

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #71B-2-7 Building Date: 1912, 1925, 1934

Building Name: Bowie School

Location: 13022 8th Street, Bowie, Maryland

Public/Community/Occupied/Good/Accessible

Description

The Bowie School is a two-story square brick school building with pyramidal roof and belfry. The original school building is now five bays by five bays, with entrance into a shallow pedimented entry vestibule in the central bay of the principal south facade. Entrance is through double doors, each leaf consisting of nine panes of glass over a single molded panel, with fifteenlight transom. Double fluted pilasters frame the double door; they carry a plain frieze and molded pediment. The building originally had three bays on east and west, but windows have been added between each of these bays, on the first and second stories, making five-bay east and west facades. Exposed rafter ends punctuate the overhanging eaves. Atop the central peak of the roof is a shingled open belfry, in the form of a square cupola. Its pyramidal roof repeats the lines of the main roof, with similar overhanging eaves punctuated by exposed rafter ends. Attached to its north elevation is a six-bay two-story brick addition; farther to the north is a four-bay wide two-story addition with gable roof and 24-pane windows.

Significance

The Bowie School, although much altered in appearance by two major additions and a modern entry vestibule, is still a landmark in the town of Bowie, originally established as Hungtington. The Bowie School was constructed in 1912 in response to requests from the local population for a more substantial school building. In June 1911, five of the town's prominent citizens were appointed as a building committee for the proposed new school; nine lots were purchased at the northwest corner of 8th Street and Chestnut Avenue. The new school opened late in 1912, and was probably the most substantial school building in the County at the time. It followed the lines of the popular four-square construction: a square brick building two stories high, with four classrooms. In 1925 a two-story addition was constructed on the north, adding a stage and auditorium with two classrooms above. In 1934, a second two-story addition was constructed on the north facade of the first, adding four more classrooms. At the same time, renovation was undertaken on the original structure. In the early 1960's, the old Bowie School was closed, and, from 1964 to 1978, was used as a Special Education Center. It was renovated and opened as a Community Center in 1982. Although much altered, the structure still has the appearance of a substantial early twentieth century four-square school building. It reflects the development of education in Bowie, and is still a noticeable landmark in that turn-of-the-century railroad town.

Acreage: ca. 1/2 acre

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Bowie School (School #5, District #14)

and/or common Bowie Special School

## 2. Location

street & number 13022 8th Street  not for publication

city, town Bowie  vicinity of congressional district 5

state Md. county Prince George's County

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

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

name City of Bowie

street & number 2614 Kenhill Drive telephone no.: 262-6200

city, town Bowie state and zip code Md. 20715

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber #5443

street & number Main Street folio 291

city, town Upper Marlboro state Md.

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved    date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

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

The Bowie School is a two-story square brick school building with pyramidal roof and belfry. It has had several large additions to the north which more than double its size; it stands on a group of original lots in the 1870 Huntington City.

The original school building is now five bays by five bays, with entrance into a shallow pedimented entry vestibule in the central bay of the principal south facade. Entrance is through double doors, each leaf consisting of nine panes of glass over a single molded panel, with fifteen-light transom. Double fluted pilasters frame the double door; they carry a plain frieze and molded pediment.

Windows are 6/6 double hung sash, with plain board sills. Original windows have a triple segmental arch in basement and first story, and double segmental arch in the second story. There is a double window over the main entrance. The building originally had only three bays on east and west, but windows have been added between each of these bays, on the first and second stories, making five-bay east and west facades. The (newer) alternating windows in the second and fourth bays of these facades are surmounted by flat arches of rowlock brick.

The foundation is of poured concrete. The brick of the elevations is laid in common bond with six courses of stretchers to each course of headers. The pyramidal roof is covered with gray asbestos shingle, and exposed rafter ends punctuate the overhanging eaves. Atop the central peak of the roof is a shingled open belfry, in the form of a square cupola. Its pyramidal roof repeats the lines of the main roof, with similar overhanging eaves punctuated by exposed rafter ends. A tall brick chimney rises from the north plane of the roof.

There are two major additions to the building. Attached to its north elevation is a six-bay two-story brick addition which now has a new front to the east. This modern bowed two-story front is of light stuccoed brick, has large modern windows, and encloses a handicap access ramp. Farther to the north is a four-bay wide two-story addition with gable roof and 24-pane windows.

# 8. Significance

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 type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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** 1912,1925,1934      **Builder/Architect** J. Howe Rawlings

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 Bowie School, although much altered in appearance by two major additions, and a modern entry vestibule, is still a landmark in the town of Bowie, originally established as Hungtinton. Its principle south facade retains its original appearance.

The Bowie School was constructed in 1912 in response to requests from the local population for a more substantial school building. The previous school for white children, a frame building constructed in the 1880's, still stands at the corner of 13th Street and Chestnut Avenue. (Black children attended a one-room schoolhouse just southeast of town near the top of Horsepen Hill. After 1908 and the establishment of the Maryland Normal School, now Bowie State College, many of the black children attended a model school on the college grounds.) By 1910 the town of Bowie had grown to include 100 dwellings,<sup>1</sup> and residents sought a larger, more substantial school building. In June 1911, five of the town's prominent citizens (J. W. Ryon, William Luers, Frank Luers, Dr. James Truitt and A. J. Waters) were appointed as a building committee for the proposed new school, and authorized to choose an architect and plans.<sup>2</sup> Nine lots were purchased at the northwest corner of 8th Street and Chestnut Avenue, and construction was begun in 1912. (In April of 1912, J. Howe Rawlings was selected by the Board of P.G. County School Commissioners to prepare plans for all schools to be erected after that date; it is fairly certain that it was Rawlings who planned and supervised construction of the Bowie School.<sup>2</sup>)

The new school opened late in 1912, and was probably the most substantial school building in the County at the time (cf. Brandywine School of roughly the same date). It followed the lines of the popular four-square construction, a square brick building two stories high, with four classrooms, and hip-roof with belfry centered at the peak. It served at first as an elementary school, and later as a high school.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. P.G.#71B-2-7

Cf. Notes Item #8

Prince George's County Deeds #5443,291; #4867:762; #82:369

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property Ca. 1/2 acre Tax Map 29, Block 16, lots 61-63  
Quadrangle name Laurel, Section I Quadrangle scale 71-76

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## Verbal boundary description and justification

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

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research Historian

organization Historic Preservation Commission date August 1986

street & number c/o of Planning MNCPPC telephone 952-3521

city or town Upper Marlboro state Md.

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

## #8 (Continued)

In 1925 a two-story addition was constructed on the north, adding a stage and auditorium with two classrooms above. In 1934, a second two-story addition was constructed on the north facade of the first, adding four more classrooms. At the same time, renovation was undertaken on the original structure; it was no doubt at this time that extra windows were added in the east and west facades.<sup>3</sup>

With the construction of the Levitt community of Belair south of Bowie in the early 1960's, the old Bowie School was closed and soon replaced by the present Bowie High School and several local elementary schools. From 1964 to 1978 the old building was used as a Special Education Center. When the Special Education Center closed in 1978, the building was slated for demolition, thus provoking a local effort to save the old landmark. This effort led to the City of Bowie obtaining federal funding to renovate the building for use as a community center. The renovation, which included the construction of a modern bowed entry vestibule, was completed in 1982.<sup>3</sup>

The Bowie School is much altered by the two northerly additions, and the entry vestibule to the east, but when viewed from the south, it still has the appearance of a substantial early twentieth century four-square school building with Colonial Revival decorative elements. It reflects the development of education in Bowie, and is still a noticeable landmark in that turn-of-the-century railroad town.

Notes

1 1910 Census for Bowie.

2 Journal of Board of Prince George's County School Commissioners, Volume II (1903-1921), 1911-1913.

3 Bowie Special School files, City of Bowie; interview, summer 1986, with former students.





PG#71B-2-7

Bowie School  
Prince George's County, MD  
Susan G. Pearl  
February 1986  
East elevation  
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#71B-2-7

Bowie School  
Prince George's County, MD  
Susan G. Pearl  
February 1986  
West elevation  
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD