

VLR - 12/11/84

NRHP-2/27/85

PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN AUGUSTA COUNTY, VIRGINIA, 1870-1940
 VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION
 Thematic National Register Nomination Inventory Form

Historic Name: North River High School	Common Name: North River Elementary School
Street Address/Rt. No.: Rt. 42	VHLC File Number: 07-1153
Vicinity of: Moscow	Owner: Augusta County School Board
USGS Quad: Parnasus 7.5	Fishersville, Virginia 22939
Date(s): 1930	Architect/Builder: G. G. Shaver & Kellis
Original Use: High School	Style: Neocolonial Bibb
Present Use: Elementary School	
Condition: Very good	
Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ; unaltered <input type="checkbox"/>	

Physical Description:

North River School is typical of the central-auditorium-plan schools built between 1927 and 1933 in Augusta County. The central-auditorium plan, developed by the State Division of School Services in the early 1920s, was first introduced into Augusta County in 1923 with the Fishersville and Hebron Schools. In plan, the North River School is one of the second group of central-auditorium designs, without the front classrooms that characterized the mid-1920s examples. Like the other later examples, the classroom wings project out from the facade. Since North River was once intended to consolidate some of the smaller schools, this building is also larger than the other schools from the same period which usually contained four rooms. G. G. Shaver, the head of the County School Board Maintenance Department, and Kellis Bibb supervised the construction crew for this school. This particular plan was #454 from the Division of School Services.

Although simpler in design and style than the mid-1920s schools, the North River School does exhibit strong references to the Colonial Revival styles popular at this time. The brick veneer is laid in Flemish bond, using darker bricks for headers. The steeply pitched roof, fanlight windows in the projecting classroom wing gables, and Colonial-style front portico highlight this design. The school rests on a concrete foundation and is covered with an asbestos shingle roof which resembles slate.

The original plan followed the proposed State plan with the omission of the last, or east, room on the south wing. This additional room was constructed several years later, along with the stage and office area. At that time, the library expanded into the older office space, assuming the size of a normal classroom. The central auditorium retains its wood floor and painted brick walls. Most of the classrooms retain their wardrobes, teachers' closets, and blackboards, some of which now serve as bulletin boards. The floors are now tile, and the walls are covered with plaster.

(continued)

Statement of Significance:

North River High School has achieved local significance as the first consolidated high school in Augusta County and, as local residents boast, in the state as well. With its agriculture building, North River remains an example of a high school complex. However, it is also important as one of the best examples of the Neocolonial style central-auditorium plan popular in the County in the late 1900s and early 1930s. Of the five brick central-auditorium-plan schools built between 1927 and 1929, all but Crimora suggest the Colonial styles popular during those years. North River is the best preserved of those four schools and remains in use today.

The early stages of consolidation in Augusta County in the 1910s and 1920s involved the construction of large schools within smaller towns and villages, serving the students within those communities as well as the surrounding farmlands. Yet, by the mid 1920s, state officials had become concerned about the many small high schools in each district, worrying that they might prove quite costly and take money away from the elementary schools. As consolidation progressed beyond that initial stage and better road conditions and transportation facilities were developed, State officials urged the consolidation of these smaller schools into larger schools. North River is the first such example in the County. Located in the country and away from any large town or village, North River brought students from grades eight through twelve from Spring Hill, Parnassus, Towers, and Centerville, leaving the older consolidated schools to serve only the elementary grades. It was not until the 1960s that the County progressed more completely with this regional high school consolidation. With (continued)

Geographic Data/Acreage: three and one-quarter acres

Verbal Boundary Description: Beginning at a point on S side of VA 42 approx. 1,100' NE of intersection of said route with VA 753; thence extending approx. 400' E along (continued)
 Boundary Justification: The bounds have been drawn to include the school complex, including the 1932 building, later cafeteria and primary classroom buildings, and (continued)
 UTM: 17/667910/4242310

Prepared By: Ann McCleary, Architectural Historian

Date Prepared: September 1984

Physical Description continued

In April, 1942, the State prepared plans (#1136) for an addition off the east end of the north wing including a lunchroom and kitchen on the basement level and a home economics room on the main floor. Yellow glazed brick wainscoting finishes both rooms, and some of the built-in presses remain in the home economics room. The School Board approved plans for another addition in May 1950. This addition, constructed behind an open court off the stage, included an athletic office, club room for visual arts and band, and locker and shower rooms.

In 1968-69 when North River was being remodeled into an elementary school, several changes were made to this school building. The cafeteria, library, and home economics room were remodeled into classrooms and the band and locker rooms were remodeled into a library room and media center. A detached modern addition was constructed for the elementary grades and a second detached building was built for a new cafeteria playroom.

The brick agriculture building follows the plans for a "standard agriculture shop" produced by the Division of School Services. The building began as a simple rectangular form, the south two-room gabled block of the present structure. The front, or west, room served as the shop with the forge; it had a concrete floor. The smaller room to the opposite end, with wallboard walls and ceiling, provided classroom space. Several years later the gabled north block was added for agri-science and mechanics shop. With the school's conversion into an elementary school in 1968-69, the shop has been converted into a music room and storage areas. The cinderblock storage rooms with Flemish bond veneer on the south side were added in the 1940s.

Statement of Significance continued

Fort Defiance, Buffalo Gap, and Riverheads located outside of the older established towns, these more modern plants further consolidated and improved the county's high schools.

As the county's first consolidated high school, North River boasted a modern plant for 1930. In addition to library and office space, the school housed a laboratory and Home Economics Department and a detached brick shop building for the agriculture classes. In 1942, in the heyday of the cafeteria movement, a cafeteria and home economics room addition was added. Eight years later, more athletic facilities and a club room were constructed.

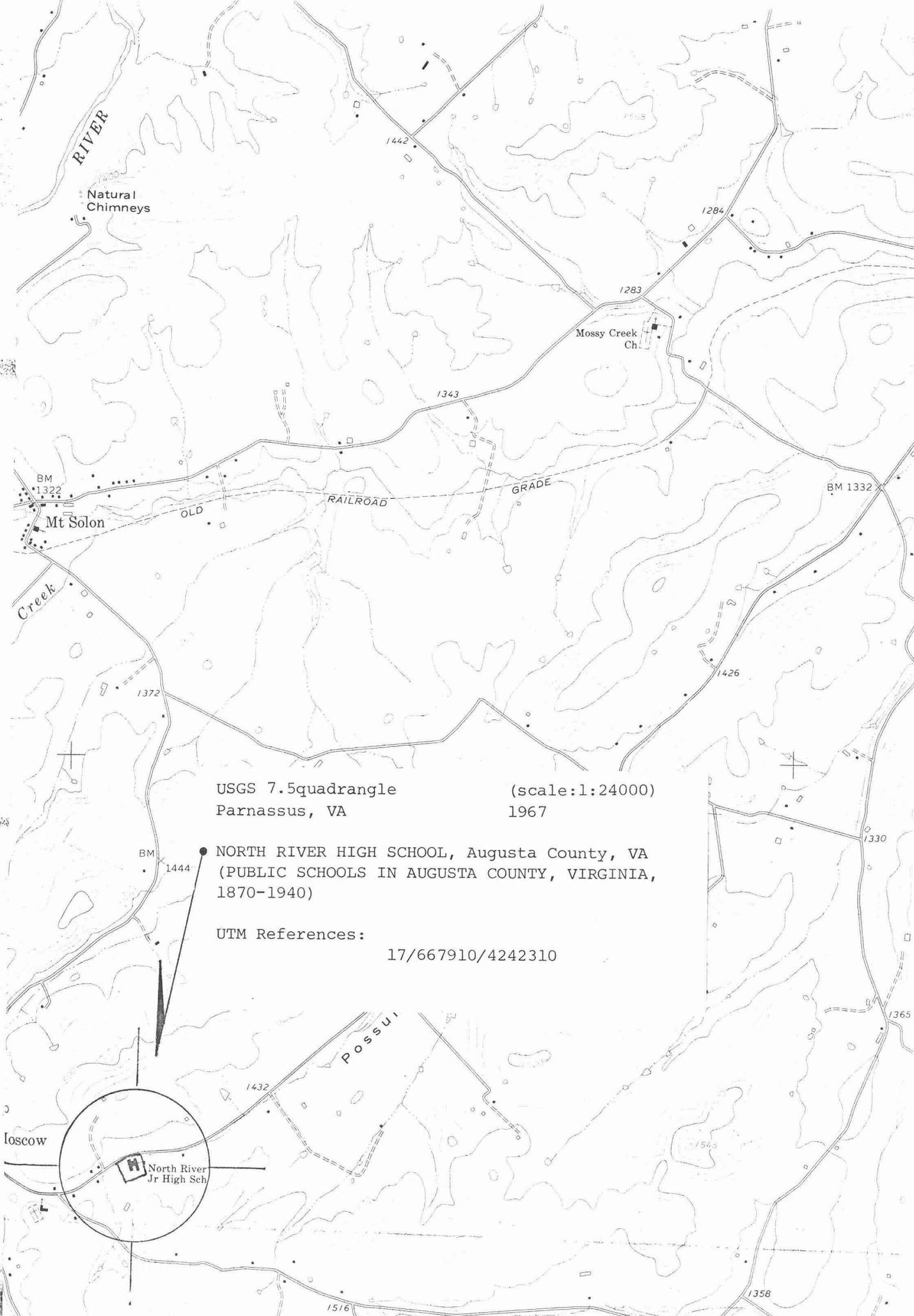
After the construction of the new, larger high schools at Fort Defiance and Buffalo Gap in 1962, grades ten and twelve were moved to these new schools, and North River became a junior high school for grades six through nine. Six years later, the school was renovated into an elementary school, again one of several larger schools being used to consolidate the older elementary schools.

Verbal Boundary Description continued

S side of VA 42; thence approx. 400' S; thence approx. 350' W; thence approx. 350' N to point of origin.

Boundary Justification continued

agricultural shop, along with the immediate school yard.



USGS 7.5quadrangle
Parnassus, VA

(scale:1:24000)
1967

● NORTH RIVER HIGH SCHOOL, Augusta County, VA
(PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN AUGUSTA COUNTY, VIRGINIA,
1870-1940)

UTM References:
17/667910/4242310