

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes    
no

Property Name: Root Cellar, Spring Grove Inventory Number: BA-2332  
 Address: Spring Grove Hospital City: Catonsville Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 County: Baltimore County USGS Topographic Map: Baltimore West  
 Owner: DHMH Is the property being evaluated a district?  yes  
 Tax Parcel Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Tax Map Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Tax Account ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Site visit by MHT staff:  no  yes Name: L. Bowlin, 1985 Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Is the property is located within a historic district?  yes  no

*If the property is within a district* District Inventory Number: BA-2319  
 NR-listed district  yes Eligible district  yes Name of District: Spring Grove Hospital Center  
 Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource  yes  no Non-contributing but eligible in another context  yes

*If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district)* Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible  yes  no

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in:

#BA 157 (Bowlin, 1986); Project Review & Compliance Files; Spring Grove Architectural Survey Notebook

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

Spring Grove Hospital Center, Catonsville, Baltimore County was initially determined eligible for the Maryland Register of Historic Properties in 1986. Trust policy is that any property eligible for the MRHP is also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Spring Grove is eligible under Criterion A, events, as the first state-sponsored facility for the mentally ill. The hospital had its origins in 1797 where the indigent sick and insane were cared for in Baltimore. By 1872 the hospital had outgrown its site and the state chose a new 200-acresite in Catonsville. The District is also eligible under Criterion C, as an architectural example. The hospital center does not have a specific layout, but rather its growth and development are demonstrated through the construction of buildings in response to new needs and developments in the care of the mentally ill. The 1985 survey included 25 buildings built between 1872 and 1944. All are eligible contributing resources to the historic district.

[from Spring Grove Hospital Center DOE]

As a result of the recently completed survey, 25 buildings have been determined to be historically and architecturally significant to the development of public mental health care in Maryland at Spring Grove Hospital Center. This property, BA-2332, Root Cellar, was included on the list of significant properties. (See Bowlin, 1985)

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended  Eligibility not recommended

Criteria:  A  B  C  D Considerations:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  None

MHT Comments

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

Date

Reviewer, NR Program

Date

BA-2332

NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Root Cellar, Spring Grove

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Prepared by: L. Bowlin, 1985 (MHT)

Date Prepared: \_\_\_\_\_

BA-2332

1930

Root Cellar

Public

Spring Grove Hospital Center

Catonsville

The Root Cellar displays two main walls, while the main body of the structure remains underground. The stone facade is embedded into the earth, decorated by the construction date of the cellar: 1930. The end wall rises above the ground for approximately six and a half feet and provides ventilation for the cellar.

Maryland Historical Trust  
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. BA-2332

Magi No. 0323324839

DOE \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic Root Cellar

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number

\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Catonsville

\_\_\_ vicinity of

congressional district

3

state Maryland

county Baltimore

**3. Classification**

**Category**

district  
 building(s)  
 structure  
 site  
 object

**Ownership**

public  
 private  
 both  
**Public Acquisition**  
 in process  
 being considered  
 not applicable

**Status**

occupied  
 unoccupied  
 work in progress

**Accessible**

yes: restricted  
 yes: unrestricted  
 no

**Present Use**

agriculture  
 commercial  
 educational  
 entertainment  
 government  
 industrial  
 military  
 museum  
 park  
 private residence  
 religious  
 scientific  
 transportation  
 other: Hospital

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

name Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

street & number 201 West Preston Street

telephone no.: 301-225-6816

city, town Baltimore

state and zip code

Maryland 21201

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore County Courthouse

liber

street & number

folio

city, town Towson

state Maryland

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

date  
\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

# 7. Description

Survey No.

BA-2332

## Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

## Check one

unaltered  
 altered

## Check one

original site  
 moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

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

Constructed in 1930, the root cellar has only two faces that stand above ground. The principal facade faces east and provides access to the root cellar. This eastern facade is one story, constructed of stone, and decorated by a stepped parapet. On the eastern face of the parapet, the date of 1930 has been attached to commemorate the construction of the structure. The wall openings have been altered and what remains is a single pane window, a modern metal door, and a short, wide, wooden door. Though altered, this wooden door appears to be original. Because the facade is embedded into the earth, rubblestone retaining walls connect to each side of the stone facade.

The main body of the structure is underground. Beside the east facade, the most noticeable feature is an end wall, directly parallel to the east facade. This western wall protrudes from the ground approximately six-and-a-half feet. Constructed of stone, the thin, rectangular wall has a band of metal screens and then is capped by a stone slab. The design of the wall indicates its function as an air shaft. This wall, as well, commemorates the date of construction by having the year of 1930 attached to the wall. Proper ventilation is also achieved by individual air shafts which form two parallel lines between the eastern facade and the western end wall. The ventilation shafts measure approximately eight inches above ground and are made of metal. While the eastern facade is embedded into the earth, the interior of the root cellar runs in a westerly direction underground with the air shafts forming the connection between above and below ground by providing proper ventilation.

Steel beams with stone bases supply the root cellar with interior support. The interior space is currently used for vehicle storage. Two offices, one of particle board and one of cinder block, mark some of the alterations to the structure. The unfinished walls and cement floors remain as the original purpose dictated.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. BA-2332

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

**Specific dates**      1930      **Builder/Architect**      Unknown

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check: Applicable Criteria:  A    B    C    D  
and/or  
Applicable Exception:    A    B    C    D    E    F    G

Level of Significance:    national    state    local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Root Cellar served an important function in the farm operation of the hospital. The farm productivity increased in the first quarter of the twentieth century because the tillable acreage had been increased. Larger crop yields cramped existing vegetable storage spaces. As many structures built on the Spring Grove Campus during the 1930's, the Root Cellar provided larger facilities for the expanding hospital.

The main facade of the Root Cellar displays the year of 1930 as the construction date. While construction began in that year, the structure was not complete until additional funds had been received from Maryland's General Construction Loan of 1929. The funds were appropriated in the fall of 1931.

Since the eradication of the farm program in the 1960's, the Root Cellar is no longer needed for the storage of vegetables. Due to its large underground space, the Root Cellar has been utilized as storage space for machines required for landscape maintenance. This function has not required much alteration and allows the ventilation system to remain intact.





BA-2332

ROOT CELLAR

SPRING GROVE HOSPITAL CENTER

CATONSVILLE, MARYLAND

EAST WALL

DON JEWELL, 4/86

NEGATIVES AT MHT



BA - 2332

ROOT CELLAR

SPRING GROVE HOSPITAL CENTER

CATONSVILLE, MARYLAND

WEST WALL

DON JEWELL, 4/86

NEGATIVES AT MHT