

Capsule Summary  
SM-712  
Camp E. W. Brown  
Scotland  
Public

1936

Located on the site of Smithwood (SM-23), a plantation long owned by members of the Smith family, Camp Ernest W. Brown was established in 1936 by the Metropolitan Police Clubs of Washington D.C. Named in memory of Ernest W. Brown (then superintendent of the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington D.C.), the camp has served as a vital rural hiatus for the young children of Washington DC. According to local historian Regina Hammett, the camp's fifty cabins can "accommodate 350 campers at a time. The usual stay is two weeks, and during a typical summer, 1,400 to 1,700 vacation" there.

Surrounded by stands of tall pines, the layout of the camp consists of two open squares of bunkhouses that flank a central dirt road. At the head of the road are a number of camp administration buildings, a shelter for a fire truck, a dining hall, playing fields, basketball courts, and a swimming pool. Over the years the buildings of the camp have been repaired, altered, and replaced but the camp still conveys the feeling of its original appearance and function.



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## 7. Description

Inventory No. SM-712

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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.

Situated on the banks of the Potomac River and shaded by stands of tall pines is Camp E. W. Brown. Approached via Camp Brown Road, this summer recreational facility features two squares of cabins that straddle the main camp road. Administration buildings, a water tower, dining rooms, basketball courts, and playing fields in varying degrees of repair virtually surround the cabins. The topography of the camp is flat and relatively low and is prone to insect infestation. The property is bounded by wooded and agricultural tracts to the east, Biscoe Creek to the north, the Potomac River to the west, and Potter Creek to the south.

Established in 1936, Camp Ernest W. Brown is a mid-twentieth century example of a boys camp. Approximately fifty, one-story frame bunk houses form two open squares that flank the main camp road. The inexpensive construction of these buildings echo their seasonal use. The cabins rest on concrete pier foundations and have walls sheathed with board-and-batten siding and/or plywood. The gable roofs are covered with asphalt shingle roofs. A majority of these small bunkhouses are fenestrated by screened openings protected by wood shutters that can be propped open and usually feature a single door entry. Some of these houses have been altered, repaired, and replaced since the 1930s, but their construction and overall arrangement closely follow original appearances.

At the southwestern terminus of the camp road lie a number of camp administration buildings, a shelter for a fire truck, a pool, playing fields, basketball courts, and a dining hall. A water tower is situated to the east of the cabins along the camp road. Overall the camp deserves further documentation as a relatively intact example of a 1930s boys camp.

# 8. Significance

Inventory No. SM-712

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 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 checked="" 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 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:

**Specific dates**

1936

**Architect/Builder**

**Construction dates**

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.)

Located on the site of Smithwood (SM-23), a plantation long owned by members of the Smith family, Camp Ernest W. Brown was established in 1936 by the Metropolitan Police Clubs of Washington D.C. Named in memory of Ernest W. Brown (then superintendent of the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington D.C.), the camp has served as a vital rural hiatus for the young children of Washington DC. According to local historian Regina Hammett, the camp's fifty cabins can "accommodate 350 campers at a time. The usual stay is two weeks, and during a typical summer, 1,400 to 1,700 vacation" there.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. SM-712

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Hammett, Regina Combs. History of St. Mary's County, Maryland: 1634-1990. Ridge: Self-published, 1994.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property 168 acres  
Acreage of historical setting 168 acres  
Quadrangle name Point Lookout Quadrangle scale: 1:24 000

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Camp E. W. Brown is bounded by wooded and agricultural tracts to the east, Biscoe Creek to the north, the Potomac River to the west, and Potter Creek to the south. The property is noted as consisting of two parcels of approximately 168 acres as noted in the St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JMM 9, Folio 500.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

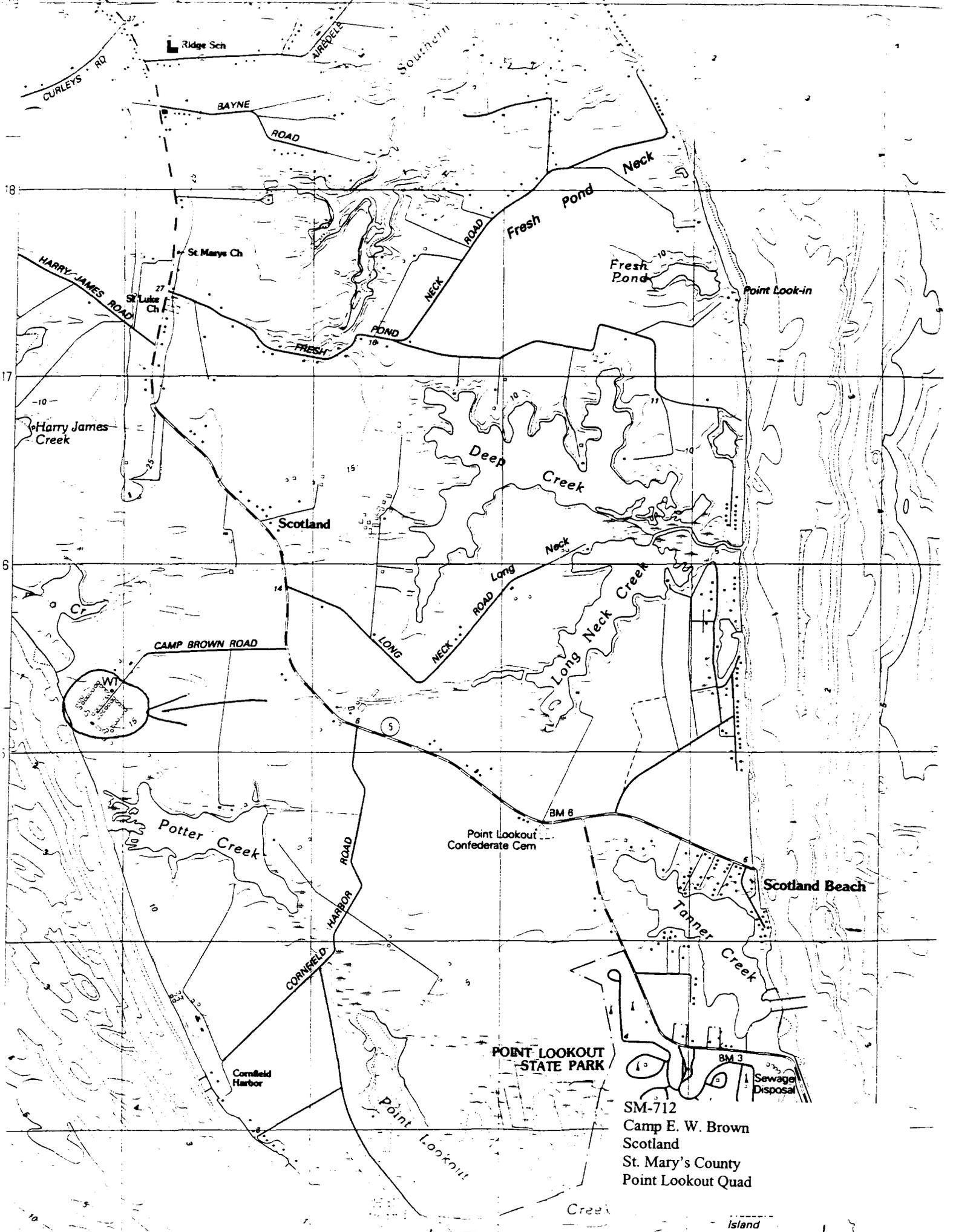
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name/title	Kirk E. Ranzetta, Historic Sites Surveyor		
organization	St. Mary's County Department of Planning and Zoning	date	7-20-00
street & number	22740 Washington Street	telephone	301-475-4662
city or town	Leonardtown	state	Md

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



SM-712  
Camp E. W. Brown  
Scotland  
St. Mary's County  
Point Lookout Quad

Island



SM-712

Camp E.W. Brown

St. Mary's County, Md

Kirk Ranzetta

Nov/99

MS 240

Looking NE

Left