

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Scattersville Public School
Other names/site number Scattersville Community Center
Name of related multiple property listing N/A
(Remove "N/A" if property is part of a multiple property listing and add name)

2. Location

Street & Number: Baptist Hill Road and Scattersville Road
City or town: Portland State: Tennessee County: Sumner
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: X Zip: 37148

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official: **Date**

Title: **State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

Scattersville Public School
 Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
 County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	1	objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: community center

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

NO STYLE

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property:

CONCRETE; ASPHALT; WOOD; SYNTHETICS: Vinyl
METAL: Tin

Narrative Description

The Scattersville Public School is located at the intersection of Baptist Road and Scattersville Road in Portland, Sumner County, Tennessee. The school building is located in the rural, historically African American community of Scattersville, west of Portland proper. It is surrounded by single family residential homes, rural fields, a church and cemetery, and new development. The school was constructed circa 1928. It is a one story, front gable, rectangular, wood-frame building with a small gable roof addition on its west elevation. A 1993 sign that reads “Scattersville Community Center: Re-established 1978” and a well pump are located within the National Register boundaries of the property.

Site Features and Setting

The roughly .98-acres that encompass the National Register boundaries of the Scattersville Public School are flat and covered in grass. The property is accessed by a large, circular shaped gravel driveway/parking area off Baptist Hill Road. A well pump, sheltered by a mature tree, is located on a small grass patch of land in the gravel driveway. Both the façade (south elevation) and east elevation feature landscaped bushes. A sign that reads “Scattersville Community Center: Re-established 1978” is prominently located southwest of the school’s façade and to the west of Scattersville Road. Mature trees compose the north boundary of the school. Scattersville Road bounds the school to the east, a private drive and single-family residential unit

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

bounds the property to the west, and Baptist Hill Road bounds the property to the south. The New Hope Baptist Church is located to the south of Baptist Hill Road directly across from the school.

Scattersville Public School, ca. 1928 – Contributing Building

The Scattersville Public School is a one story, front gable, rectangular building with a concrete foundation and asphalt shingle roof. All elevations are clad in ca. 1993 replacement vinyl siding. All replacement vinyl windows were installed at the same time as the siding. The original wood siding is located beneath the applied vinyl siding. Original wood siding remains on the north elevation. A gable roof addition constructed ca. 1965 is attached to the west elevation.

Exterior

Façade (South Elevation)

A square, poured concrete pad accesses the centered, single bay recessed porch. The recessed porch is clad in vinyl siding and has a carpeted landing. The recessed porch shelters a single entrance filled with a one-over-one light storm door and modern paneled door. A wood, shed roof awning supported by wood brackets and roofed in corrugated metal shelters the concrete pad and carpeted landing. Two vinyl, double-hung, six-over-six light windows with false muntin frame the entrance on either side.

East elevation

Four, vinyl, double-hung, two-over-two window are located on the east elevation. A modern air-conditioning unit is located to the south of the northernmost window.

North Elevation

A single, vinyl attic vent is located directly beneath the gable peak of the north elevation. A single, metal replacement door is located on the western end of the original school building. The west elevation's addition is visible and flush with the north elevation. A single wood, double-hung, one-over-four window is centered on the addition.

West Elevation

The west wall of the addition is unadorned. Two concrete steps access an entrance filled with a one-over-one light screen door and modern door on the addition's south wall. A single light, fixed, wood window is located to the west of the door on the addition's south wall. Three, single light, fixed, vinyl windows are located on the main school building's west elevation, south of the addition.

Interior

The interior walls of the Scattersville Public School are primarily covered in the original wood board siding, and the ceilings are finished in drywall unless otherwise noted.

Main Room

A replacement metal door opens into the Main Room. The floor is covered in red carpet that was installed in the late 1960s. The original wood floor is underneath the carpet.¹ Two modern ceiling fans and strips of LEDs provide light and air circulation to the room. Door surrounds, windowsills and frames, baseboards, and trim all are wood. Two entrances are located on the south wall to the east and west of the main entrance.

¹ LaShonda Padgett, Email to Author, August 29, 2023.

Scattersville Public School

Sumner County, Tennessee

Name of Property

County and State

They are filled with replacement doors and open into two square rooms. An interior wall delineates the main room from the kitchen at the room's northern end. A portion of the wall is opened to the kitchen to form a serving area. A bracketed counter the length of the opening is mounted directly beneath the serving area. An opening without a door is located to the east of the counter. A blackboard is mounted on the west wall.

Kitchen

The floor is covered in a combination of patterned linoleum and red carpet. A single modern ceiling fan and an LED strip provide light and circulation to the room. A full-length bracketed counter is located directly beneath the serving area opening on the kitchen's south wall. Metal ductwork is located above and around the serving area. An entrance filled with a replacement modern door is located on the western end of the north wall and access the exterior. Another entrance filled with a three-panel, original wood door is located on the west wall and accessed the Back Room. The remnant of a single light, wood window is located above the entrance and is filled with a wood panel. The Kitchen was added sometime ca. 1965 when the property transitioned to service as a community center. It was later remodeled in 1978. This was then the linoleum was installed.²

Back Room

The back room is finished with laminate flooring, wood panel siding on the walls, and wood paneling on the ceiling. An interior wall is located on the northern portion of the room. The interior wall is further divided to form two bathrooms, one located on the west side of the interior wall, the other on the east side. The entrances are filled with replacement doors. A modern replacement door is located on the south wall and accesses the exterior.

Well Pump, ca. 1928 – Contributing Structure

The Well Pump was constructed circa 1928 when the school was founded. A metal well pump rests on a rectangular poured concrete slab. A Y-shaped trough supports the well pump pipe and also rests on the poured concrete slab. A circular concrete slab is located directly beneath the Y-shaped trough and pump pipe. Four wood posts connected by a metal chain demarcate the Well Pump from the gravel driveway. The Well Pump is a Contributing Object because it was present during the Period of Significance, contributed to the operation of the school, and retains integrity of location, setting, material, design, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Scattersville Community Center Sign, ca. 1993 – Non-Contributing Object

The Scattersville Community Center Sign was erected circa 1993. Located southeast of the school, the sign is supported by two wooden posts sheathed in vinyl and capped with decorative vinyl caps. The sign itself is vinyl and slots into the space between the two posts. The sign reads "Scattersville COMMUNITY CENTER RE-ESTABLISHED 1978." Because the sign was not present during the Period of Significance and does not contribute to the property's historical significance, it is classified as a Non-Contributing object.

Integrity

The Scattersville Community Public School retains sufficient integrity to communicate its historical significance and qualify for listing in the National Register. The school building remains on the site of its original construction and maintains its rural setting. The overall rectangular design of the school remains. The major changes to the overall design of the school are the construction of the addition in 1965 and the installation of the kitchen, which was later remodeled in 1978. However, these changes are more than fifty-

² LaShonda Padgett, Email to Author, August 29, 2023.

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

years old and facilitated the conversion of the school to a community center. Scattersville Public School also retains integrity of materials and workmanship. The vinyl siding does not obscure the major character defining features of the building, and the original wood siding remains under the siding. The interior walls are still clad in original wood boards, and the door surrounds, window sills, and window frames are also original. Because the Scattersville Public school retains integrity of location, setting, materials, design, and workmanship, the property also retains integrity of feeling and association.

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

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.)

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black

SOCIAL HISTORY

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

Period of Significance

1928-1962

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Criteria Considerations

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

N/A

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Scattersville Public School is eligible at the local level under Criterion A for significance in the educational and social history of Scattersville’s African American community. Constructed in 1928, the Scattersville Public School is located in the community of Scattersville, a historically African American community sited west of Portland in Sumner County. The school also served the Mitchelville and Corntown communities, both of which were historically African American communities like Scattersville. The school offered local African American educational opportunities during an era defined by Jim Crow and segregation. After the school closed in 1962, the building reopened as a community center and hosted gatherings and events of local importance. The Period of Significance is 1928 to 1962, which corresponds with the building’s construction and the year the school closed.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The origins of both Scattersville and Portland are tied to the Buntin family and their plantation. William George Buntin was born in January of 1770 in Rowan County, North Carolina. On January 3, 1793, William married Mary Cowan.³ The couple had two children, John R. Buntin (1/5/1796 – 12/29/1884) and Thomas B. Buntin (3/20/1799 – 1/30/1865), while living in North Carolina.⁴ The couple had already moved to Sumner County by the time their third son, James Buntin (3/1810 – 9/6/1829) was born, and by 1820 they were listed as living in Gallatin, the seat of Sumner County.⁵ Census records indicate that William and his family were engaged in agriculture and relied on enslaved labor to build their wealth. Though not much is known about the enslaved, the census indicates William owned five slaves in 1820, and fifteen by 1830.⁶ William Buntin died on December 5, 1831.⁷

After their father died, Thomas and John began purchasing large tracts of land in the northern parts of Sumner and Robertson Counties. Sumner County was known historically for its rich natural resources and for its rapid growth and development in the nineteenth century. Created in 1786 by the North Carolina General Assembly, Sumner County was named after Revolutionary War General Jethro Sumner. Its rolling hills, fertile soil, and abundant natural water sources such as the Cumberland River were ideal for agricultural pursuits. This fueled the construction and improvements of roads and stagecoach lines, which in turn brought additional settlers. By 1820, the county boasted thirty communities and a total of fifty-four manufacturing businesses, which consisted largely of distilleries and mills.⁸ Thomas and John were attracted by this fertile land and burgeoning infrastructural and manufacturing network and began planting dark tobacco crops on their newly acquired properties.⁹

John and his family grew wealthy from their agricultural pursuits. Prior to his father’s death, John married Adelia Simonton Allison in 1819 and had several children.¹⁰ John and his family’s land was located west of Portland. Whereas his brother pursued interests with the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, John focused on

³ North Carolina, U.S. Index to Marriage Records, 1741-1868, Ancestry.com.

⁴ U.S. Find A Grave Index, 1600s-Current, Ancestry.com.

⁵ U.S. Find a Grave Index, 1600s-Current, Ancestry.com; United States Census, 1820.

⁶ United States Census, 1820; United States Census, 1830.

⁷ U.S. Find A Grave Index, 1600s-Current, Ancestry.com.

⁸ Dee Gee Lester, “Sumner County,” *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, Tennessee Historical Commission, 2017.

⁹ Jamie Johnson, et. al., *Sesquicentennial: Portland, Tennessee* (Morley: Acclaim Press, 2009) p. 1.

¹⁰ Jordan Dodd, Tennessee Marriages to 1825, Ancestry.com.

Scattersville Public School

Sumner County, Tennessee

Name of Property

County and State

increasing his tobacco estate.¹¹ Crucial to the operation of his tobacco estate was the use of enslaved labor. The 1850 U.S. Federal Census Slave Schedules indicates that John owned fifty slaves, which increased to sixty-seven in the 1860 Slave Schedule.¹² Considering that three-quarters of Tennesseans in 1860 owned less than ten slaves, John Buntin would be considered a larger slave-owner than most in the context of the state.¹³

The outbreak and conclusion of the Civil War changed the trajectory for both John Buntin and the enslaved on his plantation. Many Sumner Countians were sympathetic to the Confederate Cause and enlisted to fight against the Union. Camp Trousdale (named for Gov. William Trousdale of Gallatin) was organized outside of Portland to train newly enlisted Confederates. By July 1, 1861, nearly six thousand people had gathered at Camp Trousdale.¹⁴ The Civil War came to Portland a year later. Confederate General John Hunt Morgan defeated Union forces at Gallatin in 1862 but withdrew soon after. Sumner County came under Union control following Morgan's withdrawal. This occupation lasted for the remainder of the Civil War. During occupation, Union forces hired local African Americans, called "contrabands," to work as contract laborers. Other African Americans in Gallatin enlisted in the Union army's Thirteenth and Fourteenth U.S. Colored Troops.¹⁵ Confederate sympathizers resisted Union occupation by engaging in guerilla fighting that destroyed railroad tracks, county infrastructure, and local property.¹⁶

The conclusion of the Civil War and ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 brought a final end to slavery in Tennessee.¹⁷ Local histories indicated that John Buntin donated portions of his land to the formerly enslaved on his property.¹⁸ Some decided to accept this offer, and it is in this way that the first settlers founded Scattersville on former Buntin land in 1875. There were six initial families; the Charles Buntin family; the Henry Greene family; the Greene Gilbert family; the Seten Bell family; the Joerome Duncan family; and the Ike Brewer family. The unusual name of the community can be attributed to George German. While traveling through the community, he noted how the houses were "far apart and scattered." As a result, he recommended that they should call their community "Scattersville," and the community adopted the name.¹⁹ Scattersville was one of three African American communities established in the area west of Portland, the other two being Mitchellville and Corntown.²⁰

¹¹ Johnson et.al., *Sesquicentennial: Portland, Tennessee*, p. 1.

¹² U.S. Federal Census – Slave Schedules, 1850, Ancestry.com; U.S. Federal Census – Slave Schedules, 1860, Ancestry.com.

¹³ Anita S. Goodstein, "Slavery," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, Tennessee Historical Commission, 2017. Goodstein goes on to note that only person owned more than three hundred slaves in 1860, and that only forty-seven Tennesseans owned more than one hundred slaves.

¹⁴ Johnson et. al., *Sesquicentennial*, p. 18. Local histories note that this was originally located south of Richland Station a long the L&N Railroad. The camp changed location multiple times due to unsanitary conditions. The final location was sited on TGT Road.

¹⁵ Lester, "Sumner County," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, 2017.

¹⁶ Johnson et. al., *Sesquicentennial*, p. 22.

¹⁷ U.S. Congress, Thirteenth Amendment, January 31, 1865, <https://constitution.congress.gov/constitution/amendment-13/>.

¹⁸ LaShonda Padgett, interview by author, Scattersville, June 27, 2023.

¹⁹ Wava Bratton Young, "History of Scattersville Community," no date.

²⁰ LaShonda Padgett, interview by author, Scattersville, June 27, 2023. Dee Gee Lester noted in her "Sumner County" article other African American communities established after the Civil War in the county, including Village Green and Free Hill. Black Sumner Countians also established the first agricultural fair created by and for African Americans.

Scattersville Public School

Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee

County and State

Scattersville was home to a several important rural institutions and small businesses. The first institution the community established was a church. The first religious services in Scattersville were held in a brush arbor in 1875. The church transitioned to a community member's house as the community grew. Reverend West Crocker organized the first "official" church in Scattersville in 1880. It was named New Hope Baptist Church by Lulu Buntin Parrish. Though the church has changed over the years, it is still located on the same land as the first church in 1880. New Hope Baptist Church purchased the first cemetery in Scattersville from the African Bell Association, an African American fraternal organization. The small community was also home to two other lodges, the Oddfellows of America and the Household of Ruth.²¹

The community continued to grow in the first half of the twentieth century. By the early 1900s, Scattersville was home to two grocery stores operated by community members Ike Brewer, Wilmus Turner, and Jake Rankins. Jake and Ike joined Nancy Goins as the first members of Scattersville to own telephones, installed sometime between 1913 and 1914. The community boasted a local baseball team and a band, which numbered sixteen members and featured the clarinet, trombone, brass horn, bass drum, kettle drum, and alto and baritone singers.²² Residents of Scattersville were generally sharecroppers and farmers who grew tobacco, strawberries, and gardens to feed their families.²³

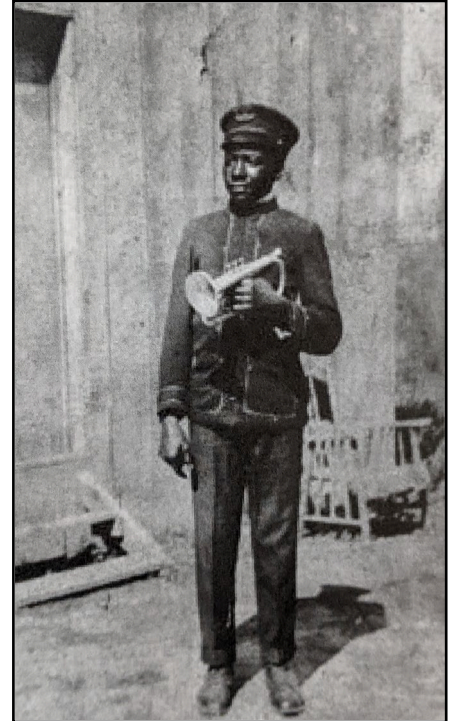


Figure 1: Oliver Brewer was a member of the Scattersville band. 1916. Photograph courtesy of Johnson et. al, *Sesquicentennial: Portland, Tennessee*.

Educational opportunities for African Americans in Scattersville and near Portland were limited before the construction of the Scattersville Public School in 1928. The first African American school constructed on the west side of Portland was the Jeff Groves School in Mitchellville in 1890. It was named after the community member who donated the land for the school. Shortly thereafter came the Dick Mitchell School in Corntown, also named after the person who donated the land for its construction. Both schools were of log construction.²⁴ Community member Lula Rucker recalled that the school in Mitchellville had only one teacher and that students spent two-and-a-half months at Jeff Groves School and then finished the second two-and-a-half months of the school year at the Dick Mitchell School in Corntown.²⁵ Both of these schools closed with the opening of the Scattersville Public School, which consolidated students in the area into one building.

²¹ Wava Bratton Young, "History of New Hope Baptist Church About 1875," no date, <https://sites.rootsweb.com/~tnsumner/sumnewh.htm>.

²² Members included Henry Bratton, Oliver Brewer, Leonard Coakley (clarinet), Luther Bratton Sr., John Alison Groves, Cornelious Coakley (trombones), John Duncan, Gilmore Coakley (alto), William "Dick" Brewer (baritone), Lewis Brewer (brass horn), Bill Bledsoe, Alfred Brewer (bass drum), Jessie Bledsoe, Ventress Brewer, Claton Brewer (kettle drum and teacher), and brothers M.B. and N.C. Davis.

²³ Young, "History of Scattersville Community."

²⁴ Young, "History of Scattersville Community."

²⁵ Highland Rim Historical Society, "History of Mitchellville Community by Mrs. Lula Rucker," *Finding our Past: An Oral History of Portland and the Surrounding Areas*, <https://portlandtnlibrary.omeka.net/items/show/17>.

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State



Figure 2: Parkers Chapel School, circa 1923. Photograph courtesy of Johnson, et. al.

The other African American school in the Portland area was Parker's Chapel. The African American community of Parker's Chapel is sited east of Portland and was originally known as "Old Taylor's Field." Like Scattersville, Mitchellville, and Corntown, the original settlers, Sam and Lucy Coakley, were former slaves. The first school in Parker's Chapel began in the 1870s. Classes were held in a log church where the current Parker's Chapel Missionary Baptist Church and Cemetery (NR Listed 11/29/2021) is sited. This was followed by a small, one-room school that operated until it was destroyed by a cyclone. A two room Rosenwald School (named Parker's Chapel School after the community) was constructed in 1923 to replace the destroyed building. It served grades one through eight. Citizens of the community raised \$600 for its construction, and the Rosenwald School fund donated the remaining \$1200 needed to build the school.²⁶ The school served the Parker's Chapel community until it closed in 1960, after which students were bused to Union High School in Gallatin until the Portland School system desegregated in 1965. Parker's Chapel School is no longer extant.²⁷

African Americans did not have access to Tennessee's public-school systems prior to the Civil War. Although there was no specific law that prevented the education of enslaved African Americans, many whites were threatened by the idea of educated slaves. Some whites even took violent action against enslaved African Americans who learned how to read or write. The years following the Civil War and Reconstruction promised change for African Americans in Tennessee, and many took advantage of their newfound freedom and civil rights. In response, white legislators took steps to disenfranchise African Americans through a series of laws, codes, and legislation collectively known as "Jim Crow" laws in the latter-half of the nineteenth century. The Plessy v. Ferguson case in 1896 made "separate but equal" segregation legal in the United States, though it should be noted that the Tennessee General Assembly had already mandated segregation in public schools as early as 1867.²⁸

Jim Crow continued to harden throughout the late 1800s and early-twentieth century. Tennessee continued to pass laws that further segregated public education, including the modification of the state constitution to require racial segregation in public education in 1870, and a 1901 state law that banned teachers from instructing pupils of a different race. Further, African American schools were much less likely to receive

²⁶ Gwen Smith, "The Parker's Chapel Story," no date, <https://sites.rootsweb.com/~tnsumner/sumnpkch.htm>.

²⁷ Anne-Leslie Owens, "Parker's Chapel," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, Tennessee Historical Commission, 2017. Sumner County is also home to Durham's Chapel School (NR Listed 11/8/2006). Durham's Chapel School is located southeast of Portland, near Bethpage. It was constructed in 1923 and served as a school until 1962. The Durham's Chapel community evolved much like Scattersville and Parker's Chapel. Settlement began in the mid-1860s and early-1870s, and the first settlers were formerly enslaved African Americans. For more information, see: Jaimie Woodcock et. al., "Durham's Chapel School," National Register Nomination, 11/8/2006.

²⁸ Mary S. Hoffschwelle, "Public Education in Tennessee," *Trials and Triumphs: Tennesseans' Search for Citizenship, Community, and Opportunity*, Middle Tennessee State University, 2014; Jimmie Lewis Franklin, "Civil Rights Movement," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, Tennessee Historical Commission, 2017.

Scattersville Public School

Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee

County and State

county or state funds than their white counterparts. This problem was further exacerbated in African American rural schools. Programs like the Julius Rosenwald Fund, General Education Board, and New Deal Agencies like the Public Works Administration (PWA), Works Projects Administration (WPA), and National Youth Administration (NYA) helped in some cases to alleviate the disparity between African American schools and white schools, but could not completely solve the problem.²⁹ For example, white students in Portland received a spacious, two-story, four-year high school building, the Sumner County High School, in 1916.³⁰ A new addition was constructed in 1919, which brought the building to a total of sixteen rooms for 150 students. The campus also contained eight acres and an athletic field on the north side.³¹ This was in comparison to the Scattersville Public School, which only received funding to build a single-story, single-room schoolhouse in 1928. Despite the challenges imposed by Jim Crow, African American schools like Scattersville Public School provided both a quality education and served as centers of African American community life. Historian Jimmie Lewis Franklin noted that “as an institution, only the family and the church were more central to Black community life.”³²

In 1900, Sumner County school officials determined that they would build a school in Scattersville to serve the Mitchellville, Corn town, and Scattersville community. Locating the school in Scattersville was ideal because it was a halfway point for all three communities. Henry Seten Bell and his wife Sarah Bell deeded the land for the Scattersville Public School, and in 1928 the current school building was completed.³³ The school was a one-room schoolhouse and taught grades one through twelve.³⁴ The first teacher was Ella Lee Oldham, though many other distinguished teachers mentored the students who attended Scattersville Public School over the years. One such teacher was Ola Bate, who taught at Scattersville in 1931. She was the first African American female from Sumner County to earn a college degree, having graduated from Agricultural and Industrial State College in 1926. Her father, Charles Bate, was the first African American man to earn a college degree when he graduated from Roger Williams College in 1900.³⁵ Professors from Gallatin and

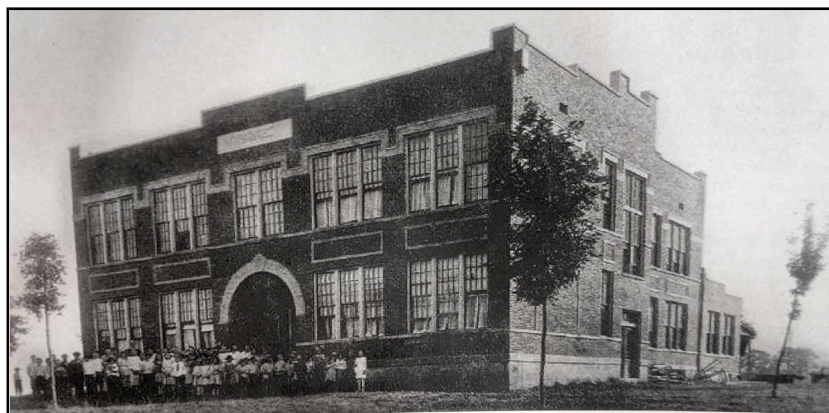


Figure 3: Sumner County High School following its completion, circa 1916. Photograph courtesy of Johnson, et. al.

further afield also taught classes at Scattersville Public School.³⁶ One

²⁹ Hoffschwelle, “Public Education in Tennessee,” *Trials and Triumphs*

³⁰ Johnson et. al., *Sesquicentennial*, p. 67.

³¹ Johnson et. al., *Sesquicentennial*, p. 77.

³² Franklin, “Civil Rights Movement,” *Tennessee Encyclopedia*.

³³ Young, “History of Scattersville Community.”

³⁴ LaShonda Padgett, interview by author, Scattersville, June 27, 2023.

³⁵ Velma Howell Brinkley with Mary Huddleston Malone, *Images of America: African-American Life in Sumner County* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 1998), p. 6.

³⁶ Other teachers include Mary Branham, Lee Gooch, Professor Sullivan, Tonia Watkin, Helen Hall, Mollie Foley, Hattie Harris, Lili Bradley, Edna Mai Scott, Professor Peter Tyree, Ola Mai Robinson, Queen O. Sta ten, Professor Robert D. Smith, Alice Smith,

Scattersville Public School

Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee

County and State

teacher, Alice Smith, would later go on to be the first teacher in Portland to integrate the public school system in 1965 at Clyde Riggs Elementary.³⁷

Not much is known about the classes the school offered, or the total number of students enrolled. Much of the school's history lied in the memory of those who attended, many of whom have passed away or moved away from the Scattersville community. A large number of photographs and other materials related to the school were lost in a fire. Despite this, some information can be gleaned from photographs and other school curriculums in the area. A 1931 image of Ola Bate and her class shows twenty-six students of varying ages. Though it is unknown if this number is representative of the average class, the image captures the large number of youth between the three communities that attended the one-room Scattersville Public School. It is likely that Scattersville Public School offered a similar curriculum to that of the Durham's Chapel School, a Rosenwald School constructed three years earlier near Bethpage in Sumner County. The boy's education curriculum focused on industrial training, while the girl's curriculum was based in home economics. Both curriculums also taught reading, writing, and arithmetic.³⁸



Figure 4: Scattersville Public School, circa 1928. Photograph courtesy of Johnson, et. al.

Scattersville Public School served the educational needs of the Scattersville, Corntown, and Mitchellville communities until it closed in 1962, after which students were bused to Union



Figure 5: Scattersville class with Ola Bate, 1931. Photograph courtesy of Johnson, et. al.

High School, an African American school in Gallatin.³⁹ Though the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education Topeka* (1954) that segregation in public schools was unconstitutional and mandated that all schools desegregate, in many areas this did not happen overnight.⁴⁰ Portland's school system did not begin desegregation until 1965. Virgil Coakley bused African American students who formerly attended Scattersville Public School and Parker's Chapel School (which closed in 1960) to Union High School in Gallatin. In 1965, the school system offered African American students in the area the option to attend Portland schools, and in 1966 Virgil Coakley's bus ceased operation. Union High School closed its door in

Alleen Francis Brewer, Professor James H. Smith, Cora Elliott, Professor Gildden Dye, Joseph Coakley, Effie Coakley, and Mary Harper.

³⁷ Johnson et. al., *Sesquicentennial*, p. 331.

³⁸ Jaime Woodcock et. al., "Durham's Chapel School," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 2017, p. 6.

³⁹ LaShonda Padgett, interview by author, Scattersville, June 27, 2023.

⁴⁰ Franklin, "Civil Rights Movement," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*.

Scattersville Public School

Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee

County and State

May of 1970, ending school segregation in Sumner County.⁴¹

After the Scattersville Public School closed, the property was deeded over to several community members. The building then transitioned into serving as a community center. The newly anointed Scattersville Community Center continued to be a major part of the community's life. Softball games and fish fries were held on the property, and a kitchen was installed sometime after it ceased use as a school. The Community Center also hosted funerals and even served as a residence for members of the community when they had nowhere else to go.⁴² The Scattersville Public School is an important part of Portland's African American history and serves as a physical reminder of the importance of education and community.

⁴¹ Johnson et. al., *Sesquicentennial*, p. 239.

⁴² LaShonda Padgett, interview by author, Scattersville, June 27, 2023.

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

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<https://sites.rootsweb.com/~tnsumner/sumnewh.htm>.

Scattersville Public School
 Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
 County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):		Primary location of additional data:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	X	State Historic Preservation Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously listed in the National Register		Other State agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously determined eligible by the National Register		Federal agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	designated a National Historic Landmark		Local government
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #		University
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #		Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository:	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A			

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .96 **USGS Quadrangle** Portland 309-SE

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (These coordinates should correspond to the corners of the property boundary. Add additional coordinates if necessary. Enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Datum if other than WGS84:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 36.592678 | Longitude: -86.568037 |
| 2. Latitude: 36.592738 | Longitude: -86.568549 |
| 3. Latitude: 36.593716 | Longitude: -86.568501 |
| 4. Latitude: 36.593696 | Longitude: -86.568217 |

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is roughly rectangular in shape and consists of less than one acre. The corners of the boundaries correspond to the coordinates noted above.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries are drawn to include the land and resources that retain integrity and convey their historical association with the property's significance.

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

USGS Topographic Map



Figure 6: Red circle indicates the location of the Scattersville Public School. Courtesy of United States Geological Survey, 2019.

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

Boundary Map



Figure 7: Boundary lines are depicted in blue. Each vertex is keyed to their corresponding corners on the boundary map.

Scattersville Public School Sumner County, Tennessee
Name of Property County and State

Name Lashonda Padgett & J. Ethan Holden
Organization Scattersville Community Club & Tennessee Historical Commission
Street & Number 2509 Booker Street Date 04/18/2023
City or Town Nashville Telephone 615-943-7918
E-mail Padgett300@gmail.com State TN Zip Code 37208

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Photographs** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints. Photos should be submitted separately in a JPEG or TIFF format. Do not embed these photographs into the form)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. can be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps. They can also be embedded in the Section 7 or 8 narratives)

Paperwork Reduction Act 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. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

Photo Log

Name of Property: Scattersville Public School

City or Vicinity: Portland

County: Sumner

State: Tennessee

Photographer: Rebecca Schmitt and LaShonda Padgett

Date Photographed: June 27, 2023 and August 19, 2023

- 1 of 16. Southeast oblique and Scattersville Community Center sign. Photographer facing northwest.
- 2 of 16. East elevation. Photographer facing northwest.
- 3 of 16. North elevation. Photographer facing south.
- 4 of 16. West elevation. Photographer facing northeast.
- 5 of 16. Façade (south elevation). Photographer facing north.
- 6 of 16. Well pump. Photographer facing northwest.
- 7 of 16. Scattersville Public School overview. Photographer facing northwest.
- 8 of 16. Interior, Main Room. Photographer facing north.
- 9 of 16. Interior, Main Room. Photographer facing southwest.
- 10 of 16. Interior, Main Room. Photographer facing southeast.
- 11 of 16. Interior, Main Room. Photographer facing northwest.
- 12 of 16. Interior, Kitchen. Photographer facing northwest.
- 13 of 16. Interior, Kitchen. Photographer facing southeast.
- 14 of 16. Interior, Kitchen. Photographer facing west.
- 15 of 16. Interior, Back Room. Photographer facing west.
- 16 of 16. Interior, Back Room. Photographer facing southeast.

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

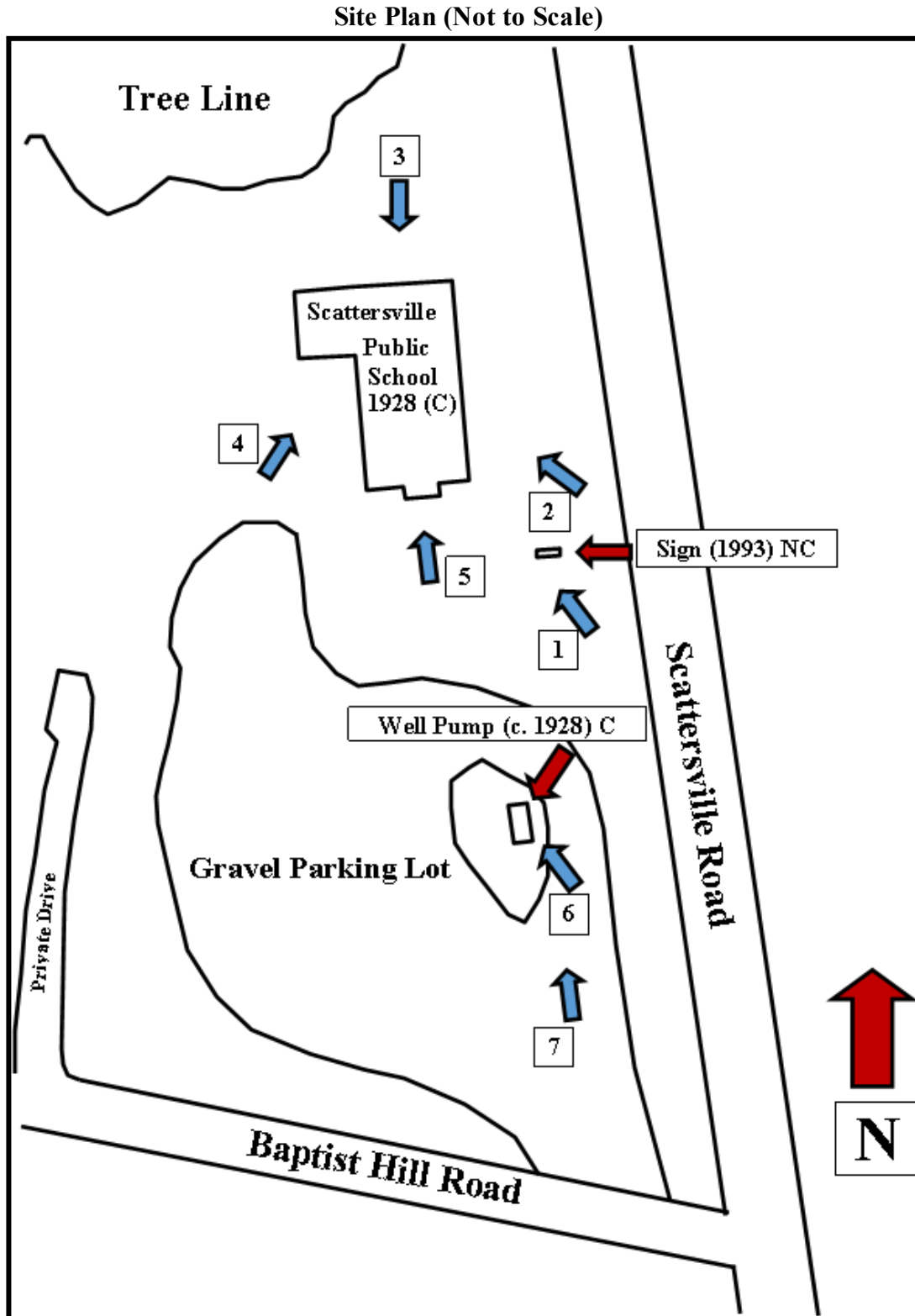


Figure 8: Site plan with photographs keyed in blue.

Scattersville Public School
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee
County and State

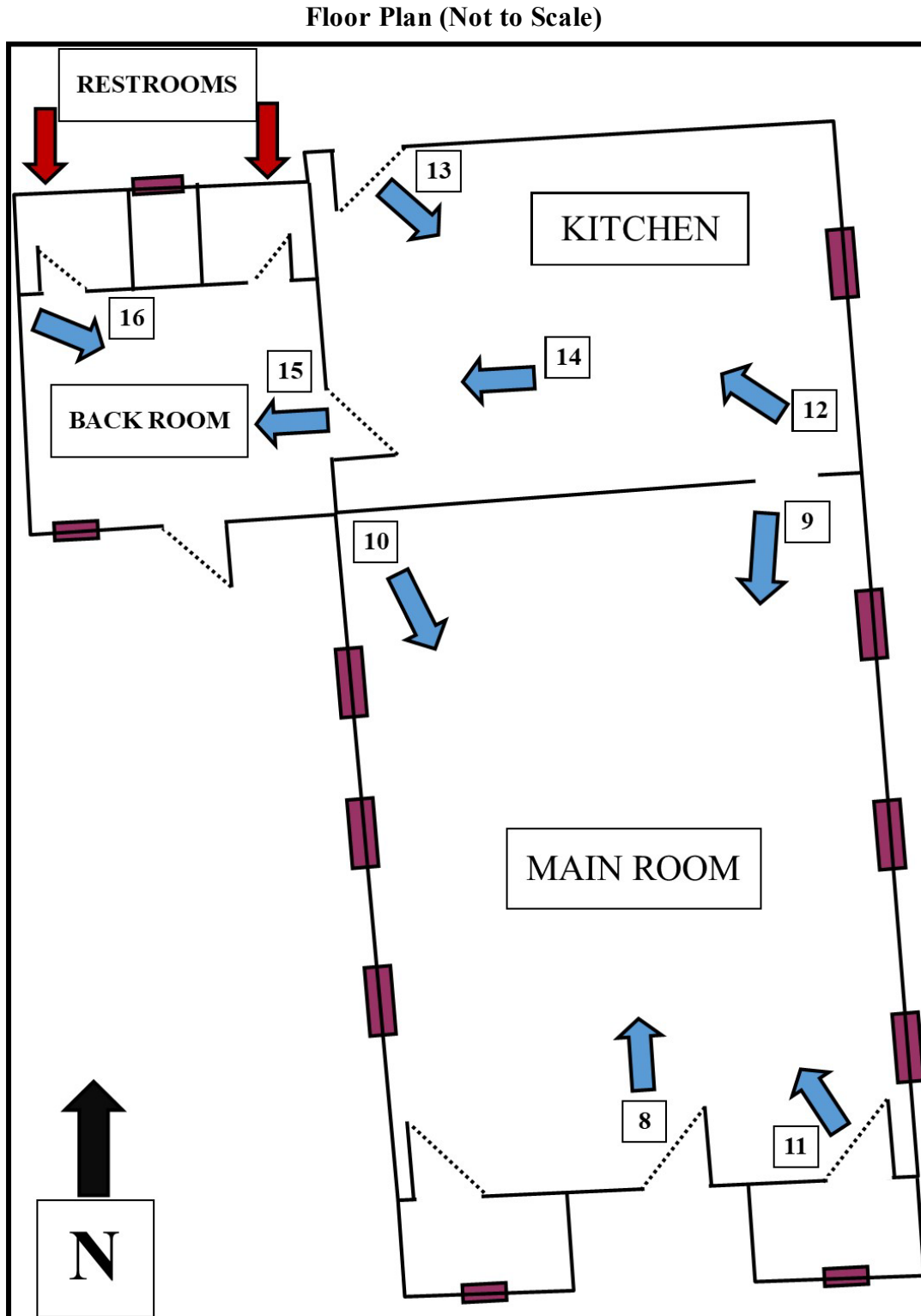


Figure 9: Floor plan with photographs keyed in blue.

Property Owner(s):

(This information will not be submitted to the National Park Service, but will remain on file at the Tennessee Historical Commission)

**Scattersville Community Club (Winston Key, Roger Johnson, James House, John
Duncan, James Hammond)**

Name

Street &

Number

Telephone

615-943-7918

City or Town

Portland

State/Zip

37148



1 OF 16



2 OF 16



3 OF 16



4 OF 16



5 OF 16



6 OF 16



7 OF 16



8 OF 16



9 OF 16



10 OF 16



11 OF 16



12 OF 16



13 OF 16



14 OF 16



15 OF 16



16 OF 16