

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

LISTED ON:	
VLR	06/16/2011
NRHP	08/18/2011

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. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Toms Brook School
other names/site number DHR File No. 313-5001

2. Location

street & number 3232 South Main Street

N/A	not for publication
N/A	vicinity

city or town Toms Brook
state Virginia code VA county Shenandoah code 171 zip code 22660

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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 X local
 _____
Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
Virginia Department of Historic Resources
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 or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

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

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL REVIVAL

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: BRICK

roof: STONE/ Slate

other: WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Toms Brook School, built in 1935, is the largest building in the small Shenandoah Valley turnpike town of Toms Brook. Located on the east side of the Valley Turnpike (U.S. Route 11), its imposing architecture makes it a dramatic presence in this town of mostly frame buildings. The monumental portico is the most distinctive feature of the two-story, red-brick school. The school has an unusual plan with a large two-story space, which functioned as both the auditorium and gymnasium, occupying half of the interior. Windows on the interior auditorium wall open into the north/south corridor, providing light into the corridor. The school had a total of twelve classrooms. A one-story cafeteria building was constructed in 1952 on the hill behind the school and was connected to it by an elevated walkway.

Narrative Description

The Toms Brook School stands on a 1.156-acre lot on the east side of U.S. Route 11 in the middle of the linear turnpike town of Toms Brook. The northwest-facing main school building is situated on level ground; however, the lot then rises steeply to the rear (east) with the cafeteria located midway up the hill at the second-floor level of the school. A mortared random-rubble stone retaining wall holds the bank below the cafeteria. The Architectural plans indicate that the lot originally rose more steeply to the rear, necessitating significant grading to prepare level ground before the school could be built. The lot is completely open with the exception of two dogwood trees on the front lawn that flank the concrete sidewalk that provide access from the street to the front door. A gravel drive encircles the school and runs between the main school and the cafeteria. Concrete steps rise on the hill behind the cafeteria. Apparently athletic fields or a playground was located on a level area at the top of the hill but this area is not on the nominated parcel.

The Toms Brook School was built in 1935 and is of monumental proportions. The school features a T-shaped footprint with the portico and main entrance at the top of the T. Tall columns support the pediment, which has a plain frieze. The entrance features double-leaf doors with glass lights topped by a transom. This, in turn is framed by pilasters supporting a pediment that echoes the portico pediment.

The two-story building is brick laid in five-course bond with an alternating course laid in Flemish bond. The foundation is parged and a cornerstone is located on the northeast corner of the facade. The east and west end walls of the front block are blank. The windows beneath the portico are single eight-over-eight-light wooden sash windows. On each side, large wooden windows arranged in groups of five six-over-six-light double-hung sash provide ample light into the classrooms and auditorium/gymnasium. Windows in the rear block, which steps in from the main stem of the T, are paired on the sides and single across the second-floor rear wall. There are no windows on the first floor rear wall. A projecting molded brick cornice encircles the school and stone or cast-concrete coping tops the roof parapet. The portico has a gable roof while the main block of the school has a flat roof.

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)

- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1935-1952

Significant Dates

1935

1952

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

James Raymond Mims

Criteria Considerations

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

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.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with its construction in 1935–1936 and ends in 1952 with the construction of the cafeteria.

Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Toms Brook High School was constructed in 1935–1936 at Toms Brook, a small town in Shenandoah County, Virginia. Architect James R. Mims, of Luray, Virginia, designed the building in the Colonial Revival style. During the first half of the 1930s, the county undertook a construction campaign to replace older and damaged schoolhouses with new buildings; Toms Brook High School was the last one built under this program. The school’s unusual design—the entry leads to an auditorium that occupies half of the floor space, with a corridor and classrooms lining the other half—and its fireproof construction make it an interesting variation on school architecture for the period. Mims also designed a cafeteria for the school that was completed in 1952.

Toms Brook High School meets National Register of Historic Places Criterion C (Architecture) as a locally significant example of then-modern fireproof school design executed in the Colonial Revival style. The school retains the integrity of its historic location, association, setting, feeling, design, materials, and workmanship. The period of significance begins with its construction in 1935–1936 and ends in 1952 with the construction of the cafeteria.

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

The Toms Brook School is eligible in the area of Architecture as a good example of a large school executed in the Colonial Revival style. The monumental columned and pedimented portico, the multiple-light sash windows, and the use of red brick and white trim evoke a sense of the county’s history, its permanence and authority which was intended to convey the importance of education in this rural area. It was designed by local architect James Raymond Mims in an era when many localities took advantage of the standardized plans offered by the Virginia Department of Education.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

In 1869, during the Reconstruction era that followed the Civil War, Virginia adopted a new state constitution that mandated public elementary education throughout the Commonwealth. Conservative elitists, whose children typically were either tutored at home or attended private-subscription schools, vigorously opposed the concept of public education and the funding of public schools with tax dollars. The advocates of the new system gradually defeated the conservatives by acknowledging local control over each jurisdiction’s schools. As a result, the quality of both public education itself and the infrastructure that supported it—the buildings in which children were taught—varied widely from one county and city to another, depending on local customs,

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: **Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 313-5001

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.156
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>721566</u>	<u>4313414</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)
The nominated property encompasses Shenandoah County tax parcel 034A A061

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)
These boundaries encompass the lot on which all extant school-related buildings stand including the school and cafeteria.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ashley Neville & John Salmon

organization Ashley Neville, LLC date 3/25/2011

street & number 112 Thompson Street, Suite B-1 telephone 804-798-2124

city or town Ashland state Virginia zip code 23059

e-mail ashleyneville@comcast.net

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Toms Brook School

City or Vicinity: Toms Brook

County: Shenandoah **State:** Virginia

sdfsdf

Photographer: Ashley Neville

Date Photographed: February 2010, January 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 11. Façade, view to the southeast
- 2 of 11 Façade portico, view to the southeast
- 3 of 11 East elevation, view to the northwest
- 4 of 11 Elevated walkway connecting main school (on right) and cafeteria (on left)
- 5 of 11 Cafeteria, view to the northwest
- 6 of 11 School lobby, view to the southeast
- 7 of 11 Lobby stairs, view to the north
- 8 of 11 Auditorium and gymnasium, view to the southeast
- 9 of 11 Auditorium and gymnasium, view to the northwest
- 10 of 11 Typical classroom, view to the southeast
- 11 of 11 Second floor corridor, view to the northwest

The CD for these photographs is on file at of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources archives, Richmond, Virginia.

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 18 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.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Toms Brook School

County and State Shenandoah County, Virginia

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION CONTINUED

The front door opens into a lobby with stairs rising on the east wall and the entrance into the auditorium/gymnasium straight ahead. Modern partition walls sheathed with paneling create an office on the west side of the lobby. Paired pillars divide an outer and inner lobby with the inner lobby immediately in front of the auditorium/gymnasium entrance. A boy's restroom is located on the east side of this inner lobby immediately adjacent to the auditorium. A north/south corridor runs the length of the building from this inner lobby with classrooms located on the west side and the auditorium/gymnasium on the east side of the corridor. This corridor accesses the elevated walkway on the second floor that connects the main school and the cafeteria.

The school interior is utilitarian. Lobby and corridor walls are sheathed with tan-colored glazed brick, typical of the period in which it was constructed. The lower part of the lobby and corridor walls has been painted to create a wainscot effect. The front quarter-turn stair has a closed stringer with plain metal newels and pickets. A second stair is located near the rear entrance and has the same features at the front stair. It has been enclosed on the first floor.

The two-story auditorium/gymnasium is the most unusual and imposing feature of the interior measuring, 50 feet by 80 feet. Triple doorways topped with multiple-light transoms provide access into the auditorium/gymnasium from the inner lobby. Groups of five, six-over-six-light wooden sash windows line both sides of the space on both levels. The north entrance wall contains the doors and two windows on the first floor and seven windows on the second floor. Windows on the interior wall provide light into the corridor as well as allowing people to view the activities in the auditorium/gymnasium from the corridors. The walls of the auditorium are the same glazed brick found in the lobby and corridors. A raised stage is located at the south end and has a plain proscenium. Basketball hoops and backboards are located in front of the stage and on the entrance wall and remains of bleachers are located along the corridor wall of the auditorium/gymnasium.

There are a total of twelve classrooms in the school; five on the first floor and seven on the second floor. The classrooms have plastered walls and wooden floors but both are in extremely poor condition. A chalkboard occupies at least one wall of the classroom and several classrooms have closets. The classrooms are in poor condition.

The cafeteria stands on the hill behind the school and is a one-story brick-and-block building with the same five-course-to-Flemish-bond-course exterior brickwork as the main building. The original architectural drawings called for the entire building to have a flat roof; however, a shallow gable roof has been added to the eastern part of the building. There is an exterior chimney on the rear. The windows are

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Toms Brook School

County and State Shenandoah County, Virginia

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 2

a combination of five horizontal lights with a bottom hopper light and two-over-two-horizontal-light sash windows. There are three exterior entrances; a double-leaf door on the rear and into the south end of the hyphen, and a single door into the east end.

The cafeteria is divided into two sections; the food preparation area on the east end and the eating area on the west end. The cafeteria interior has exposed brick and block walls in the lunch room and gypsum wallboard walls in the kitchen and storage areas.

The main school building and the cafeteria are connected by an elevated walkway or hyphen that extends from the second-floor school corridor to the cafeteria. Constructed of concrete block and parged on the exterior, it has six-light pivoting metal windows in the center on both sides and an exterior entrance on the east side of the south end. A sloped ramp was called for in this location in the original 1935 drawings. It apparently was converted into the present elevated walkway when the cafeteria was built in 1952.

Copies of the original architectural drawings for the school and cafeteria survive at the Virginia Department of Education. The original drawings were executed in 1935 by Mims, Speaks & Company of Luray and shed some light on the way the school was used. The plans called for the stairs to be on the right of the entrance and the principal's office on the left but the plan was flipped when the school was built with the stair on the left and the principal's office on the right. A later frame addition was constructed adjacent to the principal's office and occupies about half of the original entrance lobby. The large two-story space was labeled Assembly Hall and Gymnasium. Only a few of the classrooms had specific uses. The rear classroom on the first floor was used as the home economics classroom and the front east classroom on the second floor was the chemistry classroom. The front center room on the second floor was the library. The chemistry room and the library are the only rooms in the building to have skylights. The boy's bathrooms were located adjacent to the auditorium/gymnasium on both levels and the girl's bathroom were located at the end of the hall on both floors.

Shenandoah County school records at the Virginia Department of Education indicate that a utility building that could accommodate 20 students was built in 1935 with improvements made in 1954. The 1951 plans for the proposed cafeteria show a shop located about twenty-five feet to the rear of the cafeteria site; however, a shop was not shown on the 1931 plans. This building does not survive.

The Toms Brook School was designed in the popular Colonial Revival style. This style is one of the most prolific styles used for buildings in the county from the late nineteenth century onward. The Philadelphia Centennial of 1876 stimulated an interest in American history. Inspired by the American Revolution-era buildings, architects found inspiration in late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century Georgian- and Federal-style buildings. Elements like pronounced front porches and entrances, front doors with fanlights

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Toms Brook School

County and State Shenandoah County, Virginia

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 7 Page 3

or transoms, gabled, pedimented or Palladian windows, and pilasters and columns were used on all types of buildings including banks, libraries, churches, and schools in addition to residences. Many schools in Virginia were built in this idiom. The execution of J. Raymond Mims's design for the Toms Brook School in red brick with a contrasting white trim and its monumental portico typifies the Colonial Revival style.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Toms Brook School

County and State Shenandoah County, Virginia

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 4

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE CONTINUED

revenues, and preferences. Generally, one- or two-room schools predominated in rural localities such as Shenandoah County, and even when larger buildings were constructed later in the century to accommodate additional students and the increasing desire for education to the high school level, the schools tended to be of inexpensive frame construction. Fire posed a constant threat because the schools were heated with wood-burning stoves, and the buildings required considerable maintenance to prevent or postpone deterioration.¹

At the end of the nineteenth century and during the first decades of the twentieth century, various ideas of educational reform took root in Virginia as they did elsewhere. School consolidation, largely in the interest of efficiency and economy, resulted in the reduction of the numbers of schools in a locality as new and larger facilities were built. Likewise, some of the new buildings were constructed solely for high school use, but many at first functioned as both primary and secondary schools. New classes were also introduced, and the state board of education offered funding and standard school-construction plans to localities to expedite adoption of the progressive trends. The numbers of teachers also increased. Although the local control of education was still paramount in principle, the localities' growing acceptance of state funding, building plans, and curricula began a fundamental shift in the balance of power.²

Shenandoah County, like other Virginia localities, underwent educational changes. In 1872, the county had an enrollment of 3,536 students, 62 schools, and 66 teachers. By 1902, school enrollment had increased to 4,864, and there were 103 schools and 127 teachers. In 1932, however, the number of students was about the same as twenty years earlier (4,867), the number of schools had declined to 78 because of consolidation, and the number of teachers had increased to 170.³

Overseeing this period of consolidation and change was Charles Virgil (C. V.) Shoemaker, a teacher and principal who served as Shenandoah County Superintendent of Schools from 1913 until 1940. During Shoemaker's long tenure, the several county school board districts were consolidated into one county-wide school board; the several high schools were consolidated into six accredited high schools; elementary school terms, which formerly had been of varying lengths, were standardized at nine months; agriculture and home economics were introduced into all the high schools; school attendance was made compulsory; the long-standing rule against employing married teachers was discontinued; community leagues evolved into parent-teacher associations; a uniform salary scale was introduced; the certification standards for teachers were upgraded; and the standardized testing of students was introduced. Most significantly, Shoemaker coordinated the county-wide school construction campaign of the 1930s.⁴

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Toms Brook School

County and State Shenandoah County, Virginia

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 5

The first building constructed during the campaign was the New Market High and Middle School. After the old frame school burned on May 13, 1930, a new brick building was constructed in 1930–1932. Next, the Shenandoah County School Board hired Raymond V. Long, architect, and Guy Dinges, supervising architect, to design and construct the Colonial Revival–style Edinburg High School in 1932–1933. On March 23, 1934, the Columbia Furnace Elementary School burned, and during the same year a new brick school was built to replace it. Finally, Shoemaker and the board turned their attention to Toms Brook.⁵

The old Toms Brook School was a simple two-story frame building with a large frame addition. The gable-end facade featured a central window on the first floor, with flanking entry doors. Three windows were arranged symmetrically above, on the second floor, and the rooftop featured a cupola for the school bell. A two-story frame addition projected from the left side of the main building; its facade had two windows on the first floor with a single entry door on the right, and three windows above. The main building was constructed in 1879, and two rooms were added in 1906. A substantial remodeling took place in 1915, when the two-story addition was constructed and the heating system was improved. Like other large schools of the period, this school housed both high school and elementary grades.⁶

Standards for school buildings had long stressed that fresh air, space, and light were characteristics of school design that promoted a healthy learning environment. Large windows, adequate space for individual desks, and open land for recreation became the pattern for school in the first three decades of the twentieth century as school systems moved from the smaller schools of the late-nineteenth century towards a consolidated school system. By 1920, the State Board of Education had established a School Building Service that sold plans to localities at a minimal cost, saving money from architectural fees. This service standardized plans for schools that featured a basic classroom size of about 25 by 35 feet, expansive windows, usually multiples of multiple-light sash windows, and high ceilings. In rural areas, the school was expected to play an expanded role and become the focus of community life. An important addition to the new consolidated rural schools was an auditorium/gymnasium that could also function as a community center. The auditorium/gymnasium provided space for town plays and programs and could be used as indoor recreational facilities after physical education was included in the curriculum in 1920.⁷

The School Building Service could also provide customized plans to meet the needs of a community. During the first decades of this service, many schools were custom-designed for the community in which it would be located and this is a greater variation during the early period. The Toms Brook School has an unusual plan with the large auditorium/gymnasium occupying almost half the space and on one side of the building. This plan has also been identified in at least one school located in Mississippi indicating that the plan for the Toms Brooks School might be more standardized than its unusual design would indicate.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Toms Brook School

County and State Shenandoah County, Virginia

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 6

Although Shenandoah County records indicate that James R. Mims, of Luray, was the architect for the Toms Brook School, he is known to have designed only one other school, the high school in Luray, built in 1929. Raymond V. Long, however, was associated with the State Board of Education between 1923 and 1937 (when the Toms Brook School was built) and designed many schools around the state including the Edinburg High School in 1923-1933.⁸

On January 21, 1935, the Shenandoah County School Board, which had decided to solicit designs for the new Toms Brook High School rather than adopt one of the state board of education's standard plans, considered the offerings of two Virginia architectural firms: Hinnant and Smith (Clarence H. Hinnant and Walter K. Smith, of Lynchburg) and James R. Mims, of Luray. Hinnant and Smith designed at least three high schools, in Clifton Forge (1928), South Boston (1935), and, later, Nottoway County (1948-1950). Mims designed the high school in Luray (1929). The school board chose Mims's plan for a fireproof brick building executed in the Colonial Revival style.

It is interesting that the Shenandoah County School Board chose not to follow in the path of many other localities. Not only did they not use the experienced architect Long who had built the Edinburg High School, but they also chose not to use one of the standardized plans offered by the Virginia Department of Education as many other localities did.

Copies of the original plans for the Toms Brook School on file with the Virginia Department of Education indicate that Mims was a part of the firm Mims Speake & Company of Luray who were architects as well as contractors. Their commissions were primarily in nearby small towns. As early as 1914, the firm was the contractor for two houses in Luray as well as the Rappahannock National Bank in Washington, Virginia. The following year they are credited with the design and construction of Christ Episcopal Church in Luray. Between 1920 and 1929, they designed and/or built a commercial building in Luray, made repairs to the Hines Memorial Pythian Home of Virginia in New Market, and designed a church building in Woodstock and the Luray High School. By 1948, Mims is listed as J. Raymond Mims of Arlington, which is how he is listed on the 1951 plans for the Toms Brook Cafeteria.⁹

As the *Shenandoah Herald* reported,

The estimated cost of the building will be \$35,000 and it will occupy the site of the present frame structure. . . . It will be two stories, with basement, and built of brick and fire proof materials. The plans contemplate an auditorium 50 x 80 feet, ten class rooms, a library, laboratory, and offices.¹⁰

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Toms Brook School

County and State Shenandoah County, Virginia

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 7

Work on the new building did not begin in earnest until August, with hopes for completion in midwinter, and by the opening of the fall session in 1935 the old high school had been demolished. The demolition of the old school and the ongoing construction of the new school—which was just beginning—meant that the teachers and students had to find temporary space for instruction in two other buildings in town. At least, the county newspaper reported on August 30,

A two-room building has just been completed on the school grounds, built from material from the old building. This is to be the Agriculture Department. However until the new building is completed it will be used for the lower grades.¹¹

By October 4, the construction of the new school had progressed to the point that the cornerstone could be set in place with appropriate ceremonies conducted by the Masonic lodges of Strasburg and Woodstock. The work was “advancing rapidly,” and when finished the new school “will be one of the most complete and best equipped high school buildings in the Shenandoah Valley,” the newspaper reported.¹²

Mother Nature disrupted progress, however, as severe winter weather in February 1936 not only halted construction but also closed the high school in its various locations and required the cancellation of a Civic League meeting. Not until early in April did construction resume, with the hope that “the building will be finished in the near future.” By the end of the month, the work on the auditorium was far enough advanced that a school operetta, a senior class play, and commencement exercises were scheduled to be held there on various dates in May. The operetta (scheduled for May 5) was postponed, but to the delight of the students, teachers, and parents, the other activities proceeded as planned. The building was declared completed on May 15, 1936, and the first program, the senior class play entitled “From Shoat Gap to Harvard,” was “well attended and rendered.” Class night and commencement soon followed, and a reporter from the school informed the *Shenandoah Herald*, “We are indeed thankful that we will not need to be quartered another year as we were this. We are all looking forward to using our new building next year with great anticipation.”¹³

The school opened “officially” on May 28, 1936, as reported in the *Shenandoah Herald*:

Appropriate exercises accompanied by a bounteous and excellent supper furnished by the members of the Toms Brook Civic League, and served by members of Miss Judith Nelson’s Home Economics Class, marked the acceptance of the town’s just completed high school building on Thursday evening, May 28. . . . Prof. Mark S. Roller, principal of the Toms Brook school, presided at the exercises and there were brief and impromptu talks

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Toms Brook School

County and State Shenandoah County, Virginia

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 8

by officials and guests. The menu served consisted of Spring chicken, new peas, mashed potatoes, salad, hot rolls, strawberry short cake and coffee. The narrative report of Mr. J. R. Mims, of Luray, in charge of the construction of the building, gives an excellent history of the project.¹⁴

The new school cost \$60,293 to construct. According to Mims, delays in funding delayed the start of the project from late spring to August 1935. The county and the architect were ready to let bids for construction in April, but had applied to the Public Works Administration (PWA) for a grant of 45 percent of the estimated cost. Not until August, however, did the PWA reply, offering a grant of 30 percent. The work finally got under way, but most of it had to be done over the winter, and the foul weather resulted in further delays. Finally, the building was completed except for the installation of tile on the floors in the vestibule and corridors. Mims concluded by saying that “we have tried to give you a well planned, usable building, one with a small upkeep cost. This building, located as it is, will attract attention of many visitors and will serve you for many years to come.”¹⁵

Toms Brook High School did indeed serve the community for many years thereafter, and in 1951 Mims designed a cafeteria for the facility that was completed in 1952. Cafeterias were generally not included in schools built during the 1920s and 1930s. It was not until the 1940s that cafeteria/kitchen additions, supported by cafeteria staff, were added to existing schools.¹⁶ This cafeteria was built in 1952 at a cost of \$2,000.

In June 1959, the last high school class graduated from the school. Because three new consolidated high schools were opening (at Mount Jackson, Strasburg, and Woodstock), Toms Brook became a primary and middle school. In the mid-1980s, the middle school students were moved to the middle schools in Strasburg and Woodstock. The primary school students were moved to the Sandy Hook and W. W. Robinson schools in 1991, and Toms Brook closed. On October 24, 1991, the county school board transferred the school to the county board of supervisors. Toms Brook School was sold at auction in September 1992 to West Oak Associates of Toms Brook.¹⁷

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Toms Brook School

County and State Shenandoah County, Virginia

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8 Page 9

ENDNOTES

¹ William A. Link, *A Hard Country and a Lonely Place: Schooling, Society, and Reform in Rural Virginia, 1870–1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 7–23; Ann McCleary, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, File 07-1175, “Public Schools in Augusta County, Virginia, 1870–1940,” 1984, Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR), Richmond, Va.

² Ibid.

³ Shenandoah County Retired Teachers Association, *Echoes of Shenandoah: A History of Shenandoah County’s Public School System* (Stephens City, Va.: Commercial Press, 1977), 6.

⁴ Ibid., 23–27.

⁵ Shenandoah County Historical Society, *Reflections: Early Schools of Shenandoah County, Virginia* (Woodstock, Va.: Shenandoah County Historical Society, 1995), 20–22, 79–82, 74–76.

⁶ *Reflections: Early Schools of Shenandoah County*, 142–144.

⁷ McCleary, “Public Schools in Augusta County, Virginia, 1870-1940,” DHR; Paul L. Weaver, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, File 127-0845, “Public Schools of Richmond,” 1991-1992, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va.

⁸ John E. Wells and Robert E. Dalton, *The Virginia Architects, 1835-1955: A Biographical Dictionary* (Richmond, Va.: New South Architectural Press, 1997), 267.

⁹ John E. Wells and Robert E. Dalton, *The Virginia Architects, 1835–1955: A Biographical Dictionary* (Richmond, Va.: New South Architectural Press, 1997), 198–199, 302

¹⁰ *Shenandoah Herald*, January 25, 1935, p. 1, col. 1, Microfilm 327, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. (LVA); John E. Wells and Robert E. Dalton, *The Virginia Architects, 1835–1955: A Biographical Dictionary* (Richmond, Va.: New South Architectural Press, 1997), 198–199, 302.

¹¹ *Shenandoah Herald*, June 5, 1936, p. 1, col. 1; August 30, 1935, p. 5, col. 3, LVA.

¹² Ibid., October 4, 1935, p. 1, col. 6; ibid., October 11, 1935, p. 5, col. 4.

¹³ Ibid., February 14, 1936, p. 4, col. 2; April 17, 1936, p. 4, col. 2; May 1, 1936, p. 4, col. 1; May 8, 1936, p. 3, col. 4; May 22, 1936, p. 4, col. 3.

¹⁴ Ibid., June 5, 1936, p. 1, col. 1.

¹⁵ Ibid., May 29, 1936, p. 1, col. 2; June 5, 1936, p. 1, col. 1.

¹⁶ Ann McCleary, Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, File 07-1175, “Public Schools in Augusta County, Virginia, 1870-1940,” 1984, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va.;

¹⁷ *Reflections: Early Schools of Shenandoah County, Virginia*, 144–145; Shenandoah County, Support Services/Facilities File, School Audit, Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Va.; Shenandoah County, Deed Book 636, page 563, Shenandoah County Courthouse, Woodstock, Va.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Toms Brook School

County and State Shenandoah County, Virginia

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 9 Page 10

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Link, William A. *A Hard Country and a Lonely Place: Schooling, Society, and Reform in Rural Virginia, 1870–1920*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986.

McCleary, Ann. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. File 07-1175. “Public Schools in Augusta County, Virginia, 1870-1940.” 1984. Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va.

Shenandoah County. Deed Book 636. Shenandoah County Courthouse. Woodstock, Va.

Shenandoah County. Support Services/Facilities File. School Audit. Virginia Department of Education. Richmond, Va.

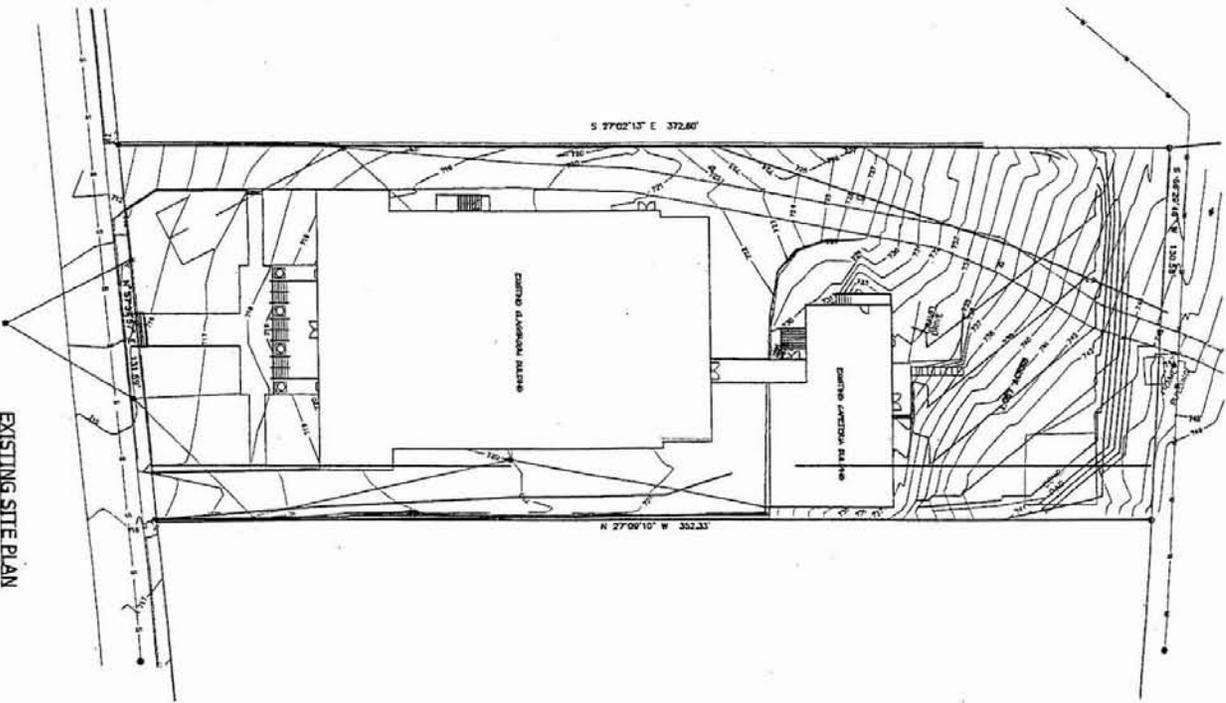
Shenandoah County Historical Society. *Reflections: Early Schools of Shenandoah County, Virginia*. Woodstock, Va.: Shenandoah County Historical Society, 1995.

Shenandoah County Retired Teachers Association. *Echoes of Shenandoah: A History of Shenandoah County's Public School System*. Stephens City, Va.: Commercial Press, 1977.

Shenandoah Herald. January 25, 1935–June 5, 1936. Microfilm 327. Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va.

Weaver, Paul L. National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form. File 127-0845. “Public Schools of Richmond.” 1991-1992. Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Va.

Wells, John E., and Robert E. Dalton. *The Virginia Architects, 1835-1955: A Biographical Dictionary*. Richmond, Va.: New South Architectural Press, 1997.



EXISTING SITE PLAN
NO SCALE

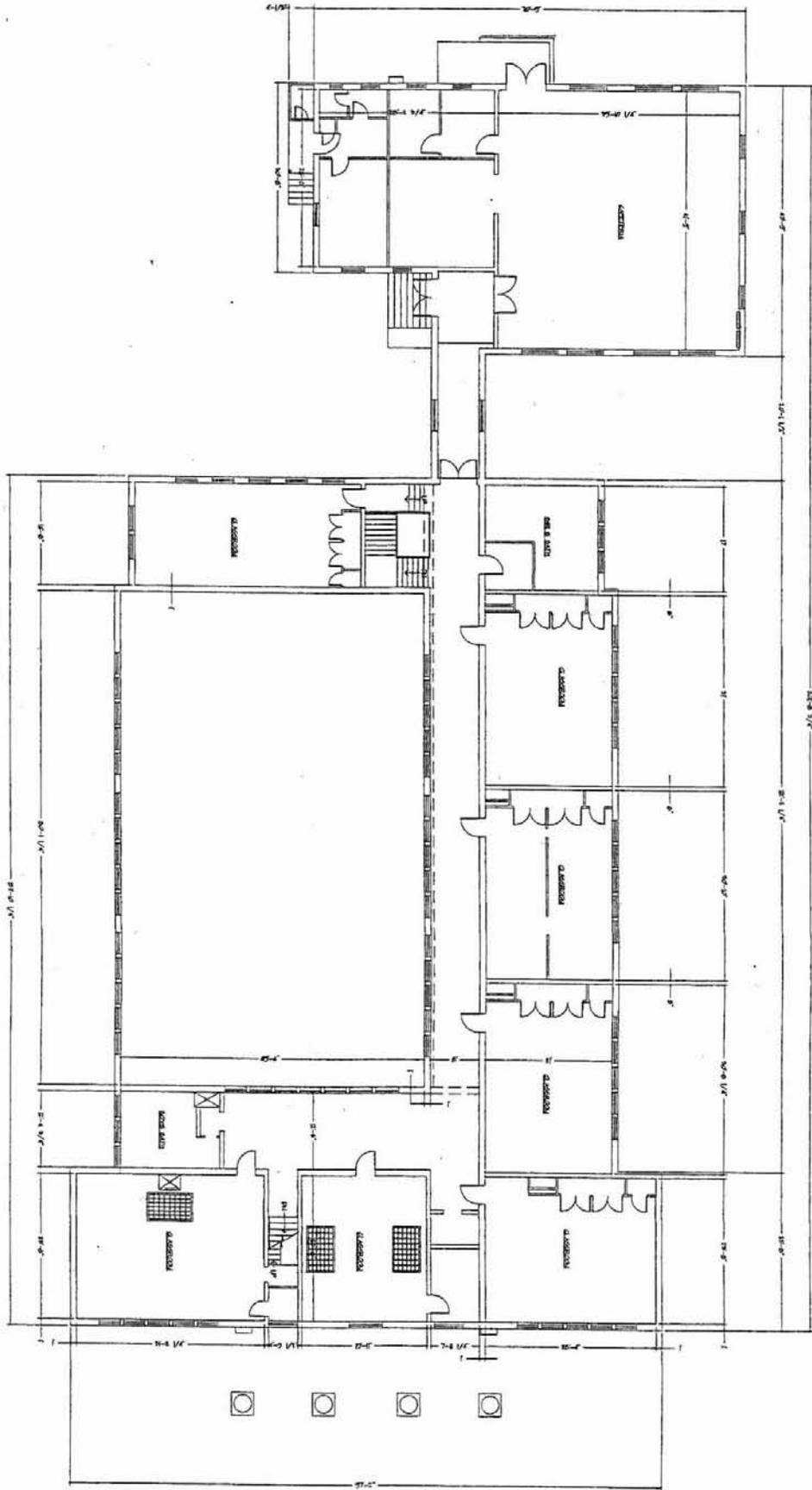
HUNDY
ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING, INC.
ARCHITECTURE & CIVIL ENGINEERING
3710 WOODBURN AVENUE, SUITE 200
WOODSTOCK, VA 22691
TEL: 703-838-3188 FAX: 703-838-3188

DATE	NO.	DESCRIPTION

**TOMS BROOK APARTMENTS
ADAPTIVE REUSE
WOODSTOCK, VA**

TOMS BROOK SCHOOL
SHENANDOAH COUNTY, VA
DHR FILE NO. 313-5001
ADAPTIVE REUSE DOCUMENTAL #

EXISTING 2ND FLOOR PLAN
No SCALE



FUNDY
ARCHITECTURE &
ENGINEERING, INC.
ARCHITECTURE & CIVIL ENGINEERING
321 W. MAIN STREET, ANDERSON, VIRGINIA 22010
TEL: 703-521-1191 FAX: 703-521-1192

DATE	NO.
2011	001
2011	002
2011	003

TOMS BROOK APARTMENTS
ADAPTIVE REUSE
WOODSTOCK, VA

Toms Brook School
SHERIDAN COURT, VA
DHR FILE NO: 313-5001
ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

