



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name San Domingo School
other names Sharptown Colored School, Prince Hall Masons Unity Lodge No. 73 , WI-676

2. Location

street & number 11526 Old School Road not for publication
city or town Sharptown vicinity
state Maryland code MD county Wicomico code 045 zip code 21861

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

[Signature] 1-3-07
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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 this 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 Pattish Andrews Date of Action 2/16/2007

San Domingo School, WI-676
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

SOCIAL/meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th and EARLY 20th CENTURY REVIVALS

foundation BRICK
walls METAL, WOOD

roof ASPHALT
other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

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Description Summary:

The San Domingo School, built in 1919, is located at 11526 Old School Road in the African-American community of San Domingo, Wicomico County, Maryland. The two-story rectangular frame structure faces northeast with the ridge of the medium-pitched hip roof oriented on a northwest/southeast axis. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles, and a brick chimney stack rises off center through the middle of the building. The two-story, three-bay frame school, measuring 54'5" by 34'2", is supported on a low, stretcher bond brick foundation, and the exterior is sheathed with aluminum siding over the original weatherboards. Framing for groups of multiple windows, characteristic of Rosenwald schools of the period, remains intact beneath the aluminum siding and is expressed on the interior. The interior remains essentially intact, with a full complement of early twentieth-century woodwork and schoolroom fixtures including beaded board walls, five-panel doors and their hardware, globe shaped chandeliers, folding doors, and a stage on the second floor.

General Description:

The San Domingo School, also known as the Sharptown Colored School, or at a later date, the Prince Hall Masons Unity Lodge No. 73 and/or the Sharptown Recreation & Lodge Center, was erected in the summer and fall of 1919. Standing on the west side of Old School Road, the school is centrally located in the African-American community of San Domingo. The two-story rectangular frame structure is supported on a low stretcher bond brick foundation, and the exterior is sheathed with a layer of aluminum siding over horizontal weatherboarding. The medium pitched hip roof, pierced by the off-center brick stack, is covered with asphalt shingles.

The northeast (main) elevation is currently defined by a center doorway protected by a shed roofed hood, and a tripartite set of six-over-six sash windows directly above the door light the second story hall. The wall surfaces to each side are covered with aluminum siding that hides paired sets of six-over-six sash windows. The window openings, minus their sash, are evident from the interior. The base of the roof is finished with a plain boxed cornice.

The northwest end elevation is a basically blind wall with a single door opening on the second floor to access an exterior metal fire escape. The aluminum siding covers a bank of three nine-over-nine sash windows on the second floor, and it is unknown at this time if there are former windows located on the first floor.

The southeast (rear) wall has been modified as well when the aluminum siding was applied. Banks of covered over windows exist on this elevation also. The first floor is currently

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defined by a center door of modern date, and it is flanked by modern single-pane sash windows. Three single pane sash fill the window openings on the second story, whereas the window openings in between have been blocked.

The southeast end of the building has banks of nine-over-nine sized window openings partially covered by the later siding.

The interior of the school building has retained a high percentage of its 1919 finishes, although some of the beaded board walls and ceiling have been covered with modern paneling and ceiling tiles. The first floor is defined by a transverse entrance and stair hall, and a series of rooms open off of it. Fixed in the northeast corner of the hall is the original closed stringer staircase, which features a square paneled newel post. The columnar newel post is marked by flat panels, a molded base and a small cornice enriched with a modest egg-and-dart molding. Rectangular balusters support a molded handrail that rises to a mid-level landing. The wall surface below the stringer is finished with beaded tongue-and-groove boards. The walls are covered with narrow beaded board sheathing with a modest chair rail molding dividing the wainscoting from the upper wall surface. Five-panel doors with original 1919 hardware open into the adjacent rooms, originally used as classrooms but more recently as lodge rooms.

The lodge rooms have been sheathed with modern sheet paneling and ceiling tiles, but the original beaded board finishes remain intact underneath. The new use of the building as a cultural and community center calls for the removal of the later paneling and ceiling tiles and restoring the spaces to their 1919 appearance. The wall between the two lodge rooms is marked by a wide door opening fitted with long paneled folding doors. The east end of the south lodge room retains a built in closet originally used for the storage of materials, coats, and lunches. The narrow rectangular space is accessed through five-panel doors, and the interior of the closet is covered with narrow tongue-and-groove beaded boards. The paired window opening has been blocked up and the sash have been removed.

The other first floor rooms, located along the north side of the floor plan, include a kitchen and bathrooms. The kitchen was the original principal's office, but it was converted to its later use when the Board of Education transferred ownership of the property in 1961.

The second floor is divided in a similar fashion to the first floor with two large classrooms that open off the second floor hallway. Beaded board walls continue throughout the second floor, and five-panel doors open into the two classrooms. The northern of the two classrooms retains the original stage, which has a center raised platform and five-panel doors to each side that open into small dressing rooms. The interiors of each closet are finished with

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beaded board walls. The auditorium room features into original early twentieth-century globe lights.

The other classroom to the south has not been altered. It retains its original beaded board walls and ceiling. In the east end of the room is a long closet accessed by five-panel doors at each end. There is a built-in series of corner shelves in the south end of the closet. The two classrooms are separated by a large door opening fitted with two sets of folding doors defined by six rectangular panels. The room is also lighted by original globe chandeliers.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.
- B** Property 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

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- 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

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Area of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Education
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

1919-1956

Significant Dates

1919

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

African-American

Architect/Builder

W. D. Gravenor & Brother, builders

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on files (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 Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Maryland Historical Trust

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Summary Statement of Significance:

The San Domingo School is significant under Criterion A for its association with the education of African-American youths in rural Wicomico County during the early-to-mid twentieth century. The San Domingo School, also known as the Sharptown Colored School, was one of seven facilities in Wicomico County financed in part by the fund established by Sears, Roebuck & Co. president Julius Rosenwald.¹ The building derives additional significance under Criterion C for its architecture, representing characteristics of the first wave of Rosenwald schools, administered through the Tuskegee Institute between 1913 and 1920.

The San Domingo School stands out as the best preserved of the four surviving Rosenwald schools in Wicomico County. The other Rosenwald Schools--located in Quantico, Delmar and Wetipquin--are much more modest than the San Domingo School in size and finish, and one, the Quantico School, is in deteriorating condition. Built in 1919, the two-story hip roofed building retains a superior degree of integrity with a very high percentage of its original fabric surviving intact. The multi-windowed exterior elevations remain largely unaltered as well, although the window openings have been mostly covered by aluminum siding and many of the sash have been removed.

The construction of the San Domingo School in the Sharptown Election District marked a sea change in educational facilities for African-American youths, who had remained in small single story, one-room plan schools during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when more substantial facilities were being erected for white children throughout Wicomico County. The influence of the Rosenwald Fund's standards for schools is clearly demonstrated in the much larger structure and quality finishes that improved the educational experience for black youths in the Sharptown Election District.

The period of significance, 1919-1956, encompasses the period between the construction of the school and a date fifty years in the past. The building remained in educational use until 1961.

Historic Context

The following historic context is excerpted from Sherri Marsh, "Rosenwald Schools of Anne Arundel County, Maryland" National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2003.

¹ Hoffschwelle, Mary S. *Preserving Rosenwald Schools*, A National Trust Publication, 2003, pp. 3-4.

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In the years following the American Civil War Maryland was one of the 17 southern states that erected legal barriers segregating African Americans from whites in public places. The constitutionality of this spate of legislation, known as Jim Crow laws, was upheld by the United States Supreme Court in 1895 in the landmark *Plessy vs. Ferguson* decision. In its ruling, the Supreme Court found that providing “separate but equal” facilities for the races did not violate Constitutional protections of the fourteenth amendment. In practice, while facilities and services provided for African Americans in southern and some northern states were separate, they were rarely equal.² The disparity in educational opportunities afforded to blacks in the Jim Crow era poignantly illustrates this point.

The importance of the Rosenwald School building program to African American education in the early 20th century can not be overstated. It was arguably the most important advancement until school desegregation following the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1954 reversal of its position on the Constitutionality of segregation in *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka*. Between 1917 and 1932, 5357 schools for African American children were built in 15 states in the rural south using funds provided by the Julius Rosenwald Fund.³ 292 Rosenwald Schools were constructed in Maryland.

African American Education in Maryland Prior to Desegregation

Prior to 1865 the state of Maryland public education was limited for white children and non-existent for African American children. White families who could afford to do so relied on private schools, tutors, religious institutions or private academies to educate their children.⁴ Private efforts to educate free blacks did occur, most often through the auspices of churches or fraternal organizations. Initiatives to educate blacks, however, were contrary to the general sentiment of the larger population that believed educating African-Americans would pose a threat to white hegemony. To prevent that end, Maryland was among a number of southern states enacting laws prohibiting the teaching of slaves to read or write.⁵

In Maryland 1865 marks an important advancement for white public education and an acknowledgement of the right of African Americans to public education. In that year Maryland passed the *Maryland Public School Law* which made white elementary education compulsory and mandated the establishment of one

² James M. McPherson, *The Struggle for Equality: Abolitionists and the Negro in the Civil War and Reconstruction*, Princeton Press, Princeton, NJ (1964).

³ Edwin R. Embree and Julia Waxman. *Investment in People: The Story of the Julius Rosenwald Fund*, Harper and Brothers, New York, New York (1949)

⁴ Donna M. Ware, *Education in Anne Arundel County: An Historic Context*, Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning, Annapolis, Maryland.

⁵ Philip L. Brown, *A Century of “Separate But Equal”: Education in Anne Arundel County*, Vantage Press, New York, New York (1988).

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public high school in each county. State funds were provided to increase the number and improve the condition of existing public schools.

A report on the condition of Maryland's Schools carried out in conjunction with the *Maryland Public School Law* found that Anne Arundel County had 41 white public primary schools with a total enrollment of 1,300 students. This was supplemented by three private schools then in operation which a total enrollment of 85 pupils. The report's overall findings were that Maryland's educational system was substandard. The report did not address black schools.

In theory, the 1865 *Maryland Public School Law* provided for free public education for black children. The practical implications of this seemingly progressive piece of legislation were few as black school construction was linked the amount of tax revenue raised from the black community. Given the general state of poverty in the African American community, the legislature was no doubt aware that the law would do little to improve educational opportunities for African Americans.

Julius Rosenwald and the Rosenwald School Building Program (1917-1932)

Julius Rosenwald was born in 1862 in Springfield, Illinois, across the street from where Abraham Lincoln once lived. The son of a German Jewish immigrant, Rosenwald dropped out of high school at age 17 to apprentice in his uncle's clothing firm. Within five years he had his own business. A turning point came in 1897 when Richard Sears approached him about investing in his new mail-order firm, Sears, Roebuck and Company.

Rosenwald became the company's president in 1909 and under his aegis Sears, Roebuck and Company became a retailing phenomenon. The company provided via mail order everything from clothing and housewares to automobiles and ready-to-assemble houses. Using the personal fortune he amassed through Sears, Roebuck and Company, Rosenwald established himself as one of America's leading philanthropists. By the time he died in 1932, he had dispensed an estimated 63 million dollars.⁶

Julius Rosenwald took interest in a wide range of causes including Jewish charities, healthcare, and museums. The chief recipient of Rosenwald's largess was African American causes, particularly improving educational opportunities for southern blacks. Rosenwald's involvement in African American education was stimulated by Booker T. Washington. He was particularly impressed by Washington's autobiography, *Up From Slavery*, and a subsequent 1911 meeting with Washington brought about Rosenwald's interest in this area.⁷ Between 1913 and 1915, Rosenwald, working with

⁶ Edwin R. Embree and Julia Waxman. *Investment in People: The Story of the Julius Rosenwald Fund*, Harper and Brothers, New York, New York (1949) p. 51

⁷ Ibid.

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Washington through the Tuskegee Institute, personally provided matching funds for elementary school construction.

In 1917 Rosenwald set up a private foundation to expand the school-building program initiated at Tuskegee Institute. The mandate of the Julius Rosenwald Fund was to provide financial and technical assistance to communities and local boards of education to enable the construction of new, state-of-the-art school buildings in 15 states in the rural south. Rosenwald Schools were constructed in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.⁸

The Rosenwald School Building Program is credited with establishing "A viable program of universal education for rural southern blacks".⁹ School attendance rates for southern black children increased from 36 percent in 1900 to 79 percent in 1940, an increase brought about in large part by the School Building Program of the Julius Rosenwald Fund.¹⁰ The number of African American schools aided by the Fund exceeded the total number of black schools existing in southern states at the beginning of the Fund's school building program.¹¹

In 1920 Julius Rosenwald turned over the day to day administration of the School Building Program to S. L. Smith with headquarters in Nashville, Tennessee. Smith, a Tennessee native, held a MA in education. He studied at Harvard and the University of Chicago and also studied schoolhouse planning. Rosenwald, however, continued a high degree of involvement with the program until his death in 1932¹².

Ideally, a Rosenwald school's construction represented a common effort by the given Board of Education and both the white and African-American communities. The state and county always bore most of the cost and had to agree to maintain the new building as a regular part of the public school system. The white community was solicited for financial contributions or gifts of land and supplies. The African-American community made gifts of money, labor and supplies. In terms of percentages, the Rosenwald Fund's contribution toward the total cost of a school was comparatively small. Contributions ranged from a minimum of \$200 for a one-teacher school to \$2,600 for a six-teacher building. While at the high school level, the Fund contributed up to \$6,000 for a six-teacher structure.

⁸ Edwin R. Embree and Julia Waxman. *Investment in People: The Story of the Julius Rosenwald Fund*, Harper and Brothers, New York, New York (1949)

⁹ James D. Anderson *The Education of Blacks in the South: 1860-1935*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill (1988). p. 114.

¹⁰ Susan Salvatore et al, *Racial Desegregation in Public Education in the United States*, Theme study prepared by the National Register, History and Education Program, National Park Service, Washington D.C. (2002) p.36.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Embree and Waxman, (1949) pp. 40-41.

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The Fund however, provided more than money and architectural plans. Rosenwald's reputation and record of accomplishment secured the trust of the African-American community who, knowing their resources would be used directly for the good of their neighborhood, were inspired to give money and labor. The result was a donation of resources that Boards of Education felt compelled to accept. The Rosenwald Fund served not only as a funding source, but also an important mediator between the black community and the generally all-white Boards of Education.¹³

Rosenwald Schools were constructed according to standardized plans provided by the Fund's architectural office in Nashville, Tennessee. Designs ranged from one to twelve classrooms. Many schools also featured industrial rooms for the teaching of "practical" skills. The Fund also provided designs for single-family and dormitory-style teacher's housing, as well as privies. As a student of schoolhouse design and construction, Smith personally designed many of these plans and incorporated the most up-to-date innovations and techniques for educational facilities. Plans were provided free of charge whether or not a proposed school was receiving Rosenwald funding. As a result, more than 15,000 schools, both black and white, were constructed, that in outward appearance seem to be a Rosenwald School, but in reality had no formal relationship with the Rosenwald Fund.¹⁴

Rosenwald Fund designs were simple and efficient and omitted corridors where possible to save on costs and maximize useable space. Buildings were one story in height, both because of cost consciousness and to facilitate evacuation in the event of fire. Buildings were generally sheathed with weatherboards nailed over a diagonal substrate. Permitted exterior color schemes were white trimmed in gray, gray trimmed in white, or nut brown trimmed in white or cream.¹⁵

Since there was seldom electricity available, design and placement maximized natural light. Groupings of tall double-hung sash windows are characteristic of all Rosenwald designs. Buildings were oriented with the points of the compass and the plan designed so that every class room would receive either east or west light. According to S. L. Smith's professor and mentor, F.B. Dresslar:

"in warm weather a southern exposure is more uncomfortable all day long than either east or west exposure and ventilation through windows is more difficult because of the necessity of partially closing the windows with shades ... on dark days a northern light will not command sufficient light for children to do their work safely."¹⁶

¹³ Ibid. p. 51

¹⁴ Thomas W. Hanchett, "The Rosenwald Schools and Black Education in North Carolina", *The North Carolina Historical Review*, LXV, (October 1988).

¹⁵ Julius Rosenwald Fund, *Community School Plans*, Nashville, Tennessee, published by the Julius Rosenwald Fund, (1921).

¹⁶ Hanchett (1988).

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The Fund demanded that interiors not be left unpainted. This was for sanitary, aesthetic and maintenance reasons, but mainly because "It will materially increase the amount of light in the classroom." The Fund permitted only two interior paint schemes.

Color Scheme No. 1: Cream ceiling, buff walls and walnut wainscoting or dado.

Color Scheme No. 2: Ivory cream ceiling, light gray walls, and walnut stain wainscoting or dado.

Contractors were warned not to mix lamp black with white paint in order to make gray as such a mixture would reflect very little light. As a result of the precautions Smith noted proudly that all Rosenwald designs provided natural light well in excess of the minimums proposed by the National Education Association's Committee on Schoolhouse Planning and Construction.

Interiors featured a sub-floor topped by oiled wooden flooring, wooden tongue-and-groove wainscoting and plaster walls. Desk arrangements were mandated. For example, in a 22'x 30' classroom, desks were to be positioned in five rows of nine desks. Desks were oriented with a child's left side oriented toward the window so that his or her writing arm (at least in the case of right-handed children) would not cast a shadow on their paper. Each room had a blackboard set at a scientifically determined height. Because chalk dust was known to be a health detriment, chalkboard designs included a chalk trough with a wire net covering. This prevented erasers from absorbing and spreading chalk dust.¹⁷

Rosenwald Fund administrators strictly enforced design guidelines. State and county Boards of Education were allowed to adapt plans to meet their needs, but to guarantee an adherence to Rosenwald Fund standards, any variation had to receive approval prior to construction or lose funding.¹⁸ Regular construction progress reports and photographs were required, and failure to meet deadlines or guidelines resulted in the forfeiture of Rosenwald support.

Between 1917 and 1929, roughly sixty percent of all schools constructed with assistance from the Rosenwald Fund were small, one or two teacher plans.¹⁹ After 1929, the Fund championed the construction of large, brick, consolidated schools and offered financial aid to Boards of Education to assist with transportation. As the national movement toward school consolidation increased, funding was withdrawn for the small frame buildings typical of the program's early years.

The Julius Rosenwald Fund's School Building Program officially ended in 1932, following the death of Mr. Rosenwald.. By that time almost 15,000 teachers were instructing over 650,000 African-American

¹⁷ *Community School Plans* (1921).

¹⁸ Julius Rosenwald Fund, *Community School Plan*, Julius Rosenwald Fund, Nashville, Tennessee (1931)

¹⁹ Embree and Waxman (1949) p. 4.

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children in 5,357 Rosenwald-funded schools throughout the rural South. These buildings accommodated more than two-fifths of the African-American children enrolled in school. The value of these schools in 1932 was more than twice that of all black rural school property at the beginning of the effort in 1917. While most were primary schools, one in ten provided high school level instruction.²⁰

Rosenwald schools set the standard for efficiency and sanitation and became a model for white school construction. Rosenwald plans were used for more than 15,000 schools, white and black, that otherwise had no relation to the Rosenwald Fund. Rosenwald's biographers claimed that the Fund's success was not just counted in the amount it contributed or the number of schools it helped to build, but in intangibles that could not be measured. They claimed the Fund's primary success was expressed in the effect of increased literacy in the lives of African-Americans, through the opportunities that education provided.²¹

Resource History:

The exact date of construction for the first schoolhouse in the African-American community of San Domingo, south of Sharptown, is not known. The village was settled by a group of free blacks during the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The first schoolhouse was in place by the time Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson published their atlas of the lower Eastern Shore counties in 1877.²² The school, labeled "School Col." on the Sharptown District 10 map, was sited near the village's Methodist Episcopal church.

Construction of the first school building in San Domingo most likely followed the passage of a state law in 1872 requiring at least one school in each election district for the education of African-American children. It was a single story one-room plan structure, and was located at the southern end of the current school lot. Local residents Byard Brown, Leonard Brown and James Game served as its trustees.²³ There were fourteen black schools in Wicomico County by the early 1880s.

The 1870s one-room school served the black children of the district through the early twentieth century. Due to significant population growth in the district and within the community of San Domingo itself, the African-American residents of the area petitioned the Board of

²⁰ Ibid. p. 56.

²¹ Ibid.

²² John L. Graham, ed. *The 1877 Atlases and Other Early Maps of the Eastern Shore of Maryland*. Wicomico Bicentennial Committee, 1976, p. 21.

²³ Board of Education minutes, 14 April 1882, p. 25.

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Education of Wicomico County with a proposal during the late winter of 1919. The board minutes state that

After careful consideration of the school building needs in the county, the Board directed the County Superintendent to ask the County Commissioners for sufficient funds to erect buildings at Delmar School, Sharptown Colored School, and to add one room to the present building at Willards.²⁴

In anticipation of a new school, the residents of the Sharptown District raised funds for materials and donated land on which the school was to be built. In February the Superintendent inspected the property to be given and approved it as suitable site.²⁵ By the middle of March, William L. Brown and his wife Mary conveyed to the Board of Education of Wicomico County a small parcel

...on the southwest side of and binding upon a private road separating the property hereby conveyed from the property improved by the Colored Public Hall, and beginning for the same at a point on the southwest side of the public road, it being the northernmost point of the Old School House lot....²⁶

Events relating to the construction of the new building moved relatively fast with the plans approved by the Board of Education in early March and the advertisement for bids by early April.²⁷ Towards the end of April the bids were opened and published in the newspaper. To the dismay of all concerned, the bids came in significantly over budget, thereby delaying the start of construction.²⁸ Conveying the frustration and disappointment held by many involved, the *Wicomico News* reported on May 1,

The Board of Educaiton of Wicomico county is in a dilemma so far as the building of new school houses and repairing old buildings is concerned.

There is an insistent demand for the erection of a high school building at Delmar; and a colored school building at Quantico. In several other sections the patrons are asking for improvements to school properties.

The colored people of Sharptown made such a liberal proposal to the Board that the Board decided to advertise for bids for the erection of this building, provided the County Commissioners would agree to furnish the funds as a special appropriation. So anxious were the colored people of Sharptown to receive a new building that they agreed to donate two acres of

²⁴ Board of Education minutes, 7 February 1919.

²⁵ Board of Education minutes, 6 March 1919.

²⁶ Wicomico County Land Record, JCK 112/487, 17 March 1919.

²⁷ *Wicomico News*, 10 April 1919.

²⁸ Board of Education minutes, 22 April 1919.

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land, cut and deliver all the standing frame for the building, free of cost to the Board, and also do the excavating for the basement. After considering carefully the unusually liberal offer of the colored people of Sharptown, the Board secured plans for a four-room building, about like the East Salisbury Primary School Building, and estimated that the building could be erected for about \$4,000.00. This amount was agreed to by the County Commissioners, and contractors were asked to submit bids for a four-room building.²⁹

At the end of May the Board of Education decided to modify the plans and rebid the project.³⁰ At the end of the month the Wicomico County Commissioners met and allocated an additional \$3,500 to the project.³¹ While the Rosenwald Fund is not mentioned specifically in any article or board minutes about the Sharptown Colored School, the black population was aware of the Rosenwald requirement that the resident population and the county were to be the principal sources of the funding for the project and the philanthropy of Julius Rosenwald would help defer part of the expense. According to the archived records of the Funds activities, it is documented that \$500 was donated for the project although the total cost of the school was misstated at \$6,300. The resident population's contribution was stated at \$800.³²

While the Rosenwald Fund was not mentioned specifically in any of the local records, the county's black residents were aware of the funding source since a delegation from Wetipquin made a proposal to the Board of Education for the construction of school in their community. The board minutes document the residents had raised \$500, and they were sure they could secure \$400 to \$450 from the Rosenwald Fund.³³

On June 12 the Board of Education met and opened bids once again for the Sharptown Colored School. Each company's bid ranged around a thousand dollars less than their previous bids, and the lowest bid at \$7,654.45 was submitted by W. D. Gravenor and Brother from Sharptown.³⁴ The other two construction companies were T. H. Mitchell and Hastings & Parsons. Contractor W. D. Gravenor is listed in the Fourteenth Census of the United States (1920) as a 53-year old "Undertaker", and he is grouped with his wife Anna B. (Bounds), aged 50, and two daughters, Alma B., aged 19, and Irene E., aged 15.³⁵

²⁹ *Wicomico News*, 1 May 1919.

³⁰ Board of Education minutes, 26 May 1919.

³¹ Wicomico County Commissioners minutes, 1912-1920, 27 May 1919.

³² Rosenwald Fund Archive, Box 127, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee.

³³ Board of Education minutes, 25 July 1919.

³⁴ Board of Education minutes, 12 June 1919.

³⁵ Fourteenth Census of the United States (1920), transcribed by Ruth T. Dryden, p. 294.

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No more was mentioned in the newspaper about the construction project until October 30 when it was announced that the Board of Education directed the Superintendent to accept the Sharptown School whenever the architect passed on extras and omissions as required by the plans and specifications.³⁶ The identity of the architect is unknown at present.

According to the records of the school plans advocated by the staff at the Tuskegee Institute between 1913 and 1920, the San Domingo building was influenced by their building specifications. The two-story, "three-teacher school" is identifiable with its two-story hipped roof form and batteries of windows that light the classrooms, whereas the front of the structure was marked only by doubled window sash. Many interior features such as the folding doors and built-in cloakrooms were aspects of Tuskegee design priorities. The folding doors in particular fit with the Rosenwald attitude that the school should double as a community center, and the flexibility of the folding doors allowed for the classrooms to be consolidated into one space if desired.³⁷

The school remained in use for forty-two years until the summer of 1961 when it was sold by the Board of Education to the Trustees of the Sharptown Recreation & Lodge Center.³⁸ The trustees of this organization, Levi Quinton, Bernard Quinton, and Daniel Smiley, led the members through a remodeling of the old school to serve dual purpose as a community center and lodge hall. At this time the principal's room was converted to a kitchen, and bathrooms were constructed in the adjacent space. The members of the Prince Hall Masons Unity Lodge No. 73 and the Friendship Lodge of the Order of Eastern Star have installed their ceremonial furnishings in various rooms.

Over the past several years a plan has been developed by members of the Prince Hall Masons Unity Lodge to restore the building to its original appearance and at the same time continue to use it as a cultural and community center with a focus on showcasing San Domingo's historical development.³⁹

³⁶ Wicomico News, 30 October 1919.

³⁷ Mary S. Hoffschwelle, *Preserving Rosenwald Schools*, pp. 3-4.

³⁸ Wicomico County Land Record, JWTS 522/466, 17 July 1961.

³⁹ Interview with Newell E. Quinton and Tanja Henson-Quinton, 11 May 2005, San Domingo, Maryland.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1 3/4 acre Sharptown, DE-MD quad

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	1	8	4	3	6	9	8	6	4	2	6	2	5	4	2
	Zone			Easting				Northing							
2															

3															
	Zone			Easting				Northing							
4															

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Baker Touart, Architectural Historian

Organization Private Consultant date 1.17.06

street & number Cedar Hill, Box 5 telephone 410.651.1094

city or town Westover state Maryland zip code 21871

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.

Additional Items

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

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

name Prince Hall Masons Unity Lodge No. 73 , c/o Newell E. Quinton

street & number 25940 Quinton Road telephone 410.883.2509

city or town Mardela Springs state Maryland zip code 21837

Paperwork Reduction 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 listings. 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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Major Bibliographical References:

Board of Education Minutes, Wicomico County, 1892-1919, Wicomico County Board of Education, Salisbury, Maryland.

Interview with Newell E. and Tanja Henson-Quinton, 11 May 2005, San Domingo, Maryland.

Julius Rosenwald Fund Archive, Box 127, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee.

Fourteenth Census of the United States (1920), transcribed and printed by Ruth T. Dryden, 1994.

Graham, John L. ed. *The 1877 Atlases and Other Early Maps of the Eastern Shore of Maryland*, Wicomico County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Hoffschwelle, Mary S. *Preserving Rosenwald Schools*, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2003.

Sherri Marsh, "Rosenwald Schools of Anne Arundel County, Maryland" National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2003.

Wicomico County Commissioners Minutes, 1912-1920, Maryland State Archives.

Wicomico County Land Records, various volumes, Wicomico County Courthouse.

Wicomico News, various issues, Wicomico County Library, Salisbury, Maryland.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

Boundaries are described in Liber JWTS 522, folio 466, among the Land Records of Wicomico County, Maryland.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property, 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ acres, represents the entire lot historically associated with the resource.