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Second Ward Negro Elementary School

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NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

NATIONAL
REGISTER

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

=====

historic name: Second Ward Negro Elementary School

other name/site number: Second Ward Annex

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2. Location

=====

street & number: White Avenue at Posten Av. not for publication: N/A

city/town: Morgantown vicinity: N/A

state: WV county: Monongalia code: 061 zip code: 26505

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3. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property: public-local

Category of Property: building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. ___ See continuation sheet

William C. Laman

6/2/92

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria. ___ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Andy Lopez *7/28/92*

___ 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 Keeper Date
of Action

=====

6. Function or Use

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Historic: Education_____ Sub: School_____

Current: Education_____ Sub: School_____

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

Art Deco_____

Other Description: _____

Materials: foundation sandstone_ roof asphalt__

walls brick_____ other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

The Second Ward Negro Elementary School looks much the same as it did when the building was constructed in 1938. The one-story building with basement is T-shaped in plan, with the entrance side forming the stem of the T and the two classrooms forming the cross-bar. The building is symmetrical in design, and the most prominent architectural style is Art Deco, although it is a very simple version of Art Deco.

The exterior wall fabric consists of running-bond pressed red brick. The roof is flat and is made of asphalt with tar and pebbles. A red

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : G

Areas of Significance: Education
Ethnic Heritage - Black

Period(s) of Significance: 1938-1954

Significant Dates : 1939 1954

Years of Alterations: 1940

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Tucker and Silling - architect
John W. Russell - builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X See continuation sheet.

The Second Ward Negro Elementary School is significant under criteria A, events which have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of American history, because it represents African-American history in Monongalia County, West Virginia from 1938 to 1954, the years during which it functioned as a school for African-Americans and as a community center for the black population of Morgantown. The building also has some architectural significance as the work of the firm of Tucker and Silling, one of West Virginia's most prominent architectural firms. The school maintained its significance to the African-American community

9. Major Bibliographical References

— See continuation sheet.

Brown, Mary Virginia. "A History of the Negroes of Monongalia County." Master's thesis, West Virginia University, 1930.

Core, Earl L. The Monongalia Story: A Bicentennial History. vol. 5, Sophistication. Parsons, W.Va.: McClain Printing Co., 1984.

Hastings, Lynn. "Monongalia County Schools and Local History," vols. 8, 10. Morgantown, W.Va.: Board of Education of Monongalia County, 1960. West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University Libraries, Morgantown, W.Va.

Kerin, Barbara. "A School to Remember." Morgantown, W.Va.: Second Ward Elementary School, May 1988.

Monongalia County Deed Book 214. Monongalia County Courthouse, Morgantown, W.Va.

Peyton, Gladys, "PTA Minutes of Second Ward (Negro) Elementary School 1939-1954." Second Ward Elementary School, Morgantown, W.Va.

Strayer, George D. A Report of a Survey of Public Education in the State of West Virginia. Charleston, W.Va.: Jarrett Printing Co., 1945.

Waddell, Richard Lee. "First Lady to Dedicate New Schools Here." Dominion News (Morgantown, W.Va.), 23 May 1940.

Waddell, Richard Lee. "Mrs. FDR Asks Students to Help America." Dominion News, 24 May 1940.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- _ 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 Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- _ State historic preservation office

- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University (West Virginia University's West Virginia and Regional History Collection)
- Other -- Specify Repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 1.9 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	17	590200	4386 ⁰⁴⁰ 200	B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: ___ See continuation sheet.

The boundary of the property begins at a point on the western side of White Avenue and runs to the end of the concrete wall, being a corner to Rotunna property. The said property extends along two lines S. 44 degrees 15 minutes E 222.85 feet, S. 52 degrees 5 minutes E. 153.89 feet, then leaves White Avenue S. 43 degrees 3 minutes W. 158.2 feet to a point in the eastern line of Posten Avenue, which extends N. 47 degrees 3 minutes W. 396.31 feet; then N. 50 degrees 33 minutes E. 156.94 feet to the beginning of the boundary.

Boundary Justification: ___ See continuation sheet.

The boundaries of the property can be justified by the legally recorded boundaries mentioned above and by both man-made and natural topographic features. Two of the boundaries are White and Posten avenues. White Avenue runs east-west in front of the building. Posten Avenue runs north-south along the west side of the building and then east-west behind 1/2 of the south side of the property. The property's natural boundary is a line of trees and a small wooded area to the southeast and east of the building.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: _Teresa Statler, student, and Barbara J. Howe, Associate Professor

Organization _Dept. of History, West Virginia Date __13 April 1992__
University

Street & Number _202 Woodburn Hall_____ Telephone 304-293-2421__

City or Town __Morgantown_____ State WV_ ZIP _26506__

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brick chimney is located at the center of the roof. The building's foundation is made of sandstone, and sandstone is used for the cornice and watertable of the building, as well as for the window sills.

The three-bay main facade consists of two narrow 8-lite windows with stone sills flanking a recessed double door with 6-lite transom. The doors each have 4 lites. On the rear, there are 8 windows, 6 of which are original and have 25 lites each. Each of the original windows has a section of 6 lites in the center of rows 2 and 3 that opens as awning windows. The west facade has no windows on the northern half of the building, which is where the classroom is, and three windows (two 6-lite windows flanking a 15-lite window) on the southern half. On the east facade, in addition to a 9-lite window on the northern half of the facade, there are three windows on the southern half that are identical to those opposite on the west facade.

The interior consists of a hallway leading from the front door and another hallway perpendicular to it, which leads to the two adjoining classrooms. The classrooms are separated by a folding wooden partition door so that they can be opened into one large room if needed. Behind the west classroom, there is a cloakroom that runs the length of the classroom with entrances at either end of the classroom.

Originally, wooden steps led to the entrance of the building. In 1940, concrete steps replaced the wooden steps, and a hand railing was also installed. The only other alterations to the annex have been the replacement of two windows at the rear of the building and the addition of fireproof doors to the interior.

The building is still in good condition, although it is starting to show signs of weathering. There are cracks in the mortar along the exterior walls, but the biggest problem is that the cracks in the foundation have caused water to leak into the basement, making that space useless for storage.

The school grounds retain a high degree of their original integrity. The annex stands on a small hill, and a grassy lawn is located in the front of the building, on both sides of the steps, and on the east side of the building. The playground equipment consists of a sliding-board, seesaws, monkey bars, and two swing-sets, which were purchased during

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the 1940s and 1950s. In 1940, a wall was built around the front of the school-yard, and that remains today.

Due to school consolidation in Monongalia County, the annex will no longer be used as a school after 1993. The Morgantown Landmarks Commission and Monongalia County Board of Education are interested in having the building used as a community center when the school closes.

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until the Brown v. Board of Education decision of 1954 rule that segregated school systems were unconstitutional; at that time, West Virginia promptly pursued a relatively peaceful path toward school integration.

White Avenue, where this school is located, had become a predominantly African-American street by 1938 because the Edwards family lived there. James A. Edwards was a successful African-American businessman who operated his own garbage collection service for the city of Morgantown until the city government assumed that responsibility in the 1920s. Edwards also used his home as a school for African-American children in the neighborhood. Edwards was not the only person to provide a home school, as there were ten schools for African-Americans in the county in 1933-34, five of which were in homes. When the county board of education decided to build a new school for African-American children, White Avenue was an ideal location.

The board of education built the Second Ward Negro Elementary School because it received a grant of \$1,034,284.31 from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1938 for a total of twenty-one schools; these consisted of new school buildings or additions to existing buildings. The firm of Tucker and Silling was the architect for all of these projects. Beginning in 1939, schools constructed through this grant and an accompanying bond issue included Suncrest Elementary, Suncrest-Flatts-Evansdale Junior High, Second Ward Negro Elementary, Osage Junior High and Elementary, Morgantown High School auditorium, Clay-Battelle High School, Cassville Junior High School, Laurel Point Elementary, National Elementary, elementary schools for black and white children at Everettsville, and additions to Second Ward Elementary (for white children) and Seneca Elementary schools.

Second Ward Negro Elementary School opened for the 1939-40 school year. In 1939, there were 470 African-American students in Monongalia County, and approximately 30 of those attended Second Ward. The African-American schools had the same curriculum as the white schools. The county was supposed to provide the African-American schools with instructors for music, art, and physical education, but these instructors rarely attended the African-American schools. Nor did the African-American schools receive as many facilities or as much funding as did the white schools. When the white schools received new

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textbooks, the African-American students received those previously used by the white students.

To help the students at Second Ward Negro Elementary School, the school's Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) raised money for textbooks and playground equipment. The PTA also raised enough money to help pay for the concrete steps which replaced the wooden steps in front of the building and to have a wall built around the playground to keep the children from running into the street to retrieve balls. By bringing together parents and teachers, the PTA and, therefore, the school provided an important meeting place for the African-American community.

The WPA grant was an important event for Monongalia County because it brought jobs as well as new schools to the area. In 1940, a formal ceremony was held in the Morgantown High School auditorium in honor of the new schools. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who had taken an active interest in the problems of Monongalia County and neighboring Preston County since 1933, came to dedicate the schools.

In 1955, with integration, Second Ward Negro Elementary School closed. It reopened in the mid-1960s as the county board of education's Instructional Materials Center. The building currently houses two third-grade classes from Second Ward Elementary School and, therefore, is known as Second Ward Annex.

Of the twenty-one WPA projects, three of the new schools, Second Ward Negro Elementary, one of the Everettsville schools, and a school in Osage, served African-American children. The school in Osage was practically destroyed by a dynamite blast on November 10, 1958. The school in Everettsville has been converted to a senior citizens center and serves as a commodities distribution point for the area. Thus, Second Ward Negro Elementary is the only one of the three left serving its original purpose as a school building. In addition, the African-American high school, Monongalia High School in Westover was constructed beginning in 1936; Eleanor Roosevelt dedicated that school in 1938. It became Westover Junior High School in 1955, following integration, and was renovated at that time. By 1954, there were only five schools for blacks in the county, including the three WPA schools and Monongalia High School.

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Architectural significance is not identified as an important criteria here because this is essentially a simple utilitarian building, albeit one designed by a prominent and prolific firm. Based in Charleston, West Virginia, Tucker and Silling, and their later associates, are usually identified in the Morgantown area with much more significant landmarks such as West Virginia's Boreman Hall South (on the National Register) and Mineral Industries Building and the University Hospital/Basic Sciences complex.