

K-620

Circa 1916-1920

Chesterville Forest Public School

Near Chesterville

Private

Originally located at the southeast corner at the intersection of Chesterville Forest Road with the old Chesterville-Millington Road, the school was moved circa 1942 to its present site adjacent to Asbury Methodist Church, Chesterville Forest, to serve as a church and community hall. One of the last one-teacher schoolhouses built in Kent County, to replace a school that burned before it could be used, it also is somewhat different in plan from earlier county one-teacher schools. The earlier buildings had their entry in a gable-end (with or without vestibule wing), the gable-end facing the public road near which the school was sited. In this building, however, the entry is first into a gable-roofed vestibule wing, but that wing is located not on a gable end but in the center of a long side, perpendicular to the long side. Why the change of vestibule location was made is not known. Otherwise, the school was as plain, simple and utilitarian as the earlier schools. The school is a reminder of the period when schooling for blacks and whites was separate in the county and when many one-teacher schools dotted the countryside. It served as one focus of community life for the rural black community of Chesterville Forest for only about 25 years before being closed as part of the county-wide school consolidation movement.

7. Description

Survey No. K-620

Condition		Check one	Check one		
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move	Circa 1940'
<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.

Originally located at the southeast corner at the intersection of Chesterville Forest Road with the old Chesterville-Millington road, the old Chesterville Forest Public School was moved to its present site adjacent to Asbury Methodist Church, Chesterville Forest, to serve as a church and community hall about 1942. One of the last one-room schoolhouses built in Kent County, in about 1916-1920 to replace a school that burned, it also is somewhat different in plan from those of the late nineteenth and very early twentieth century. The earlier buildings had their entry in a gable end (with or without vestibule wing), the gable facing the public road near which the school was sited. In this building, however, the entry is still into a gable-roofed vestibule wing, but that wing is located not on a gable end but in the center of a long side, perpendicular to the long side. The wing entry faced the road (though in its present location it faces the church). The main section is three bays wide on the entry side and two bays wide on the opposite side. The end now facing the road has a window in only one side bay. The original fenestration of the other end, where the church has added a large shed-roofed kitchen, is not known. The standing-seam metal roofs may be original.

(Continued)

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 type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Black History
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates Circa 1916-1920 **Builder/Architect**

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.

This school served the rural black community of Chesterville Forest for about 25 years before it was closed as part of the county-wide school consolidation movement. Though now moved and used as a church hall for Asbury Methodist Church, Chesterville Forest (K-619), it is a reminder of the period when schooling for blacks and whites was separate in the county and when many one-teacher schools dotted the countryside. It was the third school building for the community (though the second burned before it could be used). It was somewhat unusual in not being located originally near the church, the customary practice in the county's black communities. However, it nonetheless would have served as one focus for the community life of Chesterville Forest. It must have been one of the last one-teacher schools constructed in Kent County. It differs from the earlier ones in not having a front-gable entry. Instead entry was into the vestibule wing that is attached to one of the long sides. Why the change was made is not known. Otherwise, it was as plain, simple, and functional as the earlier schools.

(Continued)

The one-storey gable-roofed main section measures about 25 feet wide by 20 feet deep. It is thus more nearly square than were earlier one-room schools in Kent County. The gable-roofed vestibule, attached to the center of what is now the north side of the main section, measures about 10'-6" wide by 6'-0" deep. The later, shed-roofed kitchen addition added to the west end is the same depth as the main section (20 feet) and is 12 feet wide.

The exterior is now covered with interlocking panels of asphalted composition material simulating ashlar stone in pinks, greys, and browns. It was, in the case of the original building, applied over the original horizontal, lapped weatherboard in the late 1940s or early 1950s. It seems to have been applied at the time of the kitchen addition or somewhat earlier. The kitchen wing is only partially covered with the same material as the school; some sections have similar siding but in a different color.

The building rests on concrete block piers; the crawl space is unenclosed. There is a single square (ca. 17") chimney, outside the west end wall. Whether this chimney was moved with the school or built on the new site is not known. However, it apparently is the original chimney location. The stove was not located near the wall close to the chimney, but at some distance away with a long run of stovepipe for increased radiation of heat. The red brick of the chimney is now deteriorated. The chimney is now used for a kerosene heater.

The original school roofs are of standing-seam metal. The rafters are closed along their undersides; they are square-cut and overhang the walls about 10-12". The end overhang is the same.

The main entry is into the vestibule wing on the north side, where the door is five-panel. Trim is plain. Concrete steps and stoop, with a pipe rail, lead to the entry. There is also an entry into the kitchen's south side.

The windows of the school section are double-hung, with 2-over-2 lights. They may be replacement units. There is no sign of there having been shutters.

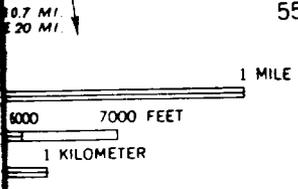
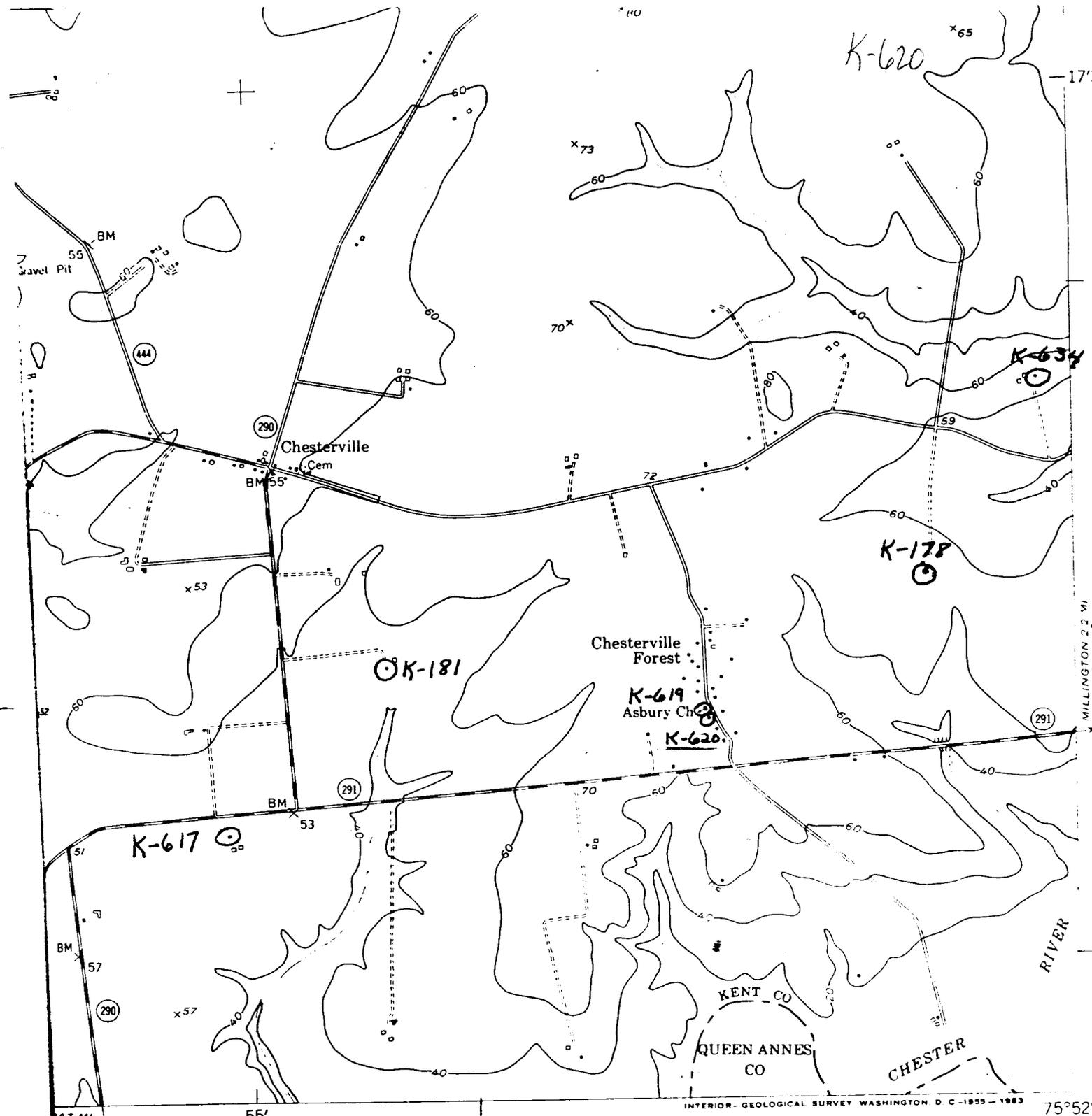
The large classroom has been remodeled since the move to the church lot, with a resilient-tile floor, plywood-panelled walls, and the same suspended-grid, drop-in-panel ceiling as used in the church. In the now-church hall, there are four of the old church pews of Asbury church, most of which had been destroyed by termites. The church hall is used for church suppers and events such as family reunions which the homes of the community are too small to accommodate.

The vestibule retains most of its original interior finishes. There is a window on each side. There is a second layer of narrow, strip tongue-and-groove pine flooring. The walls to a height of 6'-10" are of horizontal beaded board. One piece of board has two beaded sections. A few old wire clothing hooks are in place. The upper walls and ceiling have a rough (scratch coat) of plaster.

The school/hall is set back farther from the road than the church, near a grove of trees. A lawn with several trees separates the church from the hall.

This former school building seems to have been the third for the black children of the Chesterville Forest area. The first was located on the north side of the old Chesterville-Millington road east of the intersection with the Chesterville Forest road and set quite far back from it. The next school was at another site, on the southeast corner formed by the intersection, but it was said to have been burned before it could be used. For a time the children then went to school at Asbury Methodist Church, Chesterville Forest (K-619). The school building now the church hall succeeded the burned schoolhouse at the same site. It was closed about 1942 and the children transported to Garnett School for black children in Chestertown. The church then bought the building and moved it to its present site. The first Chesterville Forest school seems to have been the building previously used for white children at Mill Branch, about one mile to the east on the Chesterville-Millington road. After the school population in the Mill Branch area declined, it supposedly was moved. It would have been built about 1877 (the date of the deed for the Mill Branch school).

According to old school records, the school in 1924 enrolled 14 boys and 23 girls. By 1934 there were 12 boys and 14 girls. This clearly was not one of the largest one-room black schools in attendance. A few years later the school was closed as part of the school consolidation movement, which occurred later for the black schools than for the white. By 1944 only 9 elementary schools for black children remained, where as there had been 20 in 1934. This school was designated as School No. 5 of District 1 (the black schools were numbered separately from the white).



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty		4 LANE 6 LANE	Light-duty	
Medium-duty		4 LANE 6 LANE	Unimproved dirt	
		U. S. Route		State Route

GALETA, MD.
 SW/4 CECILTON 15' QUADRANGLE
 N3915-W7552.5/7.5
 PHOTOINSPECTED 1974
 1953



K-620

Chesterville Forest Public School

Chesterville Forest Rd., near Chesterville

M. Q. Fallaw - 5/7/86

View to south

K620-35-



K-620

Chesterville Forest Public School

Chesterville Forest Rd., near Chesterville

M. Q. Fallaw - 5/7/86

View to north

K-620-1