

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



955

1. Name of Property

historic name Whitesville School  
other names/site number Sherman District Junior High School, Whitesville Junior High School, Whitesville Elementary School, BO-0740

2. Location

street & number 37949 Coal River Road  not for publication  
city or town Whitesville  vicinity  
state West Virginia code WV county Boone code 005 zip code 25209

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  
 nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
Susan M. Pierce, DSHPO 10/22/13  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet  
 determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall Date of Action 12-18-13

Whitesville School  
Name of Property

Boone County, WV  
County and State

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property		
		Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1		buildings
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district			sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site			structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		1	objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions	Current Functions
EDUCATION/ school	EDUCATION/ school

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification	Materials
MODERN MOVEMENT/ Art Deco	foundation CONCRETE
	walls BRICK
	roof OTHER: Hot Tar/ Gravel
	other CERAMIC TILE

Narrative Description  
See Continuation Sheets

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B.** removed from its original location.
- C.** birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance:**

See Continuation sheets

**Levels of Significance** (local, state, national)

Local

**Areas of Significance**

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1931

**Significant Dates**

1931

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Wysong, Bengston, and Jones, Architects  
Hill Brothers, Builder

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Whitesville School  
Name of Property

Boone County, WV  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of Property 5.94 acres Whitesville Quad

**UTM References**

1	<u>17</u>	<u>452946</u>	<u>4203943</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**  
See Continuation Sheets

**Boundary Justification**  
See Continuation Sheets

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Cheryl Nichols (Whitesville Elementary School), Bethany Castle, and Erin Riebe (WV SHPO)  
organization Whitesville Elementary School date 5/21/2013  
street & number 37949 Coal River Road telephone 304-558-0240 (WVSHPO)  
city or town Whitesville state WV zip code 25209

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

- Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.
- CD with electronic images if digital photographs.

**Floorplans** for individual listings

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Property Owner**

name Boone County Board of Education  
street & number 69 Avenue B telephone 304-369-3131  
city or town Madison state WV zip code 25209

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### LOCATION and SETTING

Whitesville School,<sup>1</sup> constructed in 1931, is located within the town limits of Whitesville, West Virginia; a small rural mining town in southwestern Boone County approximately 40 miles from Charleston, the state capitol. The school faces northwest and is nestled on a level lot between the Big Coal River, West Virginia Route 3 (Coal River Road), and Elk Run.

A small lawn with little vegetation and concrete and stone sidewalks separates the school from roadway while a low stone wall lines the rear of the property along the river. A paved parking lot is situated adjacent to the school on the southeast elevation between the school and the Whitesville Police Department. A playground with modern play equipment, two small picnic shelters, a small shed, and basketball courts is located to the rear of the school. Much of the nearly six-acre lot is occupied by the baseball field to the north of the school. The field includes concrete stands and dugout and a paved track in the outfield.

### *Description*

The Whitesville School is an Art Deco, two-story, blonde brick building. With exception of any decorative brickwork and the stretcher bonding of the smaller pilasters, brick is laid in a type of common bond with seven rows of stretchers to one row of alternating headers and stretchers. The school sits on a raised basement that is covered in similar-color stucco and separated from the upper stories by a stone belt course. The main section of the building is rectangular in shape with a flat roof. The original two-story gymnasium/auditorium extends from the center of the rear elevation. A small, one-story addition has been constructed on the northern end of the building at the basement level. It is constructed of concrete block and has a flat roof. A stucco-covered elevator shaft also extends from this end of the building and rises from the basement to the second story. With the exception of a few on the rear extension of the school, all of the building's original metal casement windows and metal doors have been replaced.

The main elevation of the school is symmetrical and emphasizes vertical parallel lines. It features two entrance areas that extend from the main elevation and upward through the roofline – a small-scale version of the massive, boxy towers popular on the large Art Deco-style buildings. At the corner of each “tower” is a large stepped pilaster, each topped with low-relief, deco-style brickwork. The entrances are located between the basement and first-story levels between the two pilasters. Each entryway is recessed and has modern double doors and a transom window and is flanked by smooth, fluted limestone. The smooth limestone is carried upward to the stone sill and dentils of the two second-story windows. Two sets of colorful tiles are situated in this area and are flanked by limestone reeding. The tiles feature academic symbols of Greek icons including the academic lamp of knowledge, pen and quill, an open book, and a shield. The uppermost mosaic includes a banner that reads “1931,” indicating the construction year of the

<sup>1</sup> Although the school was officially named Sherman District Junior High School when it was constructed, it has always been commonly referred to simply as Whitesville School.

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school (see photo 3). The original name of the school, "Sherman District Junior High School," is displayed in metal lettering between the recessed entrance and the tiles. The area above the two windows, between the pilasters, displays chevron-style brickwork.

The remainder of the main elevation includes five separate sections; three centrally located between the towers and one section to the outside of each entrance tower. Each section includes a set of three windows, symmetrically arranged, on each the basement, first and second stories. The windows on the first and second stories are separated by a low-relief, brick pilaster each topped with a decorative stone keystone displaying a shield and scrolls. Stone window sills under the first and second story windows on the main elevation are accented with dentils while lintels are formed by a row of soldier bricks (a row of bricks laid vertically with the long, narrow side exposed). The area between the first and second story windows, between the pilasters, is accented with parallel lines formed by stack bonding with projecting rows of headers, while the cornice area is accented with deco-style square tiles and brickwork. The three central sections are separated by two larger pilasters that extend through the roofline, similar to those on the towers.

The side (southeast) elevation of the main building continues the Art Deco theme with vertical bands and parallel lines, displaying similar pilasters and a central "tower." The only openings on this elevation, however, are within the tower area and include a recessed entrance at the basement level and a set of two windows on each the first and second story, of which one on each level has been enclosed with an air conditioning unit. The basement entrance originally was two window openings similar to the others. The cornice area of this side elevation displays the same elements as that on the main elevation. The opposite side elevation is similar, but includes two additions; a central elevator shaft and a small one-story, concrete block addition at the basement level.

The rear of the main block is devoid of any Art Deco characteristics and simply includes symmetrical fenestration. The only architectural feature carried to the rear of the main building is the stone belt course separating the basement from the upper stories. A two-story gymnasium/auditorium projects from the center of this elevation. While most of the gymnasium windows have been enclosed and covered with stucco, a handful of the original metal casement windows exist on this section of the building. A large brick chimney stack is situated on the rear of this section extending at least one story higher than the roofline.

The interior of the school includes a library, school office, kitchen, cafeteria, large gymnasium with a stage, seventeen classrooms, two shower rooms, nine bathrooms and two dressing rooms. Stucco walls are lined with metal lockers and dropped ceilings to allow for a fire suppression system. Several original loudspeaker boxes remain in the classrooms and still function as do some chalkboards (see photo 7).

The two main entrances enter into a small foyer with original terrazzo tiles and a small staircase up that leads to the first floor hall. Double stacked metal lockers line the hallway on both sides with a teacher's lounge, school offices, and five classrooms (see photo 6). The classroom entrances are recessed with wooden doors and transoms above. Across the hall from the main entrance is another set of steps to access the gymnasium

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floor and bleachers. The large gymnasium has a basketball court, original concrete bleachers with wooden bench seats, acoustic filling material and a stage (see photos 8 and 9). The stage has two dressing rooms, one on each side. Two metal doors lead into the staircase up to the second floor or down to the basement.

The second floor has six classrooms, a library, computer lab, and bathrooms. Two trophy cases donated as class gifts line the hallway along with metal lockers between classrooms. The basement of the Whitesville School is used for the Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten classrooms, storage rooms, locker rooms and the newly remodeled cafeteria. Opposite the cafeteria is the mechanical room which still houses the original coal furnace. Although it is not operational, it is preserved. The locker rooms have tiled floors and shower areas and lockers.

The property also includes the Whitesville Junior High School Athletic Field (now known as Johnston Field). While an athletic field existed earlier, major improvements were made in 1961 when construction began on the concrete bleachers and dugout. The stands include seven rows of bleacher seats with steps. Some areas of the concrete are in deteriorated condition. The athletic field is surrounded by a chain link fence. A chain link backstop is situated behind home plate and bears a sign reading Johnston Field. A small stone monument with bronze plaque (see photo 10) is located behind the backstop and is dedicated to former Whitesville Mayor, Harry L. Johnston.

A stone wall, approximately four feet high and twelve inches wide, lines the property along the Big Coal River and extends from the parking area to the athletic field. The wall may have been constructed by Andy Averson, Sr., a local Italian immigrant. Since the construction date of the wall is unknown, it is considered a noncontributing structure. The athletic field, with its features, is considered a noncontributing structure since much of it was constructed outside of the period of significance and it is not associated with the area of significance. Other features of the property including the shed and playground equipment have not been counted since they are considered minor resources and do not contribute to the significance of the property.

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### STATEMENT of SIGNIFICANCE

Whitesville School is locally significant and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: Architecture as a significant example of the Art Deco style in the Boone County and southern West Virginia coalfield area. The period of significance is 1931, the date of construction.

#### *History*

Whitesville is located in the Sherman magisterial district of eastern Boone County near the Raleigh County line. It is situated approximately 40 miles from each Charleston, Beckley, and Madison, the county seats of Kanawha, Raleigh, and Boone Counties. Formerly known as Jarrols Valley and later, Prichard City, Whitesville was incorporated in 1935 and named for B.W. White, an early settler. At the time, Whitesville was a railroad and trading center for nearby mining towns along the Coal River valley in Boone County. With 12 different seams of workable coal in the county, there were 14 major coal companies operating in this area during the 1920s.

In the early twentieth century, area students attended Whitesville School, a small wood-frame building perched on a hilltop and under the jurisdiction of the Sherman District Board of Education. In December 1929, however, the building and all of its contents were destroyed by fire. Though the school was insured, the payment was not enough. To finance a new school building, the school board held a special bond election. The people's vote authorized the Sherman District Board of Education to issue \$125,000 in bonds to construct a new elementary and junior high school in Whitesville.<sup>2</sup>

Bids for construction of the new school, designed by the Charleston architectural firm of Wysong and Bengston, were opened on June 17, 1930.<sup>3</sup> A contemporary news account described the plans for the new school:

The building is to be fireproof and modern in every detail. It will be two stories and a basement, consisting of 26 class rooms, a large auditorium and gymnasium combined, manual training department, laboratories and rest rooms.<sup>4</sup>

The building contractors, Hill Brothers of Oak Hill in Fayette County, began construction in September 1930 on a parcel that not only provided room for the two-story school building, but also an athletic field, ample space for a playground, and easy access for parents and school buses. While the school was under construction students attended classes at nearby churches, in a hotel basement, in lodge halls, and even in

<sup>2</sup> "History of Boone County Schools: Sherman High School," <http://www.shermanhigh.com/BCSHistory/Sherman.htm> (accessed 9 September 2013). And, "District Bond Vote is Set for March 8," *Charleston Daily Mail*, 26 February 1930.

<sup>3</sup> "To Open Bids June 17," *Charleston Gazette*, 6 June 1930.

<sup>4</sup> "Whitesville," *Charleston Daily Mail*, 28 September 1930.



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apartment units located over businesses. Construction was complete in April 1931, in plenty of time for the beginning of the 1931-32 school year.<sup>5</sup>

When the new school opened, its enrollment included 517 students.<sup>6</sup> The school, then known as Sherman District Junior High School, alleviated some overcrowding at the new Sherman District High School in Seth by accepting ninth graders in addition to all lower grades. Like many industrial areas in the early decades of the twentieth century, Whitesville was home to many immigrants whose children attended the school and learned the English language in addition to the regular curricula.

The school continued to serve kindergarten through ninth grade until 1993 when seventh, eighth, and ninth graders were transferred to a new junior high school that was constructed in Seth. Currently, the school also includes a pre-kindergarten class. Over the years it has served not only the students, but also the community for events, meetings, and other performances. At one point, it also served as the community bomb shelter.

### *Criterion C: Architecture*

Whitesville School is an excellent example of the Art Deco style of architecture in West Virginia's southern coal field counties. In the United States, the style became popular in the late 1920s following a 1925 exhibition in Paris, the *Exposition des Arts Decoratifs*, which served as a showcase of "new inspiration and real originality." Advocates of the style saw it as a rejection of historical precedents. With an emphasis on the future, it was a style of decoration that was also applied to furniture, jewelry, and clothing.<sup>7</sup>

In architecture, some elements of the Art Deco style include parallel lines, reeding and/or fluting around windows and doors, vertical bands of windows, inspiring murals, polychromatic effects, and low-relief geometric designs usually in the form of zigzags, chevrons, or floral motifs. Metal doors included stylized panels or grilles and windows were often metal casements. Large-scale Art Deco buildings usually featured large central towers while smaller commercial and institutional buildings were box-like with flat roofs. Generally rectangular in massing, the style was hard-edged and angular and thus never became a popular domestic architectural style.<sup>8</sup>

Whitesville School displays many of these Art Deco characteristics. Though box-like in plan, similar to smaller-scale Art Deco buildings, the school's two main entrances project outward and upward, similar to the boxy towers of the larger-scale buildings of the style. The school's three levels of window openings are symmetrically placed with low-relief pilasters separating each column of windows, adhering to the style's emphasis on parallel lines and vertical bands of windows. While the polychromatic effect is somewhat

<sup>5</sup> "Visiting Clubs are Entertained at Tea," *Charleston Daily Mail*, 23 April 1931.

<sup>6</sup> "History of Boone County Schools..."

<sup>7</sup> John C. Poppeliers, et. al. *What Style is it? A Guide to American Architecture* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1983), p. 88-89.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen C. Gordon, "How to Complete the Ohio Historic Inventory," (Columbus, Oh.: Ohio Historical Society, 1992), p. 112.

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subdued, it is evident in the difference in colors between the blonde brick, which makes up most of the building, and the smooth limestone sills, door surrounds, and coping. Other color is apparent in the square tile design centered above each vertical band of windows and the colorful ceramic murals above the entrances. These murals welcome visitors with Roman and Greek symbols of academia such as books, the lamp of knowledge, a shield, and a quill (see photo 3). Reeding and fluting is on display at the entrances and other low-relief decoration, including chevrons and other geometric shapes, are displayed near the roofline.

In the early 1990s an architectural survey of West Virginia's southern coalfields, the Coal Heritage Survey, documented 76 school buildings, seven of which were located in Boone County. The Whitesville School was recommended for listing in the National Register for its significant Art Deco architectural style. Overall, the survey identified very few resources constructed in this style. The vast majority of the resources documented were vernacular in that they did not display high-style architecture, but rather reflected ordinary buildings that were adapted to local needs. In many communities of West Virginia's southern coal fields, buildings displaying any architectural style popular at the time of construction were the community's primary buildings; usually civic buildings and schools. Some company stores/clubhouses and mine foreman houses also displayed various popular architectural styles.<sup>9</sup>

Other than the Whitesville School, the Coal Heritage Survey identified the Coca Cola bottling plant in Pineville (non-extant) as an Art Deco style building as well as some buildings in Williamson's commercial district. However, these buildings are better characterized as the Art Moderne style of architecture as they display rounded bays and the emphasis is on horizontal lines, rather than vertical. In addition, the survey identified a handful of school buildings displaying elements of the Art Deco style including Varney School, Gary District High School, Trap High School (Surveyor), Aracoma High School (Logan), and Pineville Junior High School. While they each have elements of the style, none of them are high style like the Whitesville School. The primary features of each that identify it as Art Deco are the low-relief stepped pilasters separating sections of windows and the boxy tower-like entrance sections that reach through the roofline. None of the documented schools include the various other features of the style as displayed on the Whitesville school, such as the reeding and fluting, inspirational tiles, or decorative brickwork between the stories and at the cornice. The blonde brick of the Whitesville School further sets it apart from the others which were all constructed of standard red brick. A number of other schools documented in the survey displayed elements of the Neoclassical or Collegiate Gothic style of architecture. Art Deco was a rejection of these historical precedents.

### *Summary*

Although the school has undergone some alterations, the largest of which is the replacement of windows, it still retains the primary character defining features of the Art Deco architectural style, including the vertical

<sup>9</sup> West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, "Coal Heritage Survey: Southern West Virginia Reconnaissance Survey of Sites Related to the History of Coal Mining," Charleston, W.Va., 1991; and, National Park Service, "A Coal Heritage Survey: A Study of Coal Mining and Related Resources in Southern West Virginia," (Philadelphia: US Department of the Interior), 1993.

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bands of windows, entrance “towers,” and low-relief deco-style brickwork. Further, the small addition and elevator shaft do not overshadow the school or take away from the overall box-like, rectangular shape of the main block of the building. The Whitesville School retains excellent integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association. It stands out as an excellent and significant example of the Art Deco style of architecture in West Virginia’s southern coal field counties.

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### Works cited and referenced

Arvon, Manual and Georgia Arvon Price. Interview by Cheryl Nichols. May 2013.

Casto, Mitch. "Boone County West Virginia History: A Time Line and Source book." 1994.

"District Bond Vote is set for March 8." *Charleston Daily Mail*. 26 February 1930.

"Fire Destroys Whitesville Junior High School Building on Tuesday Night." *Madison Recorder*. 6 December 1929.

Gordon, Stephen C. "How to Complete the Ohio Historic Inventory," Columbus, Oh.: Ohio Historical Society, 1992.

"History of Boone County Schools: Sherman High School" <http://www.shermanhigh.com/BCSHistory/Sherman.htm>. Accessed 9 September 2013.

National Park Service. "A Coal Heritage Survey: A Study of Coal Mining and Related Resources in Southern West Virginia." Philadelphia: US Department of the Interior, 1993.

"To Open Bids June 17." *Charleston Gazette*. 6 June 1930.

Poppeliers, John C. et. al. *What Style is it? A Guide to American Architecture*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1983.

"Visiting Clubs are Entertained at Tea." *Charleston Daily Mail*. 23 April 1931.

West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office. "Coal Heritage Survey: Southern West Virginia Reconnaissance Survey of Sites Related to the History of Coal Mining." Charleston, W.Va., 1991.

"Whitesville." *Charleston Daily Mail*. 28 September 1930.

"Whitesville Club to Elect Officers." *Charleston Daily Mail*. 10 April 1931.

"Whitesville Grid Improvements." *Beckley Post-Herald*. 19 October 1961.

"Whitesville School Days." <http://www.picturetrail.com/sfx/album/view/16201610>. Accessed 11 September 2013.

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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The National Register boundary for the Whitesville School includes the entire acreage within current parcel 56 (map number 1 of the Whitesville District, Boone County, West Virginia).

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the entire parcel that has been historically associated with the school since its construction, with exception of a small rectangular lot (approximately 40'x90') that is now a separate parcel (Map 1, Parcel 57). Although this small parcel was originally associated with the school property, a building was constructed on it in 1947, outside the period of significance for the school. It has thus been excluded from the boundary.

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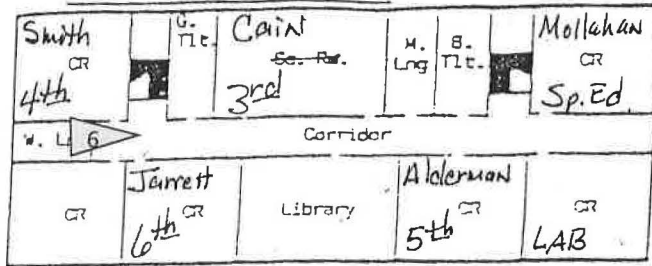
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Photographer: WVSHPO

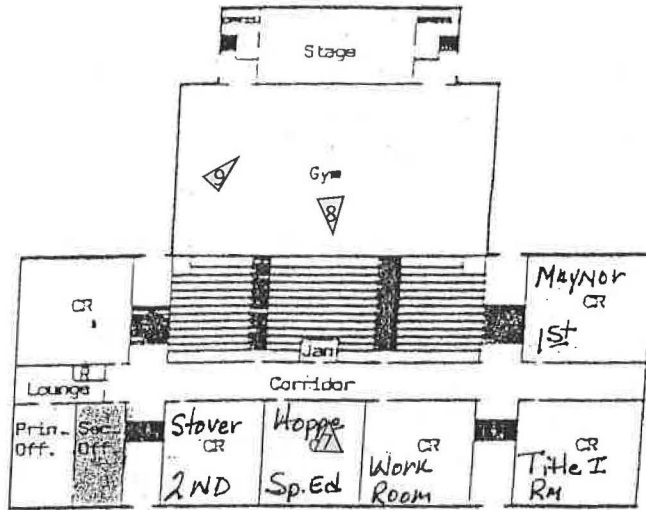
Date: March 7, 2013

- Photo 1 of 10 Exterior overview of the front of Whitesville School. Camera is facing north.
- Photo 2 of 10 Exterior close-up of the front entrance of Whitesville School. Camera is facing southeast.
- Photo 3 of 10 Exterior detail of the stone and ceramic work above the entrance. Camera is facing east.
- Photo 4 of 10 Exterior rear of Whitesville School, looking at the one story addition to the east and the gymnasium to the west. Camera is facing south.
- Photo 5 of 10 View of the stone wall which surrounds the rear boundary of the school and National Register boundary. Camera is facing northeast.
- Photo 6 of 10 Interior view of the hallway with double stacked lockers and recessed classroom entrances. Camera is facing south.
- Photo 7 of 10 Interior view of an original loudspeaker box in a classroom. Camera is facing northeast.
- Photo 8 of 10 Interior view of the gymnasium bleachers. Camera is facing west.
- Photo 9 of 10 Interior view of the gymnasium and stage. Camera is facing northeast.
- Photo 10 of 10 Exterior view of the Johnston Field dedication memorial with the athletic field and fence in background. Camera is facing north.

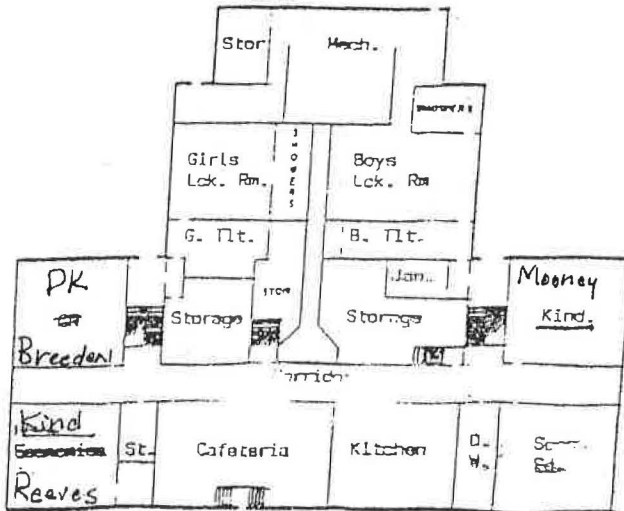
Whitesville Elementary & Junior



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



(YOU ARE HERE)  
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

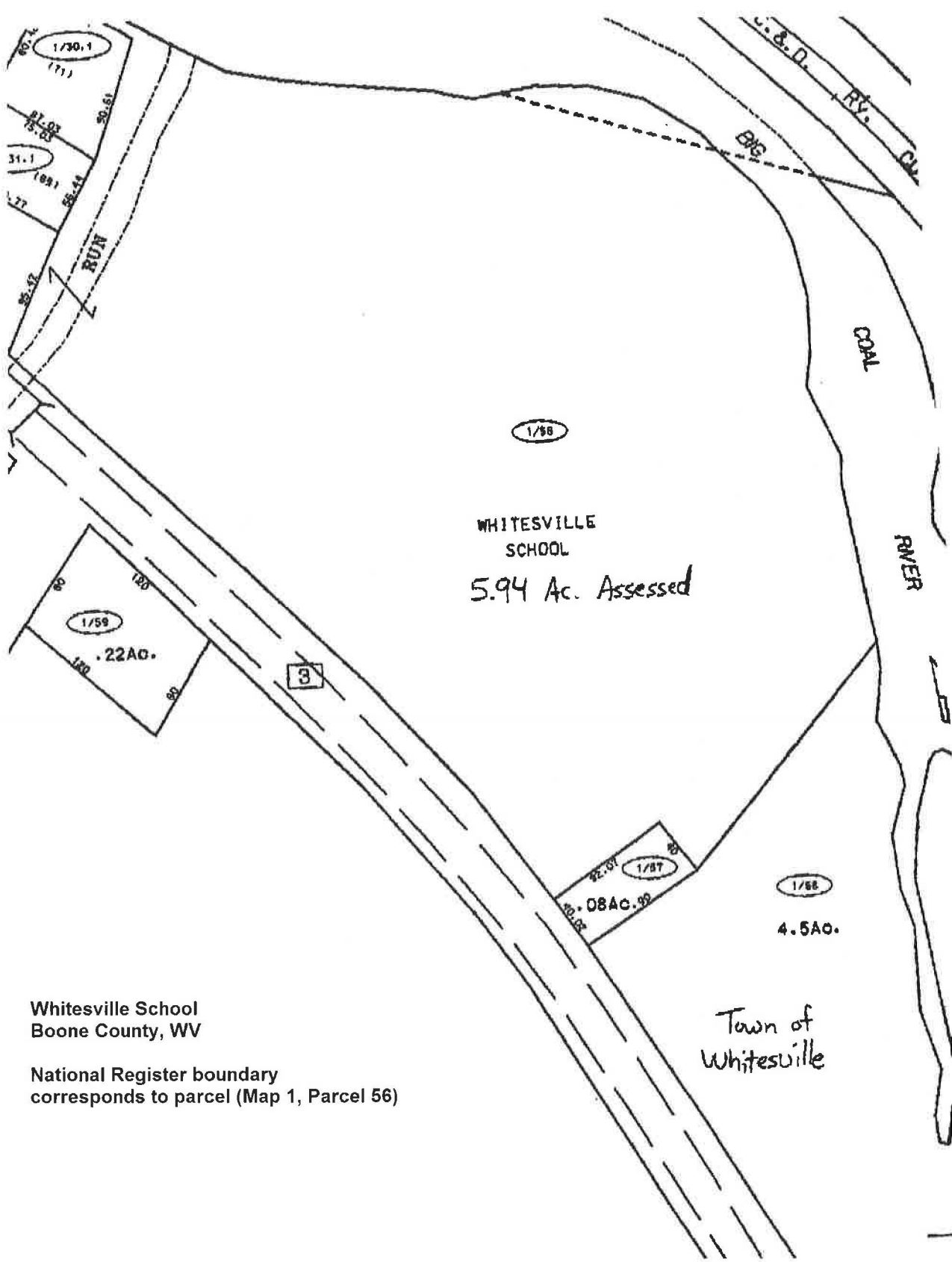


BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

Whitesville School  
Boone County  
West Virginia  
Floor Plan

△ Camera View

WHITESVILLE ELEMENTARY  
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

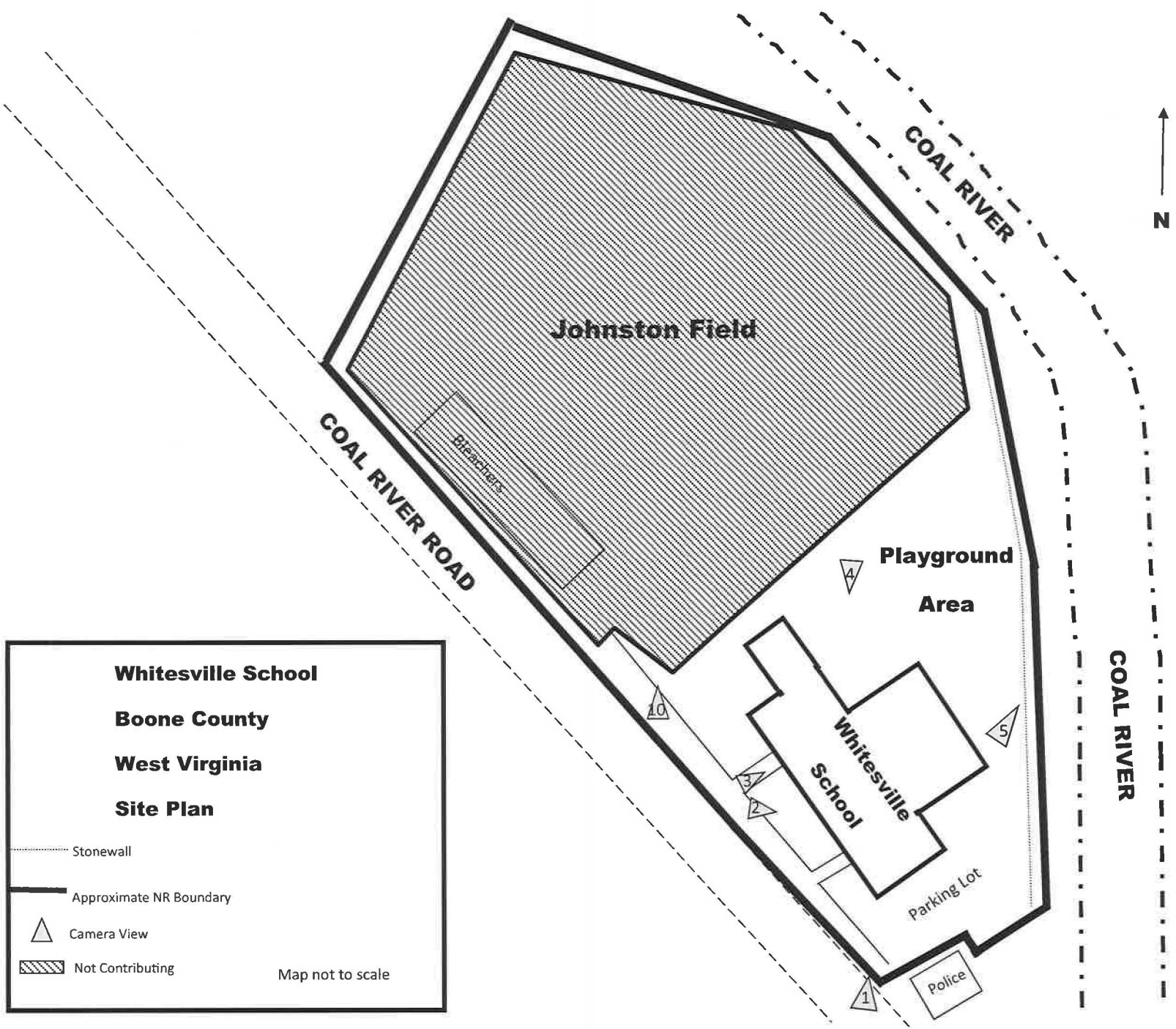


Whitesville School  
Boone County, WV

National Register boundary  
corresponds to parcel (Map 1, Parcel 56)

Town of  
Whitesville



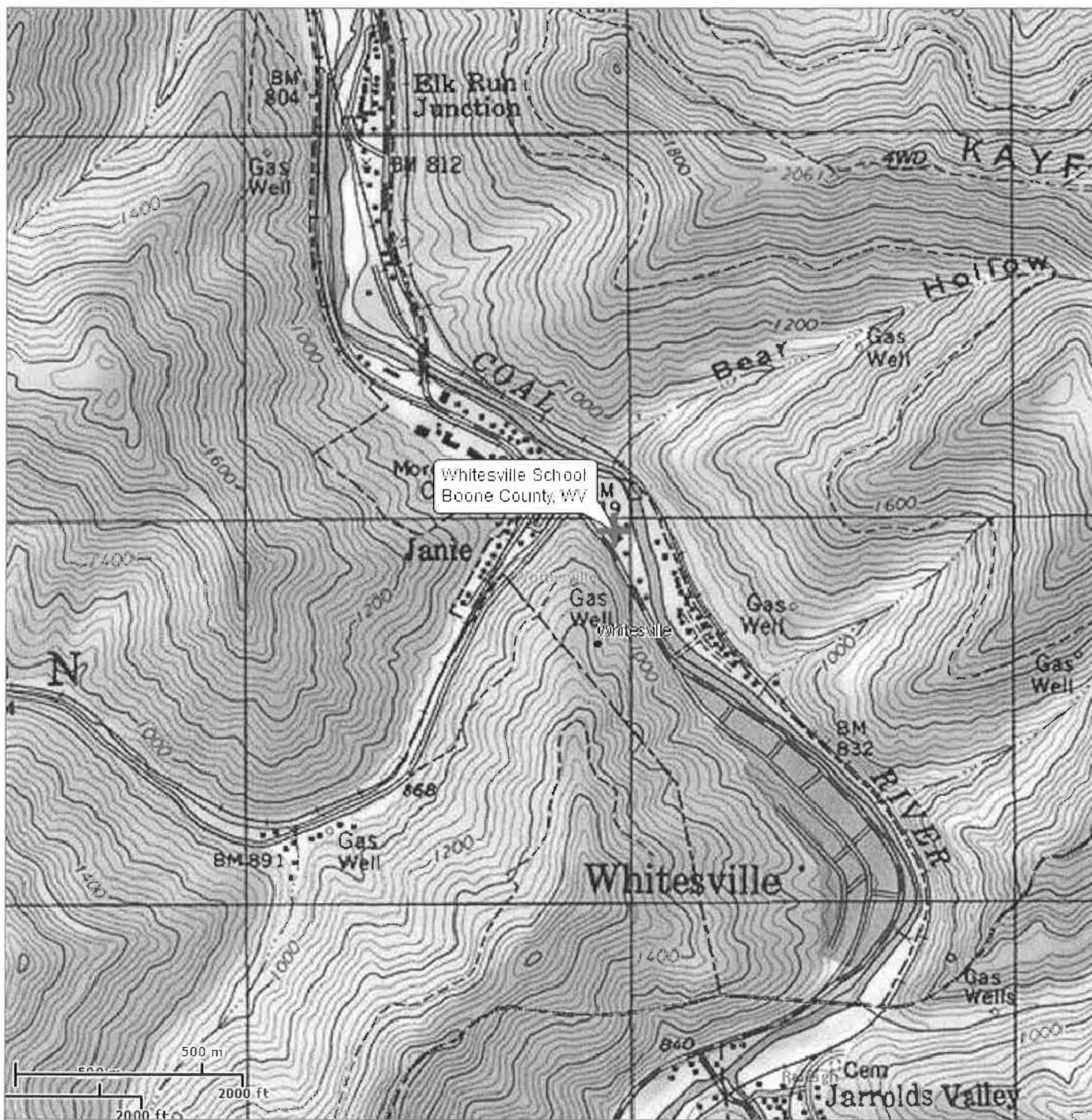


**Whitesville School**  
**Boone County**  
**West Virginia**  
**Site Plan**

..... Stonewall  
 ——— Approximate NR Boundary  
 ▲ Camera View  
 ▨ Not Contributing

Map not to scale

# Whitesville School





This map is created by West Virginia GIS Technical Center for West Virginia SHPO GIS Map Viewer.



**Coordinate System:** WGS 1984 Web Mercator (Auxiliary Sphere)

Map Created on 8/23/2013

**Architectural**

-  Point
-  Area

**National Register**

-  Point
-  Area

**User Notes:**

USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangles: Whitesville

Boone County, WV  
Zone 17

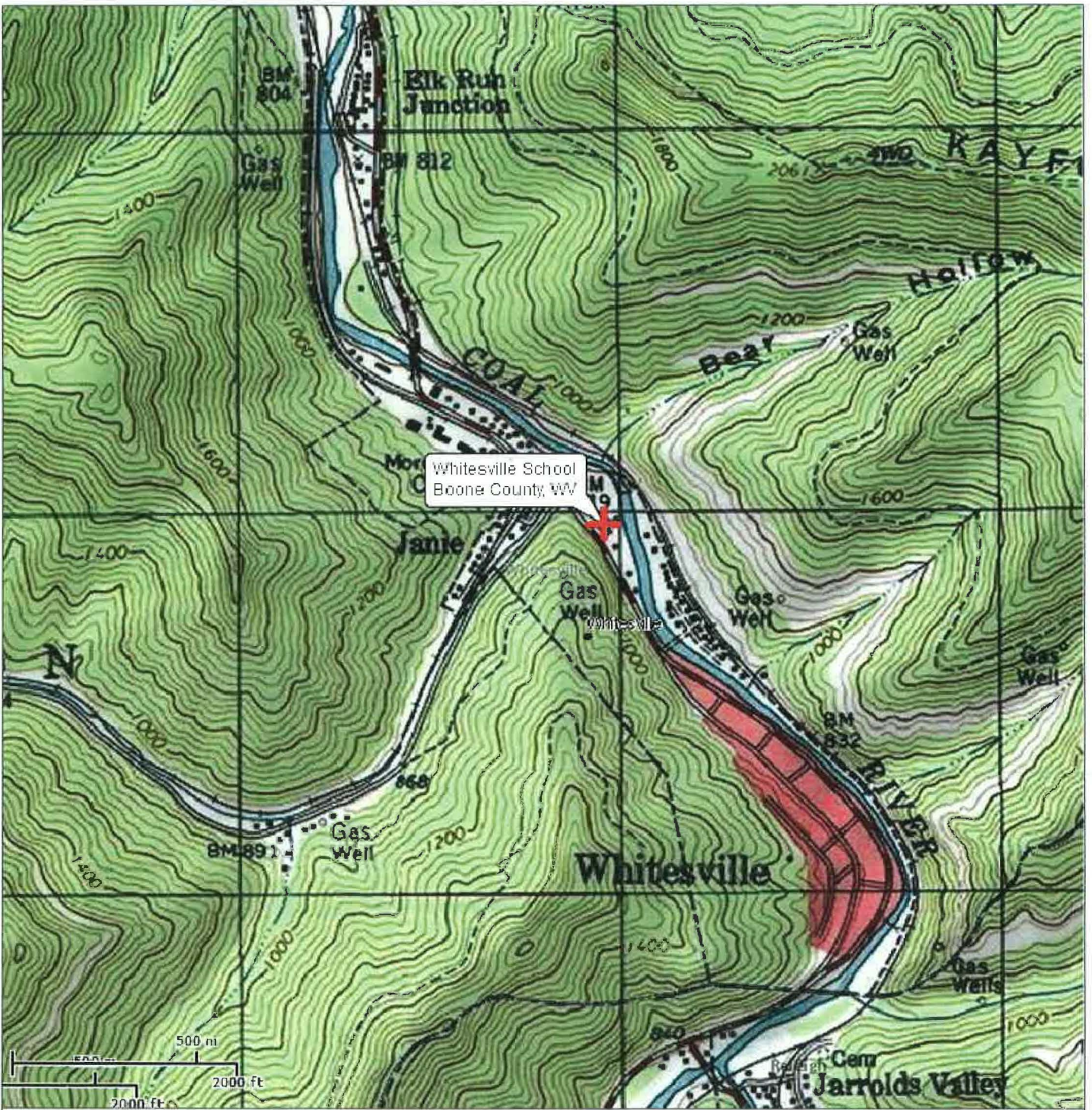
452946 Easting 4203943 Northing

**Disclaimer:**

The West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office Interactive Map is designed to provide professional consultants, state/federal agency employees and the public with a means to make informed decisions with regards to the cultural resource location.



# Whitesville School





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SHERMAN DISTRICT  
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL









Keyboard Basics

**Escape** Cancels command or series of commands

**Ctrl** Cancels command or series of commands

**Tab** Moves cursor to next tab stop

**Home Row** Leads to beginning of line

**Space Bar** Adds space or new line

**Enter/Return** Starts new paragraph or new line

**Shift** Leads to beginning or end of line

**Backspace** Deletes character to left of cursor

**Cursor Keys** Moves cursor up, down, left, or right

**Print Screen** Prints current screen

**Windows Key** Opens Start menu

**Command Key** Executes command

**Function Keys** Perform various functions

Do your  
BEST  
Be quiet  
Engage your  
mind  
Self control  
Try







THIS FIELD IS DEDICATED  
TO THE MEMORY OF  
**HARRY LOUIS JOHNSON**  
OF  
MARCH 27, 1911  
TO SEPTEMBER 10, 1988  
BY THE  
MEMBERS OF THE  
MEMORIAL SOCIETY OF  
MARTINSVILLE  
1989

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Whitesville School  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: WEST VIRGINIA, Boone

DATE RECEIVED: 11/01/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/25/13  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/10/13 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/18/13  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13000955

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 12.18.13 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

September 4, 2013

Susan M. Pierce  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
The Culture Center  
1900 Kanawha Blvd., E.  
Charleston, WV 25305-0300

Dear Ms. Pierce,

Memories of youth and family never escape our minds. My parents were immigrants from Greece. Dad arrived in America in 1911 at the age of 14 seeking freedom, employment, and a new life. After working for several years he opened a small meat business where he butchered cattle and sold it to the miners' families. After 17 years in America he returned to his Greece and married his promised bride. He and my mother returned to America in 1929.

My twin and I were born in October 1929 during the Great Depression. In the fall of 1935 we were enrolled at Sherman District Junior High School in Whitesville with numerous other immigrant children. We spoke very little English because our parents spoke Greek at home and therefore it was a challenge communicating with our teachers. However, with the encouragement of our parents and my dad speaking broken English at home, we learned the English language as well as Greek.

In 1948, we graduated from high school. In 1951, my brother and I joined the Navy during the Korean Conflict. Our family wanted us to give back to our country; we served four years. In 1955 we enrolled in college and earned a degree in Business Management and Education. Thereafter, I began my chosen profession in education. After teaching for two years I was appointed as principal, then Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent of Boone County Schools. I retired in 1995. I say this not to boast but to remember the humble journey, which began in the halls and classrooms of Whitesville Junior High School. The school was a melting pot that touched the lives of all the immigrant families. Past students will testify that they are grateful for passing through the halls of Whitesville School. My son later became the principal of that school as well as my sister.

I am forever grateful that my dad had the courage to leave his parents to come to America at the age of 14 seeking refuge in our great country, America. He wanted God Bless America on his gravestone; we did that for him.

Whitesville School may not have significant value to everyone, but it means so much to the hundreds who entered and were educated there. The building is a beacon of learning in our community.

Sincerely,



Manuel P. Arvon

To Whom It May Concern,

The enclosed Proclamation was presented to and adopted by the Sylvester Town Council, on its regular meeting on September, 3, 2013, by unanimous vote.



# **MAYORAL PROCLAMATION**

**by Manuel P. Arvon**

**September 3, 2013**

Whereas, the Sherman District Junior High School (currently known as Whitesville School) was constructed in the Town of Whitesville, West Virginia, after the local school was destroyed by fire in 1929; and

Whereas, the facility was constructed during the Great Depression in the southern West Virginia coal fields to restore the educational opportunities to the thousands of immigrants, including Greeks, Hungarians, Poles, Czechoslovakians, Yugoslavians, Turks, Italians, Armenians, Russians, Germans, Jews and African Americans that came to Whitesville to work in the coal mines and brought their families with them; and

Whereas, the building served as a place of learning for the children of immigrants and gave them the opportunity to learn the English language and the laws of America; and

Whereas, during World War II the facility was used as a bomb shelter for the citizens in the area; and

Whereas, the architecture of the Whitesville School has a unique design and aesthetic beauty that captures the vision of an era; and

Whereas, the Town of Whitesville has been the commercial center of Big Coal River area where the coal mines employed as many as 10,000 miners; and

Whereas, the school facility and grounds are utilized year round and continue to serve as the focal point of the area, including, most recently, as a control center in the aftermath of the Upper Big Branch Mine explosion, which killed 29 members of the community; now

**THEREFORE**, let it be known, because of the building's rich heritage, it certainly meets the criteria of being listed on the Historical Register. Not only will such status enhance the building's future, the building's inclusion will also enhance the Register with its story that epitomizes America during an era of immigration and coal mining growth.



# Boone County Schools

69 AVENUE B • MADISON, WEST VIRGINIA 25130  
304-369-3131  
FAX 304-369-6789

## BOARD of EDUCATION

MARK E. SUMPTER  
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ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

JEFF W. HUFFMAN  
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

## Boone County Board of Education Proclamation

September 11, 2013

WHEREAS, Whitesville Elementary School, (originally known as Sherman District Junior High School,) is locally significant and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, the facility has played a significant role in the education of local students and the culture of the community; and

WHEREAS, the school was built in 1931 and is a significant representative of the Art Deco style of architecture, unique to Boone County; and

WHEREAS, the facility represents the history and proud traditions of Boone County; historically serving immigrant children from across the world, including Greek, Italian, Russian, English, French, Scottish, German, Polish, Hungarian, Spanish, Portuguese, Irish, Middle Eastern and Asian during the early part of the twentieth century as the coal industry flourished; and

WHEREAS, the facility has served and continues to serve the community year round; examples include: serving as a bomb shelter during World War II, housing an emergency hub for Red Cross flood relief, providing a control center for mine rescue teams during a recent mine disaster, providing summer housing for community service groups, as well as hosting summer academic enrichment programs for children.

THEREFORE, let it be known that because of its historical significance and continued role in the Whitesville and Big Coal River area community, the Boone County Board of Education supports the inclusion of this facility in the National Register of Historic Places; and be it further

RESOLVED, that recognition of this facility in the National Register of Historic Buildings will enhance the culture of the community and assure continued recognition of the rich history of the Big Coal River area; and be it further

RESOLVED, that including this facility in the National Register of Historic Buildings will provide people across the country access to a glimpse of the lives of a community that exemplifies the American era of immigration and the growth of the mining industry in West Virginia.

**“High Expectations...Every Student, Every Chance, Every Day”**



**The Culture Center**  
1900 Kanawha Blvd., E.  
Charleston, WV 25305-0300

**Bandall Reid-Smith, Commissioner**

Phone 304.558.0220 • www.wvculture.org  
Fax 304.558.2779 • TDD 304.558.3562

EEO/AA Employer

October 23, 2013

Ms. Carol Shull  
Keeper, National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service 2280  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" (eye) Street, NW  
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

For your review, we are submitting the following National Register of Historic Places registration form:

*Whitesville School*  
*Boone County, West Virginia*

The enclosed nomination has been approved by the West Virginia Archives and History Commission in accordance with 36 CFR, Part 60. Two items of support are included. Should you have any questions please contact National Register Coordinator, Erin Riebe, at 304.558.0240.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Pierce  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

enclosure