

P.G. #79-47

1877

Site of Marlboro "Colored" School
Valley Lane (north side), Upper Marlboro, Md.
Priv/Unocc/ - /Unexposed

The Marlboro "Colored" Elementary School stood on this site from its construction in 1877 until its demolition in 1982. It was a one-story frame gable-roofed structure, with entrance through the south gable end. Four windows on each side lighted the single room which constituted the larger north section of the building.

The history of the Marlboro "Colored" School is closely associated with that of Union Chapel. Members of the church formed the Colored Free School Society in 1866, and with the Freedmen's Bureau overseeing construction, the first schoolhouse was completed and opened in April 1868. It is not certain what happened to this schoolhouse, but it was replaced within ten years; the second schoolhouse was built on the subject property in 1877, and it was this Marlboro "Colored" Elementary School which operated for over a half-century. In 1935, it was sold as a private residence, and it remained so until the summer of 1982. At this time, it was replaced through block grant funding by a prefabricated house, and the school building was razed. It's site, however, is important in the history of Black education in Prince George's County.

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Site of Marlboro Colored Elementary School

and or common (School #1, District #3)

2. Location

5505
street & number Valley Lane (north side) ☐ not for publication

city, town Marlboro ☐ vicinity of congressional district 4

state Maryland county P.G.

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
☐ district	☐ public	☐ occupied	☐ agriculture	☐ museum
☐ building(s)	☒ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial	☐ park
☐ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☐ educational	☐ private residence
☒ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment	☐ religious
☐ object	☐ in process	☐ yes: restricted	☐ government	☐ scientific
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial	☐ transportation
	☐ not applicable	☐ no	☐ military	☒ otherdemolished

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

name Susie Anna Lanham

street & number Valley Lane telephone no.:

city, town Upper Marlboro state and zip code Md., 20772

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. P. G. Co. Courthouse liber 430

street & number Main Street folio 454

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. P.G. #79-47

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☒ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

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

The Marlboro Colored Elementary School stood on this site from its construction ca. 1877 until it was demolished in the summer of 1982. It was a one-story frame gable-roofed structure, with entrance through the south gable end, typical of the post Civil War schools built for black students. Four windows on each side lighted the single room which constituted the larger north section of the building; a small room on the south (probably added later) formed the entryway, and was lighted by one window on each side.

8. Significance

Survey No. P.G. #79-47

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400-1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500-1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600-1699	☐ architecture	☒ education	☐ military	☐ social/ humanitarian
☐ 1700-1799	☐ art	☐ engineering	☐ music	☐ theater
☒ 1800-1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ transportation
☐ 1900-	☐ communications	☐ industry	☐ politics/government	☒ other (specify) black history
		☐ invention		

Specific dates 1877 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.

Soon after the Civil War ended, a Methodist Church for the Black community of Upper Marlboro was built on the southwest edge of the town. Within a year, this community had formed the Colored Free School Society, with the three original trustees of the church as its officers, and began to raise money to pay for the establishment of a school. Through 1866 and 1867 the Society negotiated with the "Baltimore Association for the Moral and Educational Improvement of the Colored People", which was to supply lumber for the building; and letters were written back and forth to the Freedmen's Bureau, which oversaw the building of the schools. (1)

The first school house was built on part of the church property, was finished by March 1868, and opened on the 1st of April 1868 with a White teacher, a Mr. J. A. Johnson from Philadelphia; provided by the Freedmen's Bureau. (2)

It is uncertain what happened to this first school, but in 1877 Frederick Sasscer, the same prominent Marlboro resident who had deeded land to the "Colored" Methodist Church 12 years earlier, deeded one more acre adjoining the church property on the northwest to the Board of School Commissioners of P.G. County in October 1877. (3) Richard B. B. Chew, a member of the Board, was authorized to arrange for the building of the schoolhouse, and by the end of the year, Cook was paid \$297.56 for its construction. This was the building which came to be known as the Marlboro Colored Elementary School. (R.B.B. Chew was reimbursed by the Board for furnishing the school and for erecting two small outbuildings). (4)

The elementary school operated for over a half-century. In 1921, when a new high school was built for the white students of Marlboro, the old white high school (a four-room frame structure) was moved onto the colored elementary school lot to be used as a high school for blacks. This served as such until the mid-1930's, when Frederick Douglass

(Cont'd)

High School was built (for Black students) just south of the Courthouse in Upper Marlboro. At that time (1935) the high school was removed and the old elementary school was sold by the Board of Education as a private residence; it remained so until the summer of 1982. Because of its deteriorated condition, block grant funding provided for its replacement: a small prefabricated home was built next to the old school, and as soon as it was habitable, the old school was destroyed. Its site, however, is important in the history of Black education in P.G. County.

- (1.) Freedmen's Bureau Papers 1866 - 67
- (2.) Freedmen's Bureau Papers 1868
- (3.) P. G. Co. Deed HB #12:600
- (4.) Journal of Board of School Commissioners 1877 - 1880

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. P.G.79-47

P.G. Co. Deed 430-454; HB #12:600
Freedmen's Bureau Papers 1866-69
Journals of Board of School Commissioners 1877 - 1880
Interviews with members of Valley Lane Community

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl

organization History Division M-NCPPC

date March 1983

street & number 4811 Riverdale Road

telephone 779-2011

city or town Riverdale

state Maryland 20737

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
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