

Capsule Summary
SM-614
Bennett House
Ridge
Private

c. 1944

Just after the Civil War, the Freedman's Bureau placed a priority on educating former slaves. In the late-1860s, the Freedman's Bureau erected an African-American school near the rural crossroads community of Ridge, Maryland. These facilities were soon deemed inadequate and on January 10, 1900 a new property, situated between Maryland Route 5 and Route 235, was purchased and by 1910 a new school constructed. This one room school served the local community for thirty years. In the mid-twentieth century, however, many of St. Mary's County's public schools were consolidated and regionalized and one room school houses were thus abandoned.

Ironically enough, on January 10, 1940, the St. Mary's Board of Education sold the half acre lot of the second school to Edward and Beulah Bennett, a prominent local African-American educator and his wife. By 1944, the Bennett's demolished the old school house and constructed a modest, one-and-a-half story, frame bungalow. Today, this center passage, double-pile plan house represents a good example of a once plentiful mid-twentieth century Tidewater house-type. Recently rehabilitated by its current owners, the house maintains integrity by the retention of its floor plan and appointments. This includes a stair embellished with scroll sawn stringers and a classically-inspired turned newel.

SM-614, Bennett House
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:	Western Shore
Chronological/Developmental Period:	Modern Period, 1930-present
Historic Period Theme:	Architecture, Education

Resource Type

Category:	Building
Historic Environment:	Village
Historic Function and Use:	Residence
Known Design Source:	None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. SM-614

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Bennet House (pref.)

and/or common Site of Ridge School

2. Location

street & number 49264 Bennett Drive

 not for publication

city, town Ridge

 vicinity of

congressional district

1

state Maryland

county St. Mary's

TM-71, G-1, P-501

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name Robert E. and Lisa D. Bower

street & number PO Box 451

telephone no.: 301-872-4011

city, town Ridge

state and zip code Maryland 20680-0451

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse

liber EWA 986

street & number

folio 160

city, town Leonardtown

state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date

 federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

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

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

Contributing Resource Count: 1

The Edward and Beulah Bennett house is located on 49264 Bennett Drive in Ridge, Maryland. Situated on the north side of Bennett Drive, the dwelling is positioned on a .546 acre, rectangular lot that gradually slopes down to the north. This lot is bounded to the north by a woodlot, to the west by two empty parcels owned by the current owners of the Bennett house, to the south by Bennett Drive, and to the east by a modern one story dwelling. The house is highly organized with the Bennett house centrally located and a driveway that extends in a U-shape around the back of the house--converging to a concrete block garage. The grassy yard all around the house is well defined by various well maintained shrubs. The property also contains a well house and a modern gazebo.

The Bennett house is one-and-a-half story frame dwelling with a four room original plan and gable roof. This modest Tidewater bungalow features a concrete block foundation and exterior frame walls that are covered with asbestos shingles. At the intersection of the wall and roof is an enclosed cornice. The asphalt shingle covered roof features a dual pitch. Near the roof's peak the slope is rather steep. The pitch changes abruptly to a more gradual slope about 1/3 of the way to the eaves. A centrally located, interior, brick chimney flue and a gable dormer project from the surface of the roof.

The primary or south elevation exhibits an open porch that has been fully enclosed. This enclosure consists of a raised brick foundation and walls covered with aluminum siding. The fenestration of this enclosed porch consists of a centrally located door flanked on either side by a window. The window to the west of the door consists of a central fixed pane picture window flanked on either side by a smaller one-over-one double-hung sash. The window to the east of the door features a set of paired, one-over-one windows. Each of these windows have a pair of non-functional louvered shutters. The door itself is a solid wood door that is decorated with a window that consists of three interlocking circles. The roof on this elevation is pierced by a gable dormer that is lit by a set of paired one-over-one windows. A piece of modest scrollwork decorates the peak of the dormer's roof.

The west elevation is pierced by four bays. A one-over-one window lights the enclosed porch, a set of paired one-over-one sash light a rear enclosed porch, and two sets of paired one-over-one windows light the main body of the dwelling. The half story is lit by a single one-over-one window.

The north or rear elevation is pierced by a door and five windows. The door is located on the west side of the elevation. It features eight panels and a three light semicircular window. It is flanked closely on either side by a one-over-one window. At the center of the elevation is an exterior cinder block flue that rises just above the roof line. To the east of the flue is a one-over-one window, a sliding glazed vent for the interior bathroom, and a small one-over-one window.

The east elevation is pierced on the first floor by two, one-over-one windows as well as one set of paired one-over-one sash. The half story is lit by a one-over-one window. A louvered ventilation cover lies just above this bay.

8. Significance

Survey No. SM-614

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

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
check: Applicable Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D and/or	
Applicable Exception: <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	
Level of Significance: <input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	

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

Just after the Civil War, the Freedman's Bureau placed a priority on educating former slaves. In the late-1860s, the Freedman's Bureau erected an African-American school near the rural crossroads community of Ridge, Maryland. These facilities were soon deemed inadequate and on January 10, 1900 a new property, situated between Maryland Route 5 and Route 235, was purchased and by 1910 a new school constructed. This one room school served the local community for thirty years. In the mid-twentieth century, however, many of St. Mary's County's public schools were consolidated and regionalized and one room school houses were abandoned.

Ironically enough, on January 10, 1940, the St. Mary's Board of Education sold the half acre lot of the second school to Edward and Beulah Bennett, a prominent local African-American educator and his wife. By 1944, the Bennett's demolished the old school house and constructed a modest, one-and-a-half story, frame bungalow. Today, this center passage, double-pile plan house represents a good example of a once plentiful mid-twentieth century Tidewater house-type. While several changes have modified the house's exterior appearance, the interior retains its floor plan and appointments. This includes a stair embellished with scroll sawn stringers and a classically-inspired turned newel.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-614

Interview with Robert and Lisa Bower, December, 1997.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .546

Quadrangle name Point Lookout, Md

Quadrangle scale 1: 24 000

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

Same as per deed description.

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

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk E. Ranzetta, Historic Sites Surveyor

organization St. Mary's County Dept of Planning & Zoning

date 4-27-98

street & number 22740 Washington Street

telephone 301-475-4662

city or town Leonardtown

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

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
 DHCP/DHCD
 100 COMMUNITY PLACE
 CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
 514-7600

SM-614, Bennett House

St. Mary's County

7.1 Description

The original interior consisted of four rooms with a center stair passage through the middle and open porches on the front and rear sides. While both of the porches have been reclaimed for interior spaces the interior layout of the dwelling remains relatively intact and clear. The stair features modest scroll sawn decoration on the stringer and a classically-inspired turned newel. The two rooms to the west of the center passage presently consist of a non-communicating dining room and bedroom. Of note is the dining room that features of a wide coved entrance. To the east of the passage is a communicating sitting room and kitchen. The center passage terminates on what possibly was the rear porch. This porch, however, was enclosed and improved through the addition of an bathroom and pantry/mud room. The house also maintains its original hardwood floors throughout.

SM-614, Bennett House
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain-of-Title

(All deeds are located at the Land Records Office, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber EWA 986, Folio 160

Grantee: Robert E. and Lisa D. Bower

Grantor: Margaret M. Taylor, personal representative for Edward Bennett

Date: July 7, 1995

Notes: The deed notes that Edward Bennett died on March 23, 1995. Margaret M. Taylor handled his estate (Estate # 8233).

Reference: Liber CBG 18, Folio 208

Grantee: Edward J. and Beulah Bennett

Grantor: Mary R. Fowler

Date: April 2, 1946

Notes: The deed notes that the property contains approximately 1/2 acre.

Reference: Liber CBG 18, Folio 207

Grantee: Mary R. Fowler

Grantor: Edward J. and Beulah Bennett

Date: April 2, 1946

Reference: Liber CBG 12, Folio 268

Grantee: Edward J. Bennett

Grantor: St. Mary's Board of Education

Date: August 31, 1940

Reference: Liber EBA 1, Folio 243

Grantee: Board of School Commissioners

Grantor: Peter Hopewell, Lillian Hopewell, and Philip Trossbach

Date: January 10, 1900

Notes: The deed lists the property as containing 1/2 acre and was "part of that tract of land purchased by the said Peter Hopewell of Mrs. A. S. Benville." A search through the grantor/grantee index could not find the book and page number for this transaction.

MARYS CITY

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

76° 22' 30"
38° 07' 30"

380000m E LEXINGTON PARK 12 MI.
DAMERON 20 MI.

381

382

383 20'

384

30m N
WYNE 1.7 MI

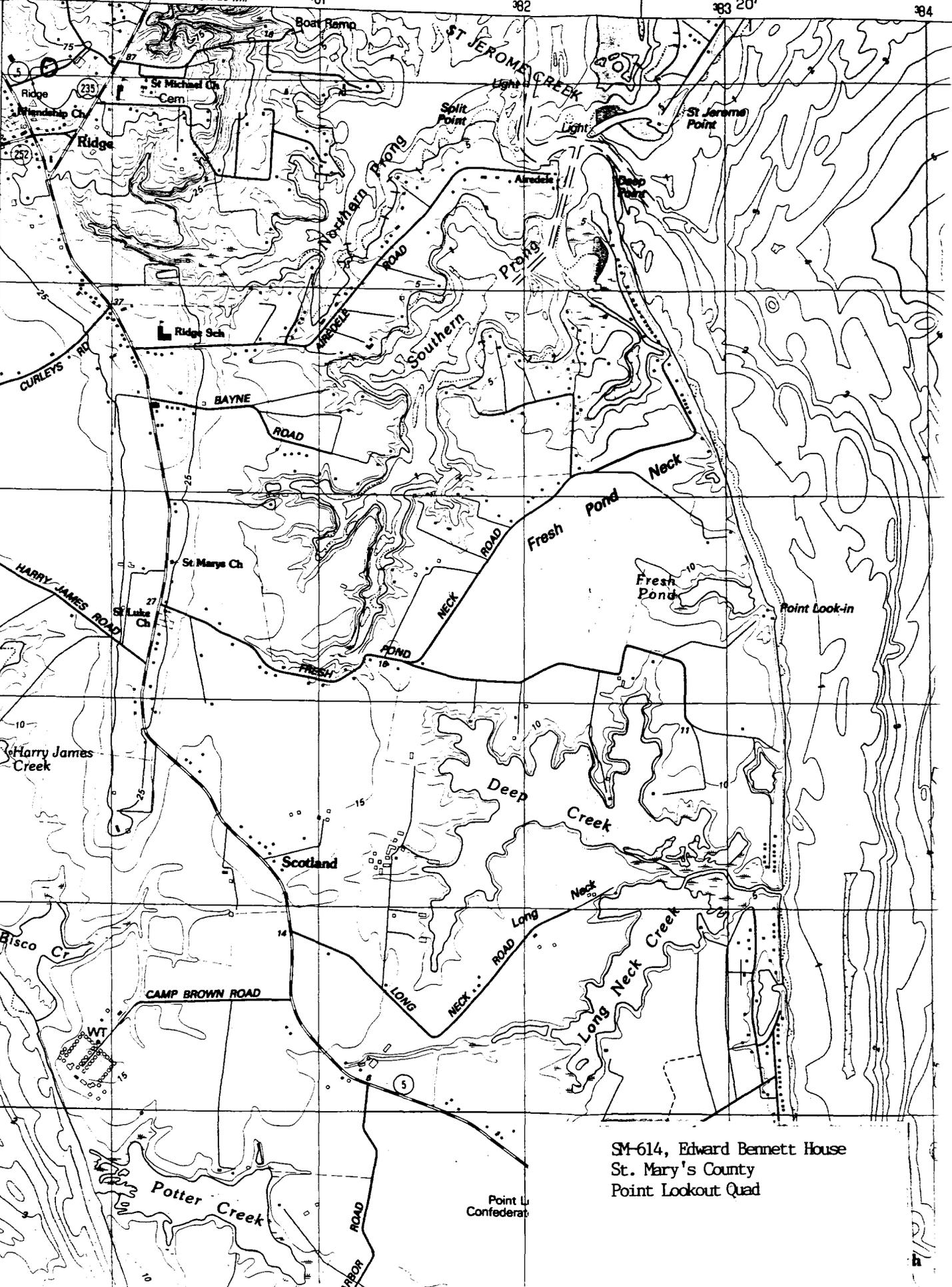
4219

4218

4217

4216

4215



SM-614, Edward Bennett House
St. Mary's County
Point Lookout Quad

Point Lookout
Confederate

b



EM-614

Edward Bennett House

St. Mary's County

Kirk Ranzetta

April /98

Ad SHPO

Sold observations

1 of 2



SM-614

Edward Bennett House

St. Mary's County

Kirk Ranette

April/98

Ms! SHPO

N+E elevations

2 of 2