INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY/DISTRICT
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property/District Name: RR Bridge over Wills Creek  Survey Number: AL-V-B-152

Project: Proposed demolition  Agency: 

Site visit by MHT Staff: X no  yes  Name __________________________ Date ____________

Eligibility recommended X  Eligibility not recommended 

Criteria: X A  B  C  D  Considerations: A  b  c  d  e  f  g  None

Justification for decision: (Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map)

Located in Locust Grove, the railroad bridge over Wills Creek is a brick structure constructed in the 1840s. It is one of the earliest remaining railroad bridges in Maryland. The structure is a four span brick arch bridge supported by granite piers. Marble and granite capstones line the deck. Built by the Cumberland Pennsylvania Railroad, the bridge was a component of the network of rail lines that brought Western Maryland coal to the eastern markets. The bridge is significant for its association with the development of rail transportation in the county as well as the state (Criterion A). Abandoned in the 1980s, the bridge exhibits signs of serious deterioration but its integrity of location, design, materials, feeling and association remain intact. The railroad bridge over Wills Creek at Locust Grove illustrates distinctive characteristics of type, period and method of construction.

N.B. To ease flooding, CSX is pursuing the demolition of the bridge. It appears that MHT does not have a regulatory handle on the demolition. We recommended that the bridge be recorded prior to demolition.

Documentation on the property/district is presented in: Maryland Inventory

Prepared by: G.J. Melodini, CSX Transportation/Inventory Form=David Dorsey

Lauren Bowlin  Office of Preservation Services
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services  October 24, 1997

NR program concurrence: X yes  no  not applicable

Reviewer, NR program  16 27 97

Date

1
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property Name: Eckhart Branch Railroad Bridge
Inventory Number: AL-V-B-152

Address: Route 40 & Mount Savage Road
City: Homewood
County: Allegany
USGS Topographic Map: CUMBERLAND

Owner:
Tax Parcel Number: ___ Tax Map Number: ___ Tax Account ID Number: ___

Project: ___ Agency: ___

Site visit by MHT staff: X no ___ yes Name: ______________________ Date: ____________

Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended ___
Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G ___ None

Is the property located within a historic district? ___ no ___ yes Name of District: ______________________
Is district listed? ___ no ___ yes Determined eligible? ___ no ___ yes District Inventory Number: ______________________

Documentation on the property/district is presented in:

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

The Eckhart Branch Railroad Bridge is significant in architectural, engineering, and industrial history as a rare example of a mid-19th century, masonry, arched bridge, a type of construction once found more commonly prior to the later 19th century proliferation of iron bridges. Built by the Maryland Mining Company around 1845, the four-span bridge was associated with the development of the coal mining industry in western Maryland.

Prepared by: ICC/Phyllis Johnson-Ball  Date Prepared: 03/30/1981

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW
Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended ___
Criteria ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D Considerations ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G ___ None
MHT Comments:
Eckhart Branch Railroad Bridge was Federally nominated for the National Register of Historic Places.

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services
Bruce MacDougall
Date
May 14, 1981
Reviewer, NR Program
Date
On the 7th of April in 1845 the Maryland Mining Company broke ground for the construction of a railway from Eckhart Mines to the Cumberland and Pennsylvania Railroad's Mount Savage line on the northern side of Wills Creek at the Narrows. The most interesting feature of the Eckhart Branch railroad is the masonry bridge across Wills Creek where it joined the Cumberland and Pennsylvania line. The bridge consists of four elliptical brick arches with gauged brick borders. Walls of the bridge are laid in english bond with pilasters at the piers. It rests on three stone piers and stone abutments. Although it is the oldest standing railroad bridge in Allegany County and in poor condition, the brick bridge is still in use serving local industries.
## NAME

**HISTORIC**
Eckhart Branch Railroad Bridge

**AND/OR COMMON**

## LOCATION

**STREET & NUMBER**
Wills Creek (at the Narrows)

**CITY, TOWN**
LaVale

**STATE**
Maryland

**VICINITY OF**
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

**COUNTY**
Allegany

## CLASSIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>PRESENT USE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>DISTRICT</em></td>
<td><em>PUBLIC</em></td>
<td><em>OCCUPIED</em></td>
<td><em>AGRICULTURE</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>BUILDING(S)</em></td>
<td><em>PRIVATE</em></td>
<td><em>UNOCCUPIED</em></td>
<td><em>COMMERCIAL</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>STRUCTURE</em></td>
<td><em>BOTH</em></td>
<td><em>WORK IN PROGRESS</em></td>
<td><em>PARK</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>SITE</em></td>
<td><em>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</em></td>
<td><em>ACCESSIBLE</em></td>
<td><em>EDUCATIONAL</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>OBJECT</em></td>
<td><em>IN PROCESS</em></td>
<td><em>YES RESTRICTED</em></td>
<td><em>ENTERTAINMENT</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>BEING CONSIDERED</em></td>
<td><em>YES UNRESTRICTED</em></td>
<td><em>RELIGIOUS</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>NO</em></td>
<td><em>GOVERNMENT</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## OWNER OF PROPERTY

**NAME**
The Chessie System

**Telephone #: 724-3000**

**STREET & NUMBER**
722 Virginia Avenue

**CITY, TOWN**
Cumberland

**STATE, zip code**
Maryland 21502

## LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

**COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.**
Allegany County Courthouse

**STREET & NUMBER**
30 Washington Street

**CITY, TOWN**
Cumberland

**STATE**
Maryland

## REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

**TITLE**

**DATE**

**FEDERAL**

**STATE**

**COUNTY**

**LOCAL**

**DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS**

**CITY, TOWN**

**STATE**
The bridge consists of four elliptical brick arches with gauged brick borders. Wall are laid in enlsh bond and wall features include brick pilasters located above the piers. A stone railing is raised approximately one-half foot above the deck of the bridge. It rests on rectangular stone piers with rounded ends and cement fenders which absorb the force of water, stricking debris, and ice. The stone abutment on the north is in relatively good condition. The southern abutment and a small part of the northernmost arch have been partially obscured by construction of Route 36. The bridge and a small part of the railroad are still in use serving local industries.
On the 7th of April in 1845 the Maryland Mining Company broke ground for the construction of a railway from Eckhart Mines to the Cumberland and Pennsylvania Railroad's Mount Savage Line on the northern side of Wills Creek at the Narrows. (1) "It required a full year of construction for the railroad to literally tear its way though the 'steep and rocky and rugged sides of the mountains'." (2) Provisions of the charters of most Maryland mining companies enabled them to build such service railroads from the mining region to larger transportation centers. (3) Later in the 1840's the Maryland Mining Company built another branch of the railroad through the Narrows into the town of Cumberland. (4) Scharf noted that in 1950 the company was making regular shipments of coal from Eckhart Mines to Cumberland, probably to the C & O Canal which was opened to traffic in that year. (5)

The most interesting feature of the Eckhart Branch railroad is the masonry bridge across Wills Creek where it joined the Cumberland and Pennsylvania line. The bridge consists of four elliptical brick arches with gauged brick borders. Walls of the bridge are laid in English bond with pilasters at the piers. It rests on three stone piers and stone abutments.

In 1852 both branches of the Maryland Mining Company's railroad were sold to the Cumberland Coal and Iron Company when the company went out of business. (6) It became part of the Cumberland and Pennsylvania Railroad Company's system during the 1850's or 1860's when that company "absorbed" most of the local service railroads. (7) Later in the nineteenth century the bridge became the focal point of competition between the C and P and the George's Creek and Cumberland Railroad. The latter company eventually won the right to use the C and P's bridge in court. (8)

The C and P Railroad was itself absorbed by the Western Maryland Railway in 1944, 99 years after the construction of the bridge. (9) Although it is the oldest standing railroad bridge in Allegany County and in poor condition, the brick bridge is still in use serving local industries.

(cont.)
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
Scharf, John T. History of Western Maryland, Philadelphia: L. H. Everts Co. 1882
Lowdermilk, Will H. History of Cumberland Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co. 1971

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE  COUNTY

STATE  COUNTY

FORM PREPARED BY
NAME / TITLE  David A. Dorsey, Historic Sites Coordinator
ORGANIZATION  Allegany County Historic Sites
DATE  March 3, 1980
TELEPHONE  777-5944

CITY OR TOWN  Cumberland
STATE  Maryland 21502

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
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438
Footnotes

(1) John T. Scharf, History of Western Maryland (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts Co.). p. 1446
(2) Harry I. Stegmaier, Jr. et al., Allegany County, A History (Parsons, W. Va.: McClain Printing Co.) p. 141-142
(4) Will H. Lowdermilk, History of Cumberland (Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co.) p. 361
(5) Scharf. p. 1435 and Lowdermilk, P. 368
(6) Allegany County Land Records, Liber 8, Folio 717
(7) Harvey, Katherine p. 12
(8) Stegmaier, p. 205
(9) Harvey, Katherine pp. 369-370
INVENTORY NO: AI. V. B-152

REMODELING: Drastic, moderate, minor

PROPERTY OF: ECKHART BRANCH RP BROGE

LOCATION OF PROPERTY: WILL CREEK AT NARROWS

DIRECTION DWELLING FACES:

NAME OF OWNER: CHESSIE SYSTEM

ADDRESS: English bond w/ some lateral soldier course

alternating leaden-stretcher

STORIES: 1( ) 2( ) 3( ) 4( ) 5( ) 6( ) BAYS: 1( ) 2( ) 3( ) 4( ) 5( ) 6( ) 7( )

WINGS, ADDITIONS: pilasters

DWELLING SHAPE: (square, cross, rectangular)

WALL CONSTRUCTION:

- FRAME: Bevel, clapboard, weatherboard, wood shingles, board & batten (type?)
- STONE: Bond type - rubble, ashlar (random or regular), quoins - plain, rusticated
- LOG
- OTHER: Coverings

WALL FEATURES: Belt Course, Pilasters, Others

FOUNDATIONS: High, Low, Brick, Stone

WATER TABLE: None, Plain, Beveled, Moulded Brick

WINDOWS, TRIM, SHUTTERS: 1/1( ) 2/2( ) 6/6( ) 9/6( ) 9/9( ) other( )
pegged( ) nailed( ) wide( ) narrow( ) mitred( ) pediment( )

ENTRANCE, DOORS: LOCATION:

- HARDWARE: original( ) replaced( )
- FAN LIGHT, TRANSOM, SIDE LIGHTS, PLAIN
- Paneled, Vertical, Horizontal Boards

CORNICE, BARGE, EAVES: (crown, fascia, soffit, bed)
original( ) replaced( ) rafter ends, modillions, dentils, frieze, architrave

ROOF: Gable front, Gable flank, Hip, Shed, Mansard, Gambrel, Flat, Dormers &

- MATERIAL: wood shingles, slate, tin, asphalt;
original( ) replaced( )

PORCHES: SHAPE OF ROOF - shed( ) hip( ) gable( )

CHIMNEYS: Number: Brick( ) Stone( ) Corbeled( ) original( ) replaced( )
Location: Flush end( ) Inside end( ) Outside end( ) Central( ) Interior( )

DOORS: Door & Windows: Keystone, Flat, Segmental, Semicircular gauged

- one on other

USE:

SIGNIFICANCE:

DATE CONSTRUCTED:

FINISHED: ROOF
AL U-B 152
ECKHART BRANCH RR BRIDGE
WILLYS CREEK AT THE NARROWS
CAULIE

DAVID A. DORSEY
2/16/80
Northwest
AL: U-B-15-Z
ECKHART BRANCH RR BRIDGE
WILDS CREEK AT THE NARROWS CAVAL
DAVID A. DORSAY
2/16/80
EAST
Al. U-B 152
ECKHART BRANCH RR BRIDGE
WILLS CREEK AT THE NARROWS CAVALE
DAVID A. DORSEY
11/20/79
Worth
AL-10-B-15Z

ECKHART BRANCH RR BRIDGE
WILLS CREEK AT THE NARROWS CAVAL

DAVID A. DORSEY

2/16/80
Northeast
CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE (AKA) ECKHART BRIDGE

ALLEGANY COUNTY, MD.

JOHN CALIBU SCHWARTZ
12-8-97
MARYLAND SHPO

VIEW NORTH FROM SW HILLSIDE OF WILLS CREEK, GENERAL OVERVIEW OF BRIDGE

1 of 13
CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE, LOCUST GROVE (AKA ECKHARDT BRANCH CULVERT BRIDGE)
BOLLESHENY COUNTY, MD.

JOHN CALLED SCHWARTZ
12-8-97

MARYLAND SHPO

VIEW SW FROM BANK OF WILLS CREEK OF NE ELEVATION OF BRIDGE

2 of 13
AL-857A2+ AL-V-B-152
CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE, LOUST GROVE (AKA ECKHART BRANCH RAILROAD)
ALLAGANY COUNTY, MD.
JOHN CALEB SCHWARTZ
12-8-97
MARYLAND SHPO
VIEW NNW FROM NEW CAR/FOOT BRIDGE OF SOUTH ELEVATION OF BRIDGE
3 of 13
CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE, LOCUST GROVE (ALL A.ECKHART BRANCH RAILROAD)
ALLAGANY COUNTY, MD.
JOHN CALEB SCHWARTZ
12-8-97
MARYLAND SHPO

VIEW FROM RTE. 36N, SOUTH ELEVATION OF BRIDGE SHOWING STONE PIERS AND
BRICK LOSS

4 of 13
CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE, LOCUST GROVE (AKA ECHART BRANCH RAILROAD)
ALLAGANY COUNTY, MD.

JOHN CALEB SCHWARTZ
12-8-97
MARYLAND SHPO

VIEW FROM NE BANK OF WILLS CREEK, 3/4 NORTHEAST ELEVATION.
STEEL GIRDER AND CABLE REINFORCEMENT VISIBLE UPPER LEFT OF PHOTO.

5 OF 13
CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE, LOCUST GROVE (AKA ECKHART BRANCH RAILROAD)
ALLEGANY COUNTY, MD.
JOHN CALEB SCHWARTZ
12-8-97
MARYLAND SHPO

VIEW FROM SE BANK OF WILLS CREEK, 3/4 ELEVATION NE.
60413
CSX Railroad Bridge, Locust Grove (aka Eckhart Branch Railroad)
Allegany County, MD.

John Caleb Schwartz
12-8-97

Maryland SHPO
View from South, Detail of Arch Construction, South Elevation.
7 of 13
CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE, LOCUST GROVE (ALSO ECKAMT BRANCH RAILROAD)
ALLANRY COUNTY, MD.

JOHN CALEB SCHWARTZ
12-8-97
MARYLAND SHPO

VIEW FROM NE BANK OF WILLS CREEK, DETAIL OF STONE PIER, NORTH ELEVATION.

8 OF 13
CSX Railroad Bridge, Locust Grove (aka Eckhardt Branch Railroad)
Allagany County, MD.

John Caleb Schwatz
12-8-97

Matchland SHPO

View from NE bank of Wills Creek, detail of brick bond, north elevation.

9 of 13
CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE, LOCUST GROVE (AKA ECKHARDT BRANCH RAILROAD)
ALLEGANY COUNTY, MD.

JOHN CALEB SCHWARTZ
12-8-97

MARYLAND SHPO

VIEW FROM NE BANK OF WILLS CREEK, DETAIL OF EAST STONE PIER.

10 OF 13
CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE, LOCUST GROVE (AKA ECKHART BRANCH RAILROAD)
ALLAGHNY COUNTY, MD.

JOHN CALEB SCHWARTZ
12-8-97
MARYLAND SHPO

VIEW FROM SURFACE OF BRIDGE, LOOKING SE. DETAIL OF BRIDGE
WALL-EDGE STONES (DISLOCATED) AND LATER REINFORCING STEEL
CABLE.

11 OF 13
AL-V-B-152
CSX RAIL ROAD BRIDGE, LOCUST GROVE (AKA ECKHART BRANCH RAILROAD)
ALLAGAN COUNTY, MD.

SIGNED: CRISPIN SCHWARTZ
12-8-97

MARYLAND SHPO

DETAIL VIEW FROM EAST TO WEST OF STONE TOP TO BRICK EDGE OF BRIDGE ABUTTING EAST BANK OF WILLS CREEK.

12 OF 13
CSX RAILROAD BRIDGE, LOCUST GROVE (AKA ECKHART BRANCH RAILROAD)
ALLEGGANY COUNTY, MD.

J. JOHN CALEB SCHWARTZ
12-8-97
MARYLAND SHPO

VIEW FROM SE 3/4 PERSPECTIVE DETAIL OF END OF BRIDGE AND WOOD BEAM ABUTTING EAST BANK OF WILLS CREEK.

13 OT-13