u> <span style="float: right;">buildings</span>
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<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:	

### Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory

There are 263 buildings on the Univ. of Maryland Campus. A 2012 DOE identified 38 as contributing resources, but that document states that is an incomplete number.

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## 7. Description

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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.

### Description Summary:

Harrison Laboratory is located on the University of Maryland campus on the south side of U.S. Route 1, opposite the main University campus area. The front of the building is accessed by a landscaped, semi-circular driveway. Constructed in 1952, the now-vacant classically inspired style laboratory is a one-story, flat-roofed, brick building composed of a slightly projecting nine-bay center block and flanking five-bay wings. A flat-roofed portico, supported by wooden, Doric order columns spans the front façade of the center section. The building has been vacant since 2003 and is in deteriorating condition. In 2013 the building's attached greenhouses were demolished.

### Detailed Description:

The now-vacant Classical Revival style building, known as Harrison Laboratory and identified in University documents as Building 002, is part of a collection of University buildings situated between Paint Branch Parkway, U.S. Rt. 1 and College Avenue. This area is known as the East District. Other prominent East District buildings include the fourteen houses associated with Fraternity Row (1958), the Service Building (1940) and Ritchie Coliseum (1932). Grouped among these pre-World War II and 1950s buildings are a roughly equal number of modern structures. Except for Fraternity Row, this part of the University of Maryland campus is mostly dedicated to support services. The area is punctuated by roads and parking lots, and lacks the organized feeling and formal design that characterizes the majority of the University's grounds. Plans are underway for the redevelopment of this area.

Harrison Laboratory is the surviving headhouse section of an original two part building that originally included a now-demolished greenhouse. The Harrison Laboratory headhouse measures 182 ft. x 32 ft., and occupies 5,824 sq. ft. of space. This one-story, flat-roofed building features a slightly projecting nine-bay center block and flanking five-bay wings. Brick exterior walls are laid up in a variant of common bond where every sixth course is alternating header/stretcher.

While Harrison Laboratory is clearly inspired by classical antecedents, its form does not neatly fit with any particular revival style. Previous studies have described it as Georgian or Colonial Revival, which are also the terms often used to describe the prevailing campus architectural style. Johannes and Murray's original design for Harrison Laboratory were be more correctly classified as Neoclassical, though most of the elaborations that would classify it as such were never built (Figure 4). It is described here using the broader category of Classical Revival.

The symmetrical building's most distinguishing feature is the wooden front portico. Spanning the façade's five center bays, the portico features a full, if not academically correct, entablature that is supported by Doric order columns. These are fashioned out of vertical wooden staves in a same manner typically used to assemble barrels. Three-inch high cast-concrete pads serve as plinth blocks that, in turn, rest upon a poured concrete floor. Two Doric order, but otherwise plain, pilasters complete the portico.

Windows are twelve-over-twelve, double-hung wood sash types. Windows throughout the building are original, though some are damaged and boarded over. Façade and side wall window openings are accented at the top and bottom by a brick jack arch and a faux stone sill, respectively. A molded faux-stone belt course runs along the top of the jack arches and along the top of the otherwise plain cornice. These embellishments are absent on the rear wall that historically was not visible due to the presence of greenhouses.

Three doorways punctuate the building's façade. A single-width opening is centered in each of the flanking wings. At least one of the two doors is not original. The main entrance, however, is fitted with the original double glazed-and-paneled double doors. The encasement features a six-light transom window, molded architrave and cornice. The rear entrance originally provided access to the now-demolished greenhouses. At some point the opening was retrofitted with a roll-up garage door. It is now boarded over from the exterior side, but ghosting from the original pedimented surround remains visible on the interior.

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The building's plain interior is unremarkable; its only distinction is the fact that it appears to have been little altered since the 1950s. Walls are painted concrete block. Most doors are stock recessed panel types, with simple mitered surrounds. The floor is poured concrete. The walls and ceiling are lined with numerous pipes and electrical conduit. The dropped ceiling, light fixtures and some doors represent the only apparent modifications.

The fact that the electricity has been disconnected and many of the windows are boarded over made close inspection difficult, but the room arrangement seems the same as that shown on a 1959 plan (Figure 8). The front entrance opens into a central hallway that is flanked on either side by small offices and rest rooms. The right side of the building is divided into work room and tool storage, while space in the left side was dedicated to instruction and research laboratories. Both 1951 and 1952 building plans indicate the right wing was conceived as an apartment, but there is no evidence that it was ever used in that capacity. Many of the building's original planned features were omitted due to cost concerns.

The building has been vacant since 2003 and shows signs of neglect in terms of paint, moisture, minor vandalism and general maintenance, but it appears structurally sound. The University of Maryland plans to demolish the Harrison Laboratory headhouse as part of its East Campus redevelopment plan.

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# 8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input 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: _____

<b>Specific dates</b>	vacant since 2003/ slated for demolition 2013	<b>Architect/Builder</b>	Johannes and Murray
<b>Construction dates</b>	1952		

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 Summary:**

Harrison Laboratory is a designated contributing resource within the National Register eligible, College Park Historic District. The District is eligible for listing under Criteria A and C, with a period of significance starting in 1856 and ending in 1961. Those dates represent the chartering of the Maryland Agricultural College (the forerunner to the University of Maryland at College Park) and the end of the post-World War II expansion, respectively. Constructed in 1952, Harrison Laboratory is associated with the University’s post-war building boom and is also relates to the University’s long tradition of agricultural science research. With respect to architecture, Harrison Laboratory displays many of the classically inspired details that characterize the majority of University buildings.<sup>1</sup>

**Narrative History and Significance:**

The Harrison Laboratory and greenhouse complex (University of Maryland Building 002) was built in 1952 as an experimental growing facility for the College of Agriculture. The Silver Spring, Maryland based architectural firm of Johannes and Murray designed the Classical Revival style brick building to serve as a headhouse (i.e. storage and support facility), and to provide laboratory, office and classroom space. Ickes & Braun, Inc. of Chicago, Illinois supplied the original prefabricated greenhouse units. The completed facility cost \$125,400. From 1952 to 2003, Harrison Laboratory provided laboratory, classroom, storage and growing space for plant science investigations in the areas of agronomy, botany, horticulture and plant virology.

In 1954, the building was named in honor of the late state senator, Orlando Harrison (1867-1928), who was a very respected horticulturist and Maryland state senator. The tribute acknowledged both Senator Harrison’s political support incorporating the Maryland State College of Agriculture into the University of Maryland system, and his professional prominence in the field of horticulture. A largely self-taught scholar, Harrison’s deep understanding and tireless promotion of the latest scientific agricultural advances, led to his election as President of the American Association of Nurserymen and President of the Maryland State Horticultural Society. Harrison was also a very successful businessman. During the 1920s Harrison Nurseries was reportedly the largest grower of fruit and shade trees in the world.<sup>2</sup>

The Harrison Laboratory and former greenhouse complex relates to a long tradition of agricultural research at the University of Maryland. In fact, the University of Maryland at College Park was founded in 1856 as the Maryland Agricultural College. The State

<sup>1</sup> John Milner Associates, Inc. “University of Maryland College Park.” Maryland Historical Trust Determination of Eligibility Form (2012).

<sup>2</sup>Taylor House Museum “Senator Orlando Harrison,” <<http://www.taylorhousemuseum.org/pages/harrison.html>> (12 September 2013).

# Maryland Historical Trust

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of Maryland acquired the private school in 1865 using federal funds provided by the Morrill Act. The purpose of that Act was to establish public institutions of learning in each state that would provide instruction in agriculture and mechanics. The University of Maryland was recognized as one of the nation's leading institutions of its type. Even after 1916, when the University adopted a liberal arts curriculum, agricultural research remained a principal field of study.<sup>3</sup>

Harrison Laboratory was constructed in 1952, during an unprecedented period of expansion and reorganization. This nearly three decades of growth started with funding from Great Depression era New Deal programs, and then continued as a result of the large number of servicemen taking advantage of educational opportunities provided by the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, or G.I. Bill. The massive influx of ex-servicemen stressed the resources of college and universities throughout the country, including the University of Maryland, who scrambled to meet the needs of the new student body. From 1930 to 1956, the University constructed sixty-nine of the current 263 College Park campus buildings, with more than half of those dating from 1945 and 1956.<sup>4</sup>

Harrison Laboratory was built for the use of the College of Agriculture which was, and remains, based in J.H. Patterson Hall. Constructed in 1931, that large Classical Revival style building is located near the center of campus. Historically trials and testing, or activities involving livestock, took place in buildings or fields adjacent to the west side of Route 1. The University's Agricultural Experiment Station was housed in what is now Rossborough Inn. Animal husbandry and dairy operations were based a few hundred yards away at Turner Hall. Until 1939, the school's greenhouses and horticultural buildings were also in this location.<sup>5</sup>

By 1939 the University of Maryland planned to build a new headhouse, laboratory and greenhouse complex on the east side of U.S. Route 1, in the newly developing area of campus now known as the East District. Architect Howard W. Cutler, who served as architect for nearby Ritchie Coliseum (1932), was hired to design the new building.<sup>6</sup> Ongoing funding issues, however, prevented the building's construction until after the war.

In 1950 the architectural firm of Johannes and Murray took over the project. Their original plans for the new "Plant Laboratory" depict an elaborate Neoclassical style, two-story, hipped roof, nine-bay, pedimented structure with flanking five-bay, one-story wings. This design was rejected due to cost (Figure 4). The current building reflects the 1951 drawings, which present a plainer structure, lacking the entire second story and grand pedimented entrance (Figure 3).

The team of Dana B. Johannes, Jr. (d. 1972) and Loren L. Murray (d. 1988) specialized in academic buildings. They were admitted into the American Institute of architects in 1947 and 1948 respectively. According to Johannes' obituary, the firm designed approximately 350 schools during the firm's approximately twenty-five year career. Surviving examples of their work include Albert Einstein and Charles Woodward high schools in Montgomery County. Later in their career the firm provided designs for other University of Maryland buildings, including Hornbake Library (1972), South Campus Dining Hall (1974), and the high-rise dormitory complex that includes LaPlata and Denton Halls (1964).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> George H. Callcott. *A History of the University of Maryland*. (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1966), 250.

<sup>4</sup> University of Maryland Facilities Management, "Building Inventory," <https://www.facilities.umd.edu/sitepages/FPBuildingInventory.aspx> 12 September 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Jason G. Speck, *The University of Maryland* (Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2010), 104-105.

<sup>6</sup> University of Maryland, "MAC to Millennium: The University of Maryland from A to Z. Ritchie Coliseum." 10 September 2013. <http://www.lib.umd.edu/univarchives/macmil/letr.html> 12 September 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Obituary of Loren L. Murray. "Retired Architect Loren L. Murray Dies at 78," *Washington Post* (Washington, DC), January 1, 1988.

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Between 1952 and 2003 Harrison Laboratory and greenhouses were used by a variety of departments. These include agronomy, botany, entomology, horticulture and plant virology. Harrison Laboratory is one of a number of buildings, both past and present, associated the University of Maryland's College of Agriculture (now College of Agriculture and Natural Resources). According to Dr. Marla S. McIntosh, a professor of Plant Science who has worked for the University of Maryland since 1979, a lot of excellent research has taken place in Harrison Laboratory, but she is unable to name any work that she considers of historical importance to the field.<sup>8</sup>

Over time the rear greenhouses were repeatedly expanded, rebuilt and finally demolished, but the headhouse/laboratory has remained remarkably unaltered. Harrison Laboratory was vacated in 2003 after the University's new Plant Sciences Building opened. Harrison Laboratory has been unused since that time and is slated for demolition.

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<sup>8</sup> Dr. Marla S. McIntosh. "Research at Harrison Laboratory." Email to Sherri M. Johns. January 27, 2013.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Callcott, George H. *A History of the University of Maryland*. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1966.

Fogle, David P. "University of Maryland at College Park," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (Draft). Maryland Historical Trust, 1998.

John Milner Associates, Inc. "University of Maryland at College Park," Maryland Historical Trust Determination of Eligibility Form. Maryland Historical Trust, 2013.

University of Maryland, Department of Facilities Management archives.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property not surveyed (438.6' x 474.58') approx. 4.778  
Acreage of historical setting original building and greenhouse footprint acreage  
Quadrangle name Washington West Quadrangle scale: 1:24000

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Harrison Laboratory is located on the 1,250 acre University of Maryland campus. It is bounded on the west by U.S. Route 1 and on the north, south and east by service roads.

## 11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Sherri Marsh Johns, architectural historian		
organization	Retrospect Architectural Research, LLC	date	September 16, 2013
street & number	303 Fairfield Drive	telephone	443-994-1591
city or town	Severn	state	MD 21144

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  
Maryland Department of Planning  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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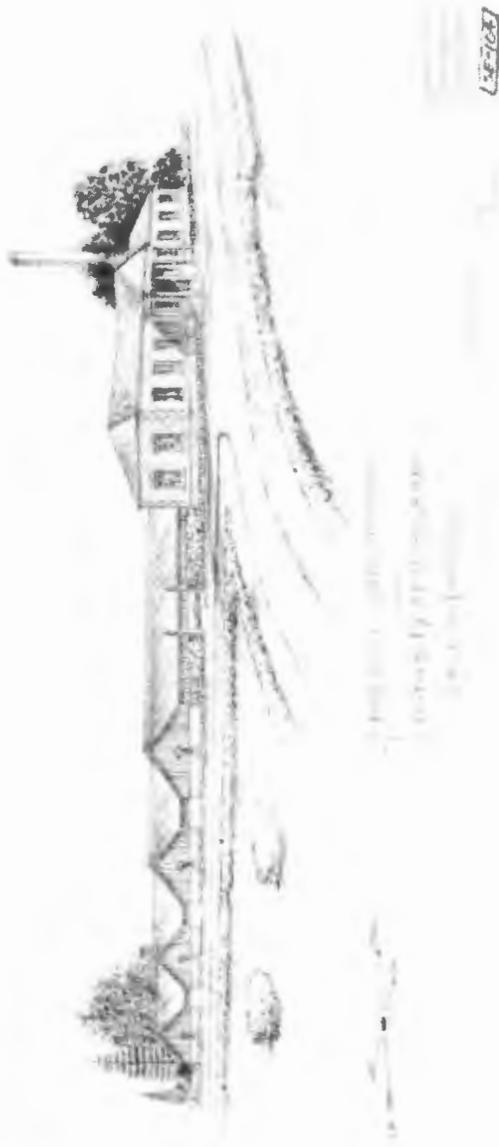


Figure 1: This 1938 architectural rendering shows Howard Cutler's unbuilt design for the new laboratory and headhouse building.

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Figure 2: This 1958 map of the University of Maryland campus shows the relationship of Harrison Laboratory and the East District to the main core campus. Source: University of Maryland Archives.

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Maryland Inventory of  
Historic Properties Form**

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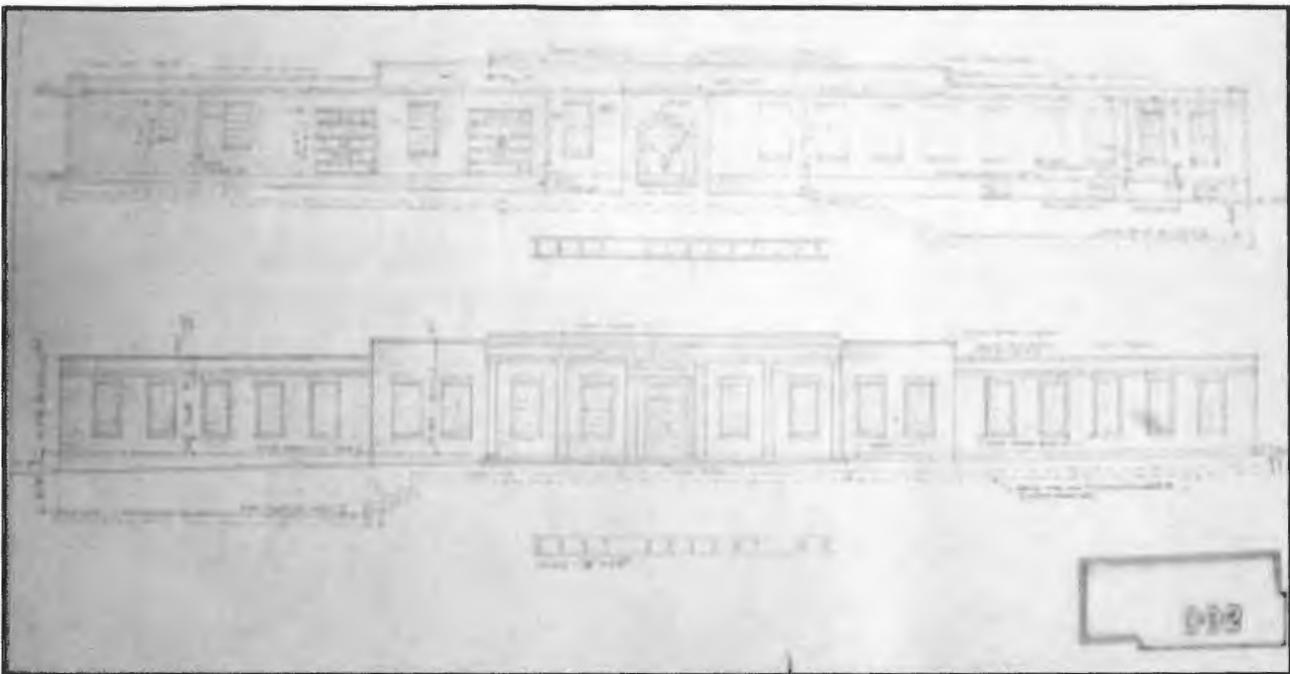


Figure 3: 1951 architectural elevation drawing for "Plant Laboratory," now Harrison Laboratory, prepared by the firm of Johannes and Murray.  
Source: University of Maryland facility archives.

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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Name  
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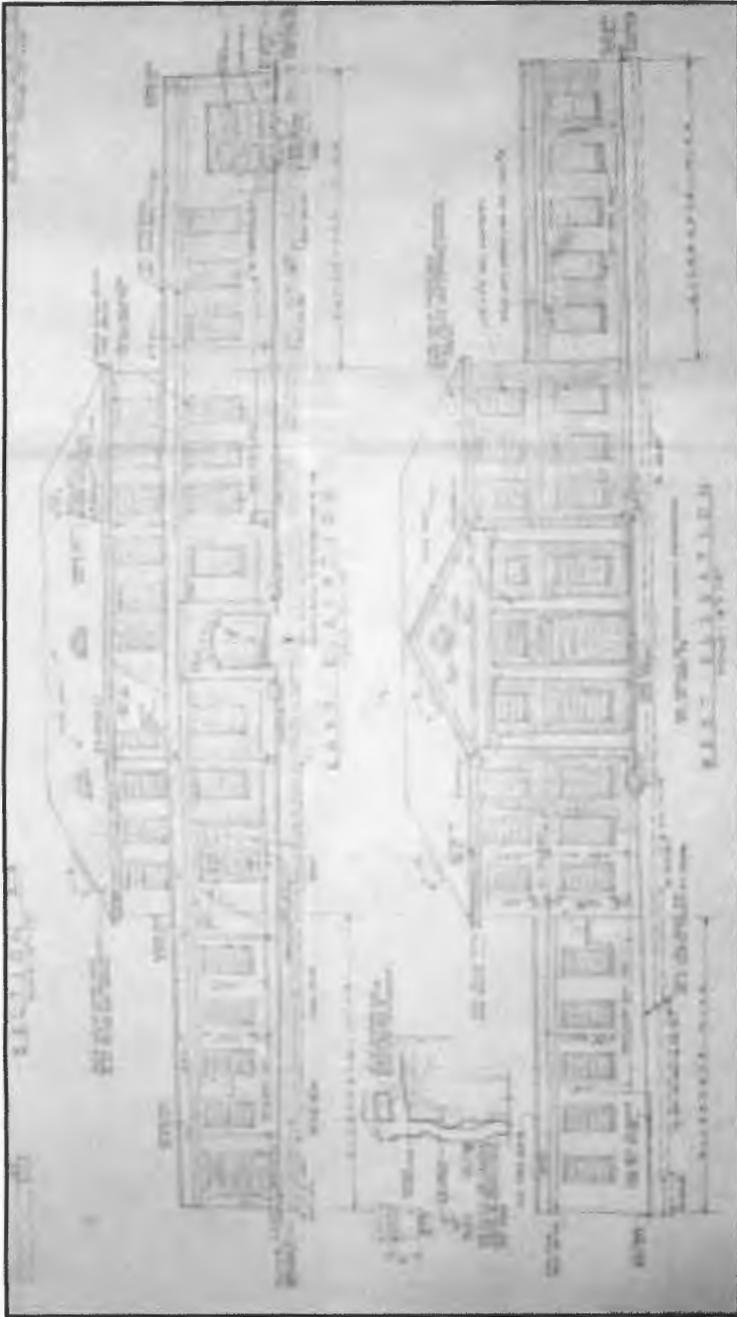


Figure 4: The above 1950 elevations shows the original design concept for Harrison Laboratory.  
Source: University of Maryland facility archives.

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Figure 5: Aerial view of the University of Maryland, 1957.  
Source: University of Maryland archives < <http://hdl.handle.net/1903.1/2925> >.



Figure 6: Aerial view of University of Maryland campus from the Terrapin yearbook, circa 1954.  
Source: University of Maryland archives <http://hdl.handle.net/1903.1/8910>.

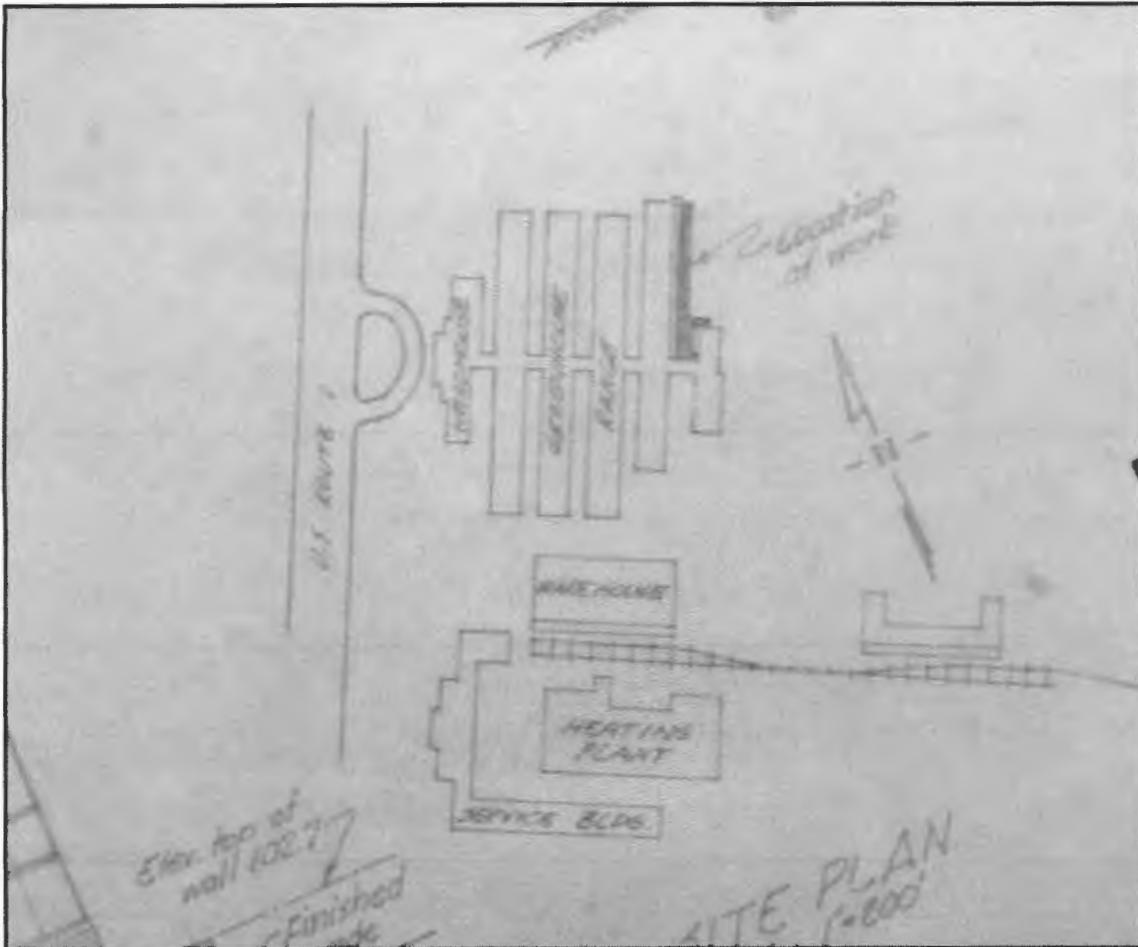
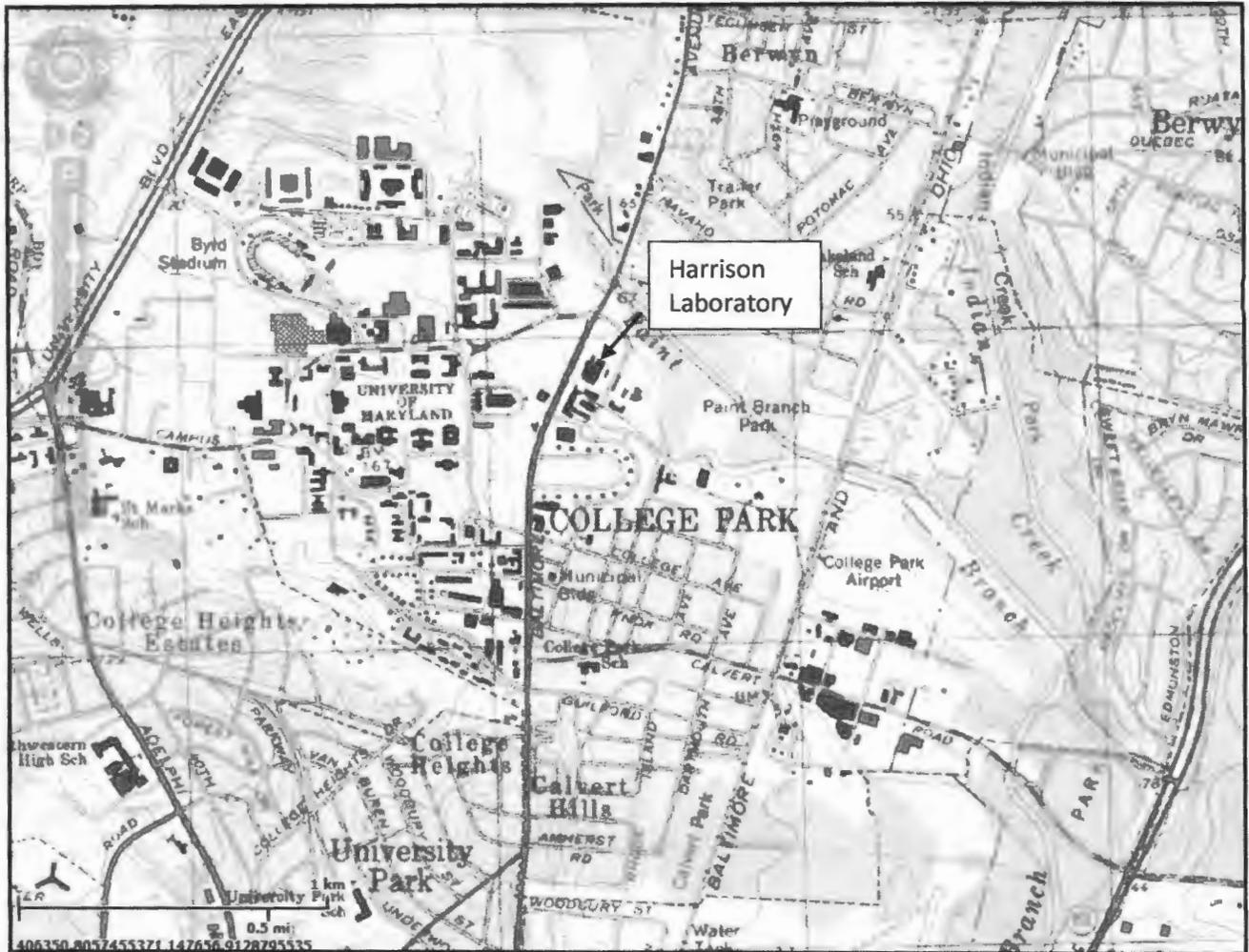


Figure 7: A 1958 site plan showing proposed expansion of the Harrison Laboratory greenhouses. The drawing is labeled "Pot, Storage Bins, Retaining Wall and Paving Harrison Laboratory."  
Source: University of Maryland facility archives





USGS Map excerpt showing the location of Harrison Laboratory, Washington East quad. Harrison Laboratory is located on University of Maryland property (PG: 66-35). Source: MERLIN online

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes \_\_\_  
no \_\_\_

Property Name: Harrison Laboratory at the University of Maryland Inventory Number: PG: 66-35 - 4

Address: U.S. Rt. 1, University of Maryland City: College Park Zip Code: 20742

County: Prince George's USGS Topographic Map: Washington East

Owner: State of Maryland Is the property being evaluated a district? \_\_\_yes

Tax Parcel Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Tax Map Number: 33 Tax Account ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Project: Univ. of Maryland—College Park MD 20121119-0810 Agency: University of Maryland

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

Is the property located within a historic district? \_\_\_yes  no

<i>If the property is within a district</i>		District Inventory Number: _____
NR-listed district ___yes	Eligible district ___yes	District Name: _____
Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource ___yes ___no Non-contributing but eligible in another context ___		

<i>If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district)</i>	
Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible ___yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	

Criteria: \_\_\_A \_\_\_B \_\_\_C \_\_\_D Considerations: \_\_\_A \_\_\_B \_\_\_C \_\_\_D \_\_\_E \_\_\_F \_\_\_G \_\_\_None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: N/A

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

**Summary**

The University of Maryland's Harrison Laboratory was erected in 1952. This one-story, brick, Classical Revival style building was constructed to serve as a headhouse for the six greenhouses moved to this location in 1939. Harrison Laboratory is significant for its association with the growth of the University of Maryland in the post-World War II period and the University's ongoing and important contributions to agricultural plant research. In addition, Harrison Laboratory's classical styling is very typical of a wide range of buildings, including academic structures, constructed in the 1950s. Despite these notable historic associations, the building's significance does not rise to a level necessary to meet National Register eligibility criteria, either individually or as a contributing resource in a potential historic district

An in-depth study of Harrison Hall has not been carried out, but is located within the University of Maryland survey district (MIHP# PG: 66-35). In 1998 Dr. David P. Fogle—then a senior faculty member of the University of

<b>MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW</b>	
Eligibility recommended <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eligibility not recommended _____
Criteria: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A ___B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C ___D	Considerations: ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G ___None
Comments: <u>Contributes to NR-eligible historic district. 1998 Fogle survey was not presented or accepted for DOE purposes. See Purple Line Transit Study DOE.</u>	
<u>[Signature]</u> Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	<u>7/30/13</u> Date
<u>[Signature]</u> Reviewer, NR Program	<u>4/16/13</u> Date

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Continuation Sheet No. 1

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Maryland's School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation program—prepared a draft National Register nomination for the University of Maryland. That document determined that Harrison Laboratory would not contribute to a potential University of Maryland Historic District and proposed district boundaries that excluded it.<sup>1</sup>

### Description

The University of Maryland's Harrison Laboratory is located on the east side of U.S. Route 1, opposite the main University of Maryland Campus. The now-vacant, Classical Revival style laboratory, identified in University documents as Building 002, is part of a collection of University buildings situated between Paint Branch Parkway, U.S. Rt. 1 and College Avenue. This area is known as East Campus. Other prominent Classical Revival style East Campus buildings include the fourteen houses associated with Fraternity Row, the Service Building and Ritchie Coliseum. Grouped among these pre-World War II and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century buildings are a roughly equal number of modern structures. Except for Fraternity Row, this part of the University of Maryland campus is mostly dedicated to support services and lacks the organized feeling and formal design that characterizes the majority of the University's grounds.

Harrison Laboratory headhouse measures 182 ft. x 32 ft. and occupies 5,824 sq. ft. of space. This one-story, flat-roofed building features a slightly projecting nine-bay center block and flanking five-bay wings. Brick exterior walls, laid up in a variant of common bond where every sixth course is alternating header/stretcher, disguise the building's structural masonry block construction.

Stylistically the building takes its cues from the Classical Revival, or alternatively Neoclassical, style. The symmetrical building's most distinguishing feature is the wooden front portico. Spanning the façade's five center bays, the portico features a full, if not academically correct, entablature that is supported by Doric order columns. These are fashioned out of vertical wooden staves in a same manner typically used to assemble barrels. Three-inch high cast-concrete pads serve as plinth blocks that, in turn, rest upon a poured concrete floor. Two Doric order, but otherwise plain, pilasters complete the portico.

Windows are twelve-over-twelve, double-hung wood sash types. Windows throughout the building are original, though some are damaged and boarded over. Façade and side wall window openings are accented at the top and bottom by a brick jack arch and a faux stone sill, respectively. A molded faux-stone belt course runs along the top of the jack arches and along the top of the otherwise plain cornice. These embellishments are absent on the rear wall that historically was not visible due to the presence of greenhouses.

Three doorways punctuate the building's façade. A single-width opening is centered in each of the flanking wings. At least one of the two doors is not original. The main entrance, however, is fitted with the original double glazed and panel door. The encasement features a six-light transom window, molded architrave and cornice. The rear entrance originally provided access to the now-demolished greenhouses. At some point the opening was retrofitted with a roll-up garage door. This has been boarded over on the exterior side, but ghosting from the opening's original pedimented surround remains.

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<sup>1</sup> Fogle, David P and Lyn M. Lawrence. University of Maryland at College Park National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. 1998. On file Maryland Historical Trust Library. (This document was prepared for planning purposes. There is no record of concurrence from either the Maryland Historical Trust or the Keeper of the National Register. )

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM**

Continuation Sheet No. 2

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The building's plain interior is unremarkable; its only distinction is the fact that it appears to have been little altered since the 1950s. Walls are painted concrete block. Most doors are stock recessed panel types with simple mitered surrounds. The floor is poured concrete. The walls and ceiling are lined with numerous pipes and electrical conduit. The dropped ceiling, light fixtures and some doors represent the only apparent modifications.

The fact that the electricity has been disconnected and many of the windows are boarded over made close inspection difficult, but the room arrangement seems the same as that shown on a 1959 plan. The front entrance opens into a central hallway that is flanked on either side by small offices and rest rooms. The right side of the building is divided into work room and tool storage, while space in the left side was dedicated to instruction and research laboratories. Both 1951 and 1952 building plans indicate the right wing was conceived as an apartment, but there is no evidence that it was ever used in that capacity.

The building has been vacant since 2003 and shows signs of neglect in terms of paint, moisture, minor vandalism and general maintenance, but it appears structurally sound.

### **History and Significance**

Harrison Laboratory was built in 1952 according to designs prepared by the Silver Spring, Maryland based architectural firm of Johannes and Murray.<sup>2</sup> The Classical Revival style building was constructed for the University's College of Agriculture for use as a headhouse (i.e. storage and support facility) for the College's relocated greenhouse complex. In addition to storage, the headhouse section accommodated laboratory, office and classroom space. In 1954 it was named in honor of noted horticulturist and Maryland state senator, Orlando Harrison (1867-1928).

Harrison Laboratory and greenhouse complex relates to a long tradition of agricultural research at the University of Maryland. In fact, the University of Maryland at College Park was founded in 1856 as the Maryland Agricultural College. The State of Maryland acquired the private school in 1865 using federal funds provided by the Morrill Act. The purpose of that Act was to establish public institutions of learning in each state that would provide instruction in agriculture and mechanics. Even after 1916, when the University adopted a liberal arts curriculum, agricultural research remained an important field of study.<sup>3</sup>

Harrison Laboratory was constructed in 1952, during a period of major University expansion and reorganization resulting from the large number of servicemen taking advantage of educational opportunities provided by the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, or G.I. Bill. The massive influx of ex-servicemen stressed the resources of college and universities throughout the country, including the University of Maryland, who scrambled to meet the needs of the new student body.

Harrison Laboratory is associated with the College of Agriculture which was, and remains, based in J.H. Patterson Hall. Constructed in 1931, that large Classical Revival style building is located near the center of campus. Historically trials and testing, or activities involving livestock, took place in buildings or fields adjacent to the west side of Route 1. The University's Agricultural Experiment Station was housed in what is now Rossborough Inn.

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<sup>2</sup> Proposed and "as built" drawings for Harrison Laboratory housed with the University of Maryland facility archives.

<sup>3</sup> George H. Callcott. *A History of the University of Maryland*. (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1966), 250.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM**

Continuation Sheet No. 3

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Animal husbandry and dairy operations were based a few hundred yards away at Turner Hall. Until 1939, the school's greenhouses and horticultural buildings were also in this location.<sup>4</sup>

By 1939 the University of Maryland planned to build a new headhouse, laboratory and greenhouse complex on the east side of Route 1. Architect Howard W. Cutler was selected design the new headhouse and laboratory building. Culter had recently designed nearby Ritchie Coliseum.<sup>5</sup> The existing greenhouses were moved from the west side of Rt. 1 to the new location, but construction of the brick headhouse and laboratory building was postponed until after World War II.

In 1950 the architectural firm of Johannes and Murray took over the project. The firm's first designs for the "Plant Laboratory" depict an elaborate, two-story, hipped roof, nine-bay pedimented structure with flanking five-bay, one-story wings. The final 1951 architectural drawings, however, present a simpler building that lacked the second story and pedimented entrance. In fact, the Johannes and Murray's as-built design is reminiscent of Cutler's 1939 blueprints. Over time the rear greenhouses have been repeatedly expanded, rebuilt and finally demolished, but the headhouse/laboratory has remained remarkably unaltered.

The team of Dana B. Johannes, Jr. (d. 1972) and Loren L. Murray (d. 1988) specialized in academic buildings. They were admitted into the American Institute of architects in 1947 and 1948 respectively. According to Johannes' obituary, the firm designed approximately 350 schools during the firm's approximately twenty-five year career. Surviving examples of their work include Albert Einstein and Charles Woodward high schools in Montgomery County. Later in their career the firm also provided the designs for Hornbake Library, South Campus Dining Hall, and the high-rise dormitory complex that includes LaPlata and Denton Halls.<sup>6</sup>

Between 1952 and 2003 Harrison Laboratory and greenhouses were used by a variety of School of Agriculture departments. These include agronomy, botany, entomology, horticulture and plant virology. Harrison Laboratory was vacated in 2003 after the University's new Plant Sciences Building opened. Harrison Laboratory has been vacant since that time.

### **National Register Significance**

Harrison Laboratory's historical significance is not sufficient to qualify for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Furthermore, it would only marginally contribute to a potential University of Maryland National Register Historic District. These findings are based on the building's architectural merit, its location as well as integrity. First, Harrison Laboratory is a commonplace and undistinguished example of Classical Revival style academic architecture. Second Harrison Laboratory is located away from the main University of Maryland campus, in a busy setting characterized by a large number of modern or temporary buildings. It is an academic building located in the midst of service and support structures. Third, with respect to integrity, the surviving brick building is largely intact, but the greenhouses have been demolished. The brick section was built as a headhouse and laboratory to support greenhouse activities. The loss of the greenhouses seriously undermines the building's integrity

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<sup>4</sup> Jason G. Speck, *the University of Maryland* (Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2010), 104-105.

<sup>5</sup> MAC to Millennium: The University of Maryland from A to Z. "Ritchie Coliseum." Retrieved January 18, 2013. <http://www.lib.umd.edu/univarchives/macmil/letr.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Obituary of Loren L. Murray. "Retired Architect Loren L. Murray Dies at 78," *Washington Post (Washington, DC)*, January 1, 1988.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM**

Continuation Sheet No. 4

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Criterion A (Event): Harrison Laboratory is one of a number of buildings, both past and present, associated the University of Maryland's College of Agriculture (now College of Agriculture and Natural Resources). The oldest and historically most important of these remains J.H. Patterson Hall. According to Dr. Marla S. McIntosh, a professor of Plant Science who has worked for the University of Maryland since 1979, a lot of excellent research has taken place in Harrison Laboratory, but she is unable to name any work that she considers of historical importance to the field.<sup>7</sup>

Criterion B (Person): Harrison Laboratory is not known to be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Criterion C (Design.Construction): Architecturally, the building's classically inspired details are very typical of a wide range of buildings constructed during the 1950s. The University of Maryland has many better examples of the Classical Revival style. These include the aforementioned H.J. Patterson Hall, as well as Wicomico and Carroll Halls, and Shriver Laboratory, just to name a few. It is also important to remember that Harrison Laboratory was constructed without the second story and decorative elements originally envisioned by Johannes and Murray. The present building is essentially a truncated version of the original conceit.

With regards to Harrison Laboratory achieving significance for representing the work of a master, little has been written in professional literature about either the firm or its partners, Dana B. Johannes, Jr. (d. 1972) and Loren L. Murray (d. 1988). This lack of peer recognition indicates that the quality of their work does not rise to the level of "master" or National Register importance.

Finally, if Harrison Laboratory were located on the main University campus it would contribute to a future historic district, but the semi-industrial modern setting of this marginal building is incongruous with justifiable historic district boundaries.

Criterion D (Information Potential): Harrison Laboratory does not have the potential to important historical information.

**Bibliography**

Callcott, George H. *A History of the University of Maryland*. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society/Pridemark Press, 1966.

Fogle, David P. "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, University of Maryland at College Park," NP, 1998. On file at the Maryland Historical Trust Library.

Speck, Jason G. *University of Maryland*. Chicago: Arcadia Publishing, 2010.

Prepared by: Sherri Marsh Johns

Date Prepared: February 4, 2013

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<sup>7</sup> Dr. Marla S. McIntosh. "Research at Harrison Laboratory." Email to Sherri M. Johns. January 27, 2013

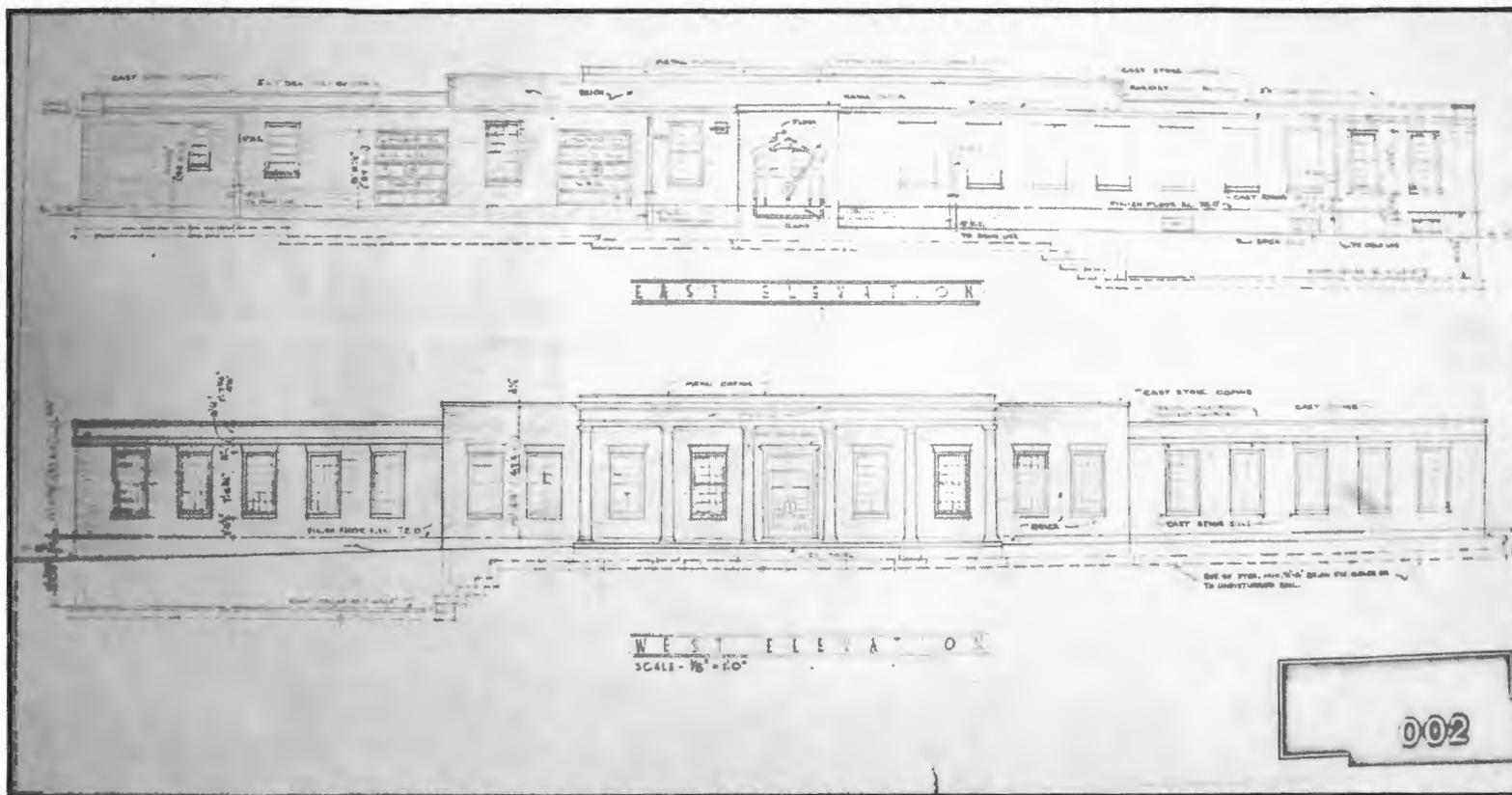


Figure 1: 1951 architectural elevation drawing for "Plant Laboratory," now Harrison Laboratory, prepared by the firm of Johannes and Murray. (University of Maryland facility archives.)



MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Continuation Sheet No. 7

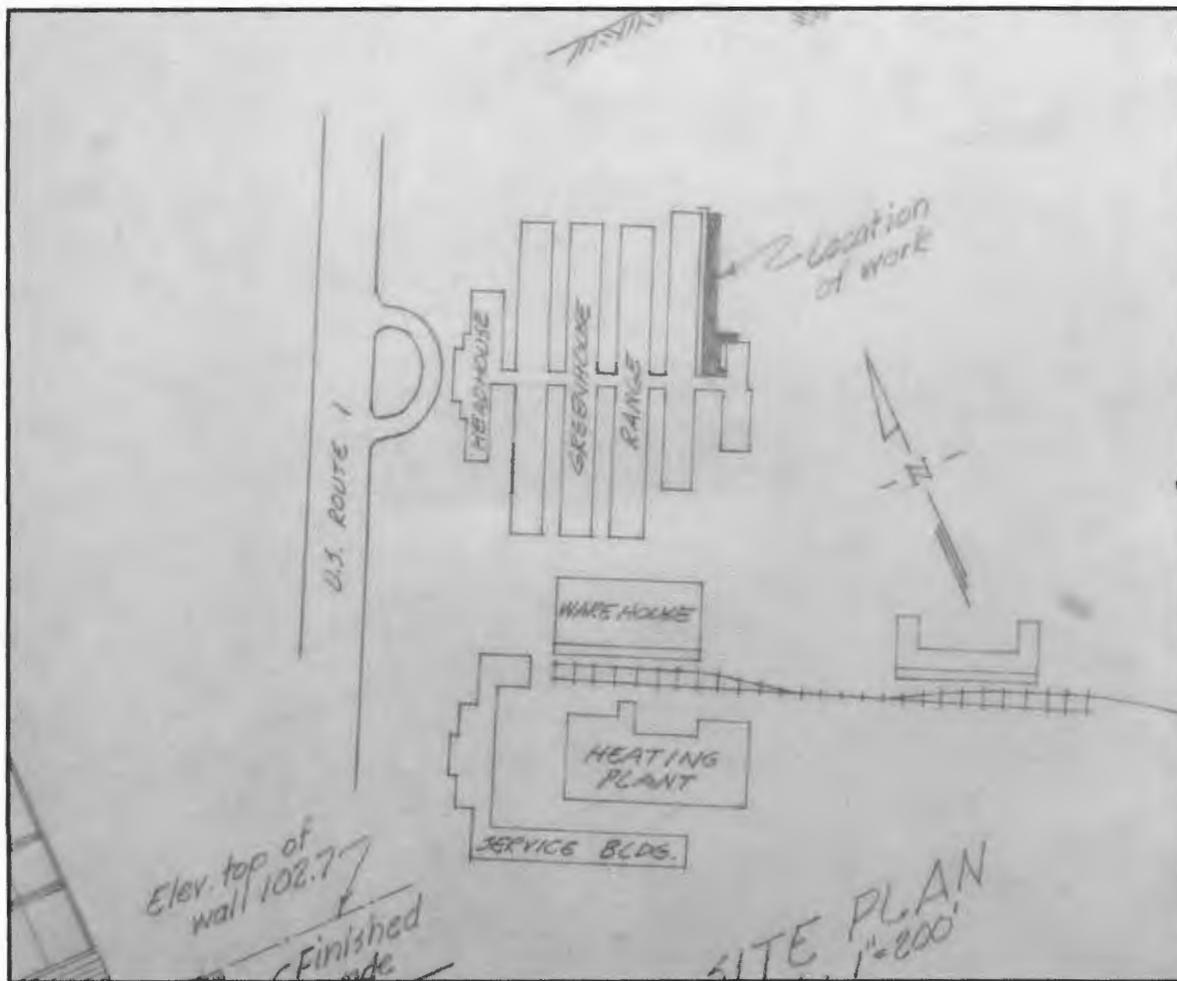


Figure 3: 1958 site plan showing proposed expansion of the Harrison Laboratory greenhouses. The drawing is labeled "Pot, Storage Bins, Retaining Wall and Paving Harrison Laboratory." (University of Maryland facility archives.)

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Continuation Sheet No. 8

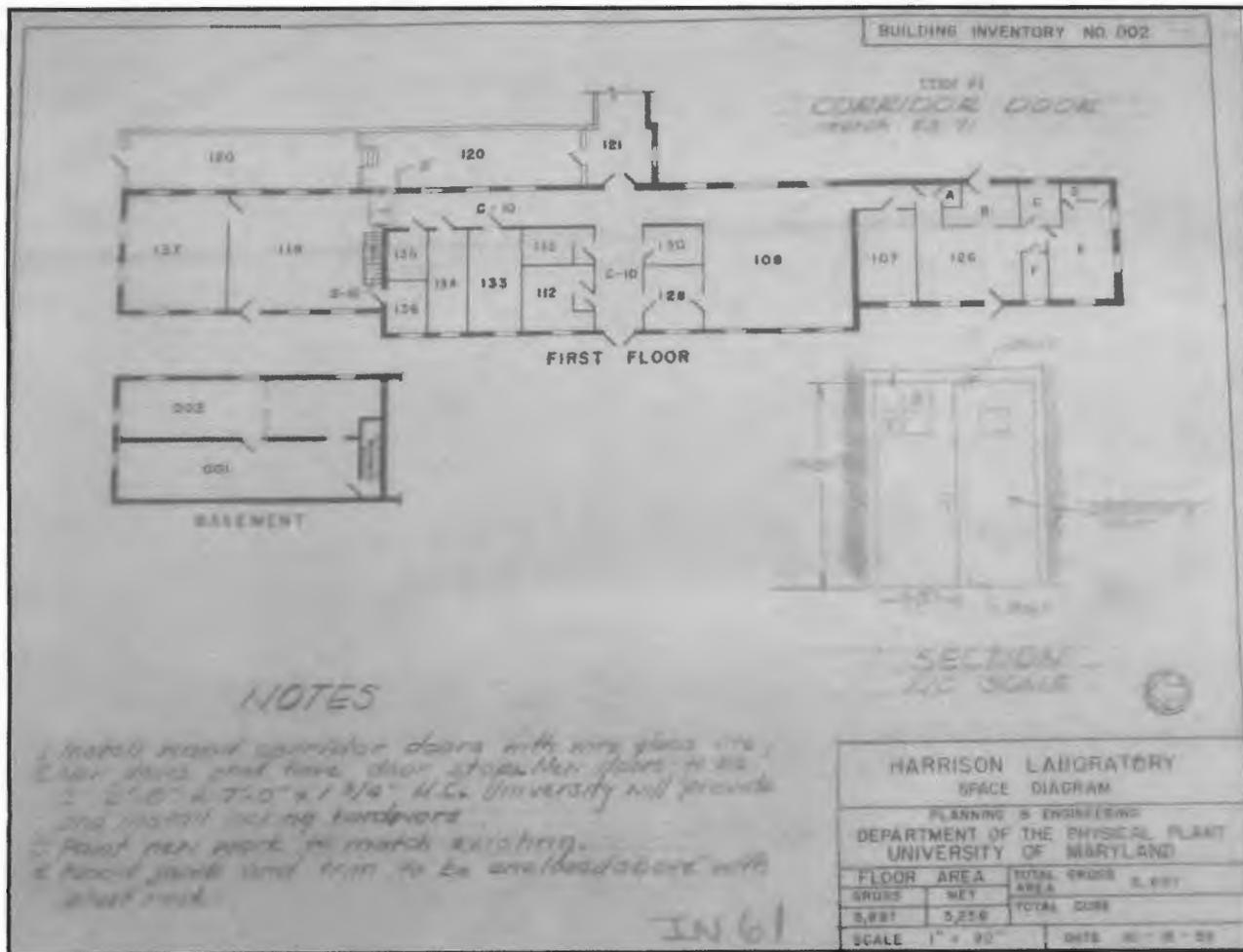


Figure 4: 1959 plan showing Harrison Laboratory's internal arrangement. (University of Maryland facility archives.) The current configuration is very similar to that shown here.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
NR-ELIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Continuation Sheet No. 9

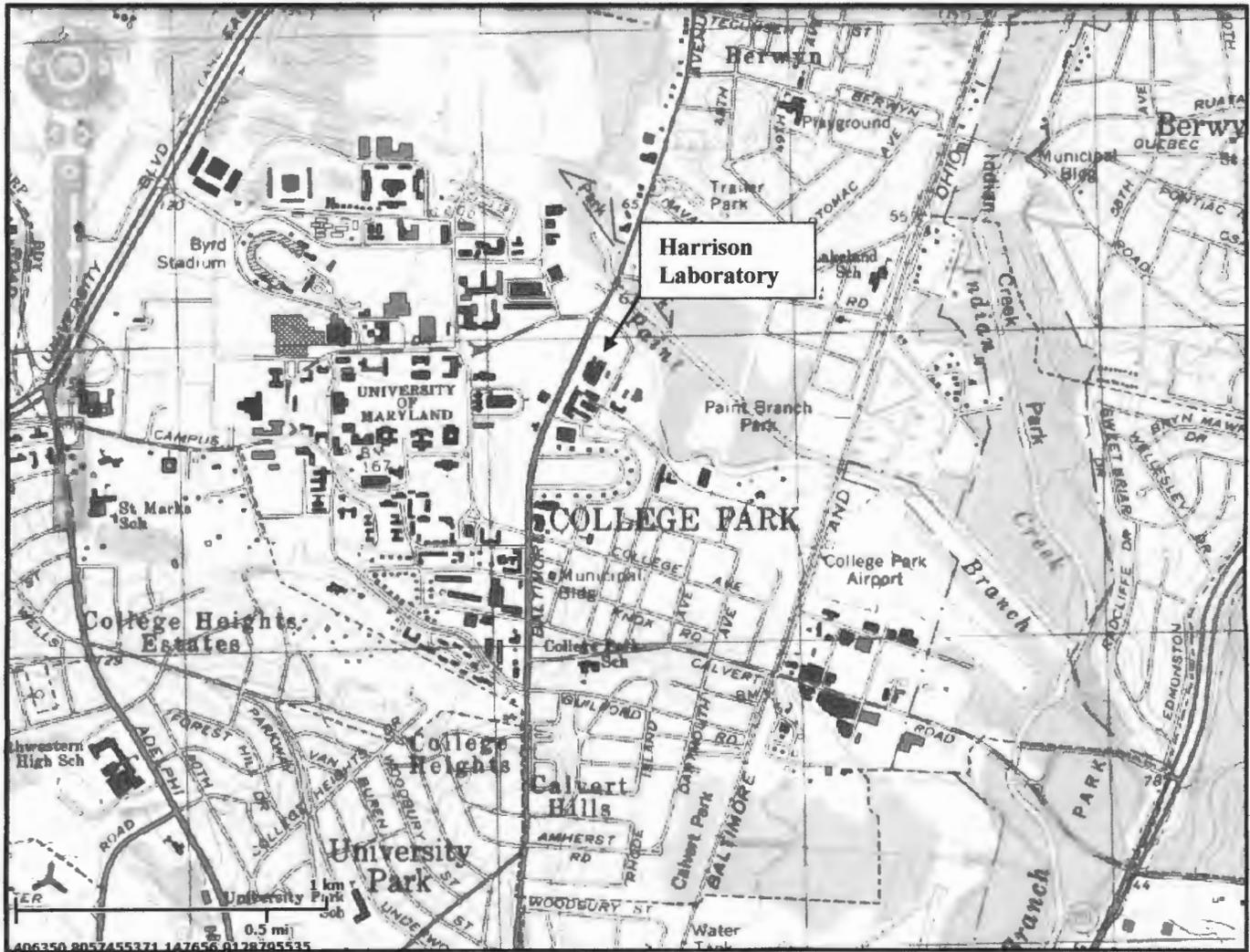


Figure 5: USGS map excerpt showing the location of Harrison Laboratory, Washington West quad. The building's footprint depicts the presence of the now-demolished greenhouses. Source: MERLIN online



HARRISON LABORATORIES

K

PG-66-35-4

Harrison Laboratory at Univ of MD

Prince Georges Co., MD

S. M. Johns, Jan 2013

8133226, 83930017\_017

Negative at MD SHPO

FACADE Facing east

(ILFORD), (Fronex True B&W), 01/28/13

photo 1 of 15



HARRISON LABORATORY

PG 66-35-4

HARRISON LABORATORY at Univ of MD  
Prince George's Co., MD

by S.M. Johns, Jan 2013

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Neg. at MD SHPO

Portico Detail

(ILFORD), (FROSTEN TRUE B&W), 01/28/13

2 of 15



PG 66-35-4

HARRISON Laboratory at Univ of MD

Prince George's Co., MD

by S.M. Johns, Jan 2013

0133226, 03930001\_001

Neg at MD SHPO

Camera facing NE

<ILFORD>, <Fomex True B&W>, 01/28/13

3 of 15



PG 66-35-4

HARRISON Laboratory at Univ of MD

Prince Georges Co., MD

by S. M. Johns, Jan 2013

0133226, 83930003\_003

Neg at MD SHPD

CAMERA FACING South

Photo 4 of 15

<ILFORD>, <Fronex True B&W>, 01/28/13



PG 66-35-4

HARRISON LABORATORY at Univ of MD  
Prince George's Co., MD

by S. M. Johns, Jan 2013

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Neg at MD SHPO

CAMERA FACING east

(ILFORD). (Fronex True B&W). 01/28/13

DOOR Detail

Photo 5 of 15



HARRISON LABORATORY

PG 66-35-4

HARRISON LABORATORY at Univ. of MD

Prince Georges Co., MD

by S. M. Johns, Jan 2013

0133226, 03930005\_005

Neg at MD SHPO

Camera facing SW, Cornice Detail

<ILFORD>, <Fomex True B&W>, 01/28/13

Photo 6 of 15



PG 66-35-4

HARRISON LABORATORY at Univ. of MD

Prince Georges Co., MD

by S. MARSH Johns, Jan 2013

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Neg at MD SHPO

REAR, view of former Greenhouse location

<ILFORD>, <Fronex True D3W>, 01/28/13

CAMERA facing west

Photo 7 of 15



PG 66-35-4

HARRISON LABORATORY at Univ of MD  
Prince George's Co., MD  
by S. M. Johns, Jan 2013

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Neg. at MD SHPU

View from Harrison Lab towards  
<ILFORD>, <Fronex True B&W>, 01/28/13

MAIN CAMPUS

Photo 8 of 15



TRANSOM WINDOW

DOUBLE DOOR

WATER FOUNTAIN

104  
WOMEN'S TOILET

1104  
WOMEN  
♿

PG 66-35-4

HARRISON LABORATORY at Univ of MD

PRINCE GEORGE'S CO. MD

by S. M. Johns, Jan 2013

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Neg at MD SHPO

FRONT ENTRANCE

(ILFORD), (Fomex True B&W), 01/28/13

Photo 9 of 15



PG-66-35-4

HARRISON LABORATORY/ at Univ of MD  
Prince George's Co., MD

by S. M. Johns, Jan 2013

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Neg at MD SHPO

Rear entrance into demolished Greenhouse

<ILFORD>. <Fronex True B&W>. 01/28/13

Photo 10 of 15



PG 6635-4

HARRISON LABORATORY at Univ of MD

Prince Georges Co., MD

by S. M. Johns, January 2013

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Neg at MD SHPO

INTERIOR

<ILFORD>, <Fronex-True B&W>, 01/28/13

Photo 11 of 15



PG 66-35-4

HARRISON LABORATORY at Univ of MD

Prince Georges Co., MD

by S.M. Johns, January 2013

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Neg at MD SHPO

INTERIOR

<ILFORD>, <Fronex True B&W>, 01/28/13

Photo 12 of 15



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HARRISON LABORATORY at Univ of MD

PRINCE GEORGE'S CO, MD

by S. M. Johns, Jan 2013

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Neg at MD SHPO

Interior

Photo 13 of 15

(ILFORD), (Fomex True B&W), 01/28/13



PG 66-35-4

HARRISON LABORATORY at Univ of MD

Prince Georges Co., MD

by S. M. Johns, Jan. 2013

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Neg at MD SATO

Interior

<ILFORD>, <Fronex True B&W>, 01/28/13

PhAu 14 of 15



PG 66-35-4

HARRISON Laboratory at Univ. of MD  
Prince Georges Co., MD

by S.M. Johns, Jan 2013

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Neg at MD SHPO

Interior

(ILFORD), (Fomex True B&W), 01/28/13

Photo 15 of 15