OMB No. 10024-0018 NPS Form 10-900 (Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property								
historic name Whitesville	School							
other names/site number	Sherman District School, BO-074		n School, White	esville Junio	r High S	School,	Whitesville	Elementary
2. Location								
2. Location								
street & number 37949 Co	oal River Road						not for p	ublication
city or town Whitesville							U vi	cinity
state West Virginia	code WV	county	Boone	c	code _	005	zip code	25209
3. State/Federal Agency Ce	rtification							
As the designated authority under request for determination of elig Places and meets the procedural does not meet the National Reginationally statewide	ibility meets the docu and professional requ ster criteria. I recomr locally. (See contir	mentation stand irements set for nend that this pr	ards for registering in 36 CFR Part 60 operty be consider	g properties in the contract of the contract o	he Nationa	al Regist	er of Historic	
Signature of certifying official			Da	te				
West Virginia State Hi State or Federal agency and bu		on Office						
In my opinion, the property comments.)	meets does not r	neet the Nationa	al Register criteria.	(See Conti	inuation sl	heet for	additional	
Signature of certifying official	/Title		Da	te				
State or Federal agency and bu	reau							
4. National Park Service Co								
I hereby certify that the property is: ☐ entered in the National Regi ☐ See continuation sh	ster.	Signature of the	Keeper					Date of Action
☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sh	eet							
determined not eligible for the National Register.								
removed from the National Register.								
other, (explain:)								
-								

5. Classification				
Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resource	ces within Property	
☐ private ☑ public-local	☑ building(s)☐ district	Contributing	Noncontributing	
public-state	site	1		buildings
public-Federal	structure			sites
	☐ object		1	
		1	1	objects Total
		-		
Name of related multiple	property listing	Number of Contrib in the National Reg	outing resources previous gister	sly listed
N/A		N/A		
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions		Current Functions		
EDUCATION/ school		EDUCATION/ scho	ol	
				
7. Description				
Architectural Classification	on	Materials		
MODERN MOVEMENT/	Art Deco	foundation CON	CRETE	
		walls BRICK		
		roof OTHER: Ho	ot Tar/ Gravel	
		other CERAMIC		

Boone County, WV
County and State

Narrative DescriptionSee Continuation Sheets

Whitesville School Name of Property

Whitesville School	Boone County, WV
Name of Property	County and State
8. Statement of Significance	
Applicable National Register Criteria	Levels of Significance (local, state, national) Local
☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of	Areas of Significance
our history.	Architecture
☐ 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.	Period of Significance
☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	
Criteria Considerations	Significant Dates
Property is: A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	
☐ B . removed from its original location.	Significant Person N/A
 □ C. birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance. □ D a cemetery. 	Cultural Affiliation N/A
☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	
☐ F a commemorative property	Architect/Builder
☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.	Wysong, Bengston, and Jones, Architects Hill Brothers, Builder
Narrative Statement of Significance: See Continuation sheets	
9. Major Bibliographical References	
Bibliography 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	Primary location of additional data: State Historic Preservation Office Other State Agency Federal Agency Local Government University Other Name of repository:
# recorded by Historic American Engineering	Record #

Whitesville School		County, WV
ne of Property County and State		
10. Geographical Data		
200 Geograpment Data		_
Acreage of Property 5.94 acres Whitesville Quad		
UTM References		
1 17 452946 4203943	3	
Zone Easting Northing	Zone	Easting Northing
2	4	<u> </u>
		See continuation sheet
Verbal Boundary Description See Continuation Sheets		
Boundary Justification See Continuation Sheets		
11. Form Prepared By		
name/title Cheryl Nichols (Whitesville Elementary School), Bethany Ca	stle, and Erin Rie	
organization Whitesville Elementary School	date	5/21/2013
street & number 37949 Coal River Road	telephone	304-558-0240 (WVSHPO)
city or town	state	zip code
Whitesville	WV	
Additional Documentation		
Submit the following items with the completed form:		
Continuation Sheets 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 Photographs - Representative black and white photographs of the property CD with electronic images if digital photographs. Floorplans for individual listings Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)	numerous resour	ces.
Property Owner		
name Boone County Board of Education		
street & number 69 Avenue B		telephone 304-369-3131
city or town Madison	state WV	zip code <u>25209</u>

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 listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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LOCATION and SETTING

Whitesville School, ¹ constructed in 1931, is located within the town limits of Whitesville, West Virginia; a small rural mining town in southwestern Boone County approximately 40 miles from Charleston, the state capitol. The school faces northwest and is nestled on a level lot between the Big Coal River, West Virginia Route 3 (Coal River Road), and Elk Run.

A small lawn with little vegetation and concrete and stone sidewalks separates the school from roadway while a low stone wall lines the rear of the property along the river. A paved parking lot is situated adjacent to the school on the southeast elevation between the school and the Whitesville Police Department. A playground with modern play equipment, two small picnic shelters, a small shed, and basketball courts is located to the rear of the school. Much of the nearly six-acre lot is occupied by the baseball field to the north of the school. The field includes concrete stands and dugout and a paved track in the outfield.

Description

The Whitesville School is an Art Deco, two-story, blonde brick building. With exception of any decorative brickwork and the stretcher bonding of the smaller pilasters, brick is laid in a type of common bond with seven rows of stretchers to one row of alternating headers and stretchers. The school sits on a raised basement that is covered in similar-color stucco and separated from the upper stories by a stone belt course. The main section of the building is rectangular in shape with a flat roof. The original two-story gymnasium/auditorium extends from the center of the rear elevation. A small, one-story addition has been constructed on the northern end of the building at the basement level. It is constructed of concrete block and has a flat roof. A stucco-covered elevator shaft also extends from this end of the building and rises from the basement to the second story. With the exception of a few on the rear extension of the school, all of the building's original metal casement windows and metal doors have been replaced.

The main elevation of the school is symmetrical and emphasizes vertical parallel lines. It features two entrance areas that extend from the main elevation and upward through the roofline – a small-scale version of the massive, boxy towers popular on the large Art Deco-style buildings. At the corner of each "tower" is a large stepped pilaster, each topped with low-relief, deco-style brickwork. The entrances are located between the basement and first-story levels between the two pilasters. Each entryway is recessed and has modern double doors and a transom window and is flanked by smooth, fluted limestone. The smooth limestone is carried upward to the stone sill and dentils of the two second-story windows. Two sets of colorful tiles are situated in this area and are flanked by limestone reeding. The tiles feature academic symbols of Greek icons including the academic lamp of knowledge, pen and quill, an open book, and a shield. The uppermost mosaic includes a banner that reads "1931," indicating the construction year of the

¹ Although the school was officially named Sherman District Junior High School when it was constructed, it has always been commonly referred to simply as Whitesville School.

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school (see photo 3). The original name of the school, "Sherman District Junior High School," is displayed in metal lettering between the recessed entrance and the tiles. The area above the two windows, between the pilasters, displays chevron-style brickwork.

The remainder of the main elevation includes five separate sections; three centrally located between the towers and one section to the outside of each entrance tower. Each section includes a set of three windows, symmetrically arranged, on each the basement, first and second stories. The windows on the first and second stories are separated by a low-relief, brick pilaster each topped with a decorative stone keystone displaying a shield and scrolls. Stone window sills under the first and second story windows on the main elevation are accented with dentils while lintels are formed by a row of soldier bricks (a row of bricks laid vertically with the long, narrow side exposed). The area between the first and second story windows, between the pilasters, is accented with parallel lines formed by stack bonding with projecting rows of headers, while the cornice area is accented with deco-style square tiles and brickwork. The three central sections are separated by two larger pilasters that extend through the roofline, similar to those on the towers.

The side (southeast) elevation of the main building continues the Art Deco theme with vertical bands and parallel lines, displaying similar pilasters and a central "tower." The only openings on this elevation, however, are within the tower area and include a recessed entrance at the basement level and a set of two windows on each the first and second story, of which one on each level has been enclosed with an air conditioning unit. The basement entrance originally was two window openings similar to the others. The cornice area of this side elevation displays the same elements as that on the main elevation. The opposite side elevation is similar, but includes two additions; a central elevator shaft and a small one-story, concrete block addition at the basement level.

The rear of the main block is devoid of any Art Deco characteristics and simply includes symmetrical fenestration. The only architectural feature carried to the rear of the main building is the stone belt course separating the basement from the upper stories. A two-story gymnasium/auditorium projects from the center of this elevation. While most of the gymnasium windows have been enclosed and covered with stucco, a handful of the original metal casement windows exist on this section of the building. A large brick chimney stack is situated on the rear of this section extending at least one story higher than the roofline.

The interior of the school includes a library, school office, kitchen, cafeteria, large gymnasium with a stage, seventeen classrooms, two shower rooms, nine bathrooms and two dressing rooms. Stucco walls are lined with metal lockers and dropped ceilings to allow for a fire suppression system. Several original loudspeaker boxes remain in the classrooms and still function as do some chalkboards (see photo 7).

The two main entrances enter into a small foyer with original terrazzo tiles and a small staircase up that leads to the first floor hall. Double stacked metal lockers line the hallway on both sides with a teacher's lounge, school offices, and five classrooms (see photo 6). The classroom entrances are recessed with wooden doors and transoms above. Across the hall from the main entrance is another set of steps to access the gymnasium

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floor and bleachers. The large gymnasium has a basketball court, original concrete bleachers with wooden bench seats, acoustic filling material and a stage (see photos 8 and 9). The stage has two dressing rooms, one on each side. Two metal doors lead into the staircase up to the second floor or down to the basement.

The second floor has six classrooms, a library, computer lab, and bathrooms. Two trophy cases donated as class gifts line the hallway along with metal lockers between classrooms. The basement of the Whitesville School is used for the Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten classrooms, storage rooms, locker rooms and the newly remodeled cafeteria. Opposite the cafeteria is the mechanical room which still houses the original coal furnace. Although it is not operational, it is preserved. The locker rooms have tiled floors and shower areas and lockers.

The property also includes the Whitesville Junior High School Athletic Field (now known as Johnston Field). While an athletic field existed earlier, major improvements were made in 1961 when construction began on the concrete bleachers and dugout. The stands include seven rows of bleacher seats with steps. Some areas of the concrete are in deteriorated condition. The athletic field is surrounded by a chain link fence. A chain link backstop is situated behind home plate and bears a sign reading Johnston Field. A small stone monument with bronze plaque (see photo 10) is located behind the backstop and is dedicated to former Whitesville Mayor, Harry L. Johnston.

A stone wall, approximately four feet high and twelve inches wide, lines the property along the Big Coal River and extends from the parking area to the athletic field. The wall may have been constructed by Andy Averson, Sr., a local Italian immigrant. Since the construction date of the wall is unknown, it is considered a noncontributing structure. The athletic field, with its features, is considered a noncontributing structure since much of it was constructed outside of the period of significance and it is not associated with the area of significance. Other features of the property including the shed and playground equipment have not been counted since they are considered minor resources and do not contribute to the significance of the property.

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STATEMENT of SIGNIFICANCE

Whitesville School is locally significant and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: Architecture as a significant example of the Art Deco style in the Boone County and southern West Virginia coalfield area. The period of significance is 1931, the date of construction.

History

Whitesville is located in the Sherman magisterial district of eastern Boone County near the Raleigh County line. It is situated approximately 40 miles from each Charleston, Beckley, and Madison, the county seats of Kanawha, Raleigh, and Boone Counties. Formerly known as Jarrolds Valley and later, Prichard City, Whitesville was incorporated in 1935 and named for B.W. White, an early settler. At the time, Whitesville was a railroad and trading center for nearby mining towns along the Coal River valley in Boone County. With 12 different seams of workable coal in the county, there were 14 major coal companies operating in this area during the 1920s.

In the early twentieth century, area students attended Whitesville School, a small wood-frame building perched on a hilltop and under the jurisdiction of the Sherman District Board of Education. In December 1929, however, the building and all of its contents were destroyed by fire. Though the school was insured, the payment was not enough. To finance a new school building, the school board held a special bond election. The people's vote authorized the Sherman District Board of Education to issue \$125,000 in bonds to construct a new elementary and junior high school in Whitesville.²

Bids for construction of the new school, designed by the Charleston architectural firm of Wysong and Bengston, were opened on June 17, 1930.³ A contemporary news account described the plans for the new school:

The building is to be fireproof and modern in every detail. It will be two stories and a basement, consisting of 26 class rooms, a large auditorium and gymnasium combined, manual training department, laboratories and rest rooms.⁴

The building contractors, Hill Brothers of Oak Hill in Fayette County, began construction in September 1930 on a parcel that not only provided room for the two-story school building, but also an athletic field, ample space for a playground, and easy access for parents and school buses. While the school was under construction students attended classes at nearby churches, in a hotel basement, in lodge halls, and even in

² "History of Boone County Schools: Sherman High School," http://www.shermanhigh.com/BCSHistory/Sherman.htm (accessed 9 September 2013). And, "District Bond Vote is Set for March 8," *Charleston Daily Mail*, 26 February 1930.

³ "To Open Bids June 17," *Charleston Gazette*, 6 June 1930.

⁴ "Whitesville," Charleston Daily Mail, 28 September 1930.

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apartment units located over businesses. Construction was complete in April 1931, in plenty of time for the beginning of the 1931-32 school year.⁵

When the new school opened, its enrollment included 517 students.⁶ The school, then known as Sherman District Junior High School, alleviated some overcrowding at the new Sherman District High School in Seth by accepting ninth graders in addition to all lower grades. Like many industrial areas in the early decades of the twentieth century, Whitesville was home to many immigrants whose children attended the school and learned the English language in addition to the regular curricula.

The school continued to serve kindergarten through ninth grade until 1993 when seventh, eighth, and ninth graders were transferred to a new junior high school that was constructed in Seth. Currently, the school also includes a pre-kindergarten class. Over the years it has served not only the students, but also the community for events, meetings, and other performances. At one point, it also served as the community bomb shelter.

Criterion C: Architecture

Whitesville School is an excellent example of the Art Deco style of architecture in West Virginia's southern coal field counties. In the United States, the style became popular in the late 1920s following a 1925 exhibition in Paris, the Exposition des Arts Decoratifs, which served as a showcase of "new inspiration and real originality." Advocates of the style saw it as a rejection of historical precedents. With an emphasis on the future, it was a style of decoration that was also applied to furniture, jewelry, and clothing.

In architecture, some elements of the Art Deco style include parallel lines, reeding and/or fluting around windows and doors, vertical bands of windows, inspiring murals, polychromatic effects, and low-relief geometric designs usually in the form of zigzags, chevrons, or floral motifs. Metal doors included stylized panels or grilles and windows were often metal casements. Large-scale Art Deco buildings usually featured large central towers while smaller commercial and institutional buildings were box-like with flat roofs. Generally rectangular in massing, the style was hard-edged and angular and thus never became a popular domestic architectural style.8

Whitesville School displays many of these Art Deco characteristics. Though box-like in plan, similar to smaller-scale Art Deco buildings, the school's two main entrances project outward and upward, similar to the boxy towers of the larger-scale buildings of the style. The school's three levels of window openings are symmetrically placed with low-relief pilasters separating each column of windows, adhering to the style's emphasis on parallel lines and vertical bands of windows. While the polychromatic effect is somewhat

⁵ "Visiting Clubs are Entertained at Tea," *Charleston Daily Mail*, 23 April 1931.

⁶ "History of Boone County Schools..."

⁷ John C. Poppeliers, et. al. What Style is it? A Guide to American Architecture (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1983), p. 88-

⁸ Stephen C. Gordon, "How to Complete the Ohio Historic Inventory," (Columbus, Oh.: Ohio Historical Society, 1992), p. 112.

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subdued, it is evident in the difference in colors between the blonde brick, which makes up most of the building, and the smooth limestone sills, door surrounds, and coping. Other color is apparent in the square tile design centered above each vertical band of windows and the colorful ceramic murals above the entrances. These murals welcome visitors with Roman and Greek symbols of academia such as books, the lamp of knowledge, a shield, and a quill (see photo 3). Reeding and fluting is on display at the entrances and other low-relief decoration, including chevrons and other geometric shapes, are displayed near the roofline.

In the early 1990s an architectural survey of West Virginia's southern coalfields, the Coal Heritage Survey, documented 76 school buildings, seven of which were located in Boone County. The Whitesville School was recommended for listing in the National Register for its significant Art Deco architectural style. Overall, the survey identified very few resources constructed in this style. The vast majority of the resources documented were vernacular in that they did not display high-style architecture, but rather reflected ordinary buildings that were adapted to local needs. In many communities of West Virginia's southern coal fields, buildings displaying any architectural style popular at the time of construction were the community's primary buildings; usually civic buildings and schools. Some company stores/clubhouses and mine foreman houses also displayed various popular architectural styles.

Other than the Whitesville School, the Coal Heritage Survey identified the Coca Cola bottling plant in Pineville (non-extant) as an Art Deco style building as well as some buildings in Williamson's commercial district. However, these buildings are better characterized as the Art Moderne style of architecture as they display rounded bays and the emphasis is on horizontal lines, rather than vertical. In addition, the survey identified a handful of school buildings displaying elements of the Art Deco style including Varney School, Gary District High School, Trap High School (Surveyor), Aracoma High School (Logan), and Pineville Junior High School. While they each have elements of the style, none of them are high style like the Whitesville School. The primary features of each that identify it as Art Deco are the low-relief stepped pilasters separating sections of windows and the boxy tower-like entrance sections that reach through the roofline. None of the documented schools include the various other features of the style as displayed on the Whitesville school, such as the reeding and fluting, inspirational tiles, or decorative brickwork between the stories and at the cornice. The blonde brick of the Whitesville School further sets it apart from the others which were all constructed of standard red brick. A number of other schools documented in the survey displayed elements of the Neoclassical or Collegiate Gothic style of architecture. Art Deco was a rejection of these historical precedents.

Summary

Although the school has undergone some alterations, the largest of which is the replacement of windows, it still retains the primary character defining features of the Art Deco architectural style, including the vertical

⁹ West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, "Coal Heritage Survey: Southern West Virginia Reconnaissance Survey of Sites Related to the History of Coal Mining," Charleston, W.Va., 1991; and, National Park Service, "A Coal Heritage Survey: A Study of Coal Mining and Related Resources in Southern West Virginia," (Philadelphia: US Department of the Interior), 1993.

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bands of windows, entrance "towers," and low-relief deco-style brickwork. Further, the small addition and elevator shaft do not overshadow the school or take away from the overall box-like, rectangular shape of the main block of the building. The Whitesville School retains excellent integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association. It stands out as an excellent and significant example of the Art Deco style of architecture in West Virginia's southern coal field counties.

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Works cited and referenced

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Casto, Mitch. "Boone County West Virginia History: A Time Line and Source book." 1994.

"District Bond Vote is set for March 8." Charleston Daily Mail. 26 February 1930.

"Fire Destroys Whitesville Junior High School Building on Tuesday Night." Madison Recorder. 6 December 1929.

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"History of Boone County Schools: Sherman High School" http://www.shermanhigh.com/BCSHistory/Sherman.htm. Accessed 9 September 2013.

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"To Open Bids June 17." Charleston Gazette. 6 June 1930.

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"Visiting Clubs are Entertained at Tea." Charleston Daily Mail. 23 April 1931.

West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office. "Coal Heritage Survey: Southern West Virginia Reconnaissance Survey of Sites Related to the History of Coal Mining." Charleston, W.Va., 1991.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The National Register boundary for the Whitesville School includes the entire acreage within current parcel 56 (map number 1 of the Whitesville District, Boone County, West Virginia).

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the entire parcel that has been historically associated with the school since its construction, with exception of a small rectangular lot (approximately 40'x90') that is now a separate parcel (Map 1, Parcel 57). Although this small parcel was originally associated with the school property, a building was constructed on it in 1947, outside the period of significance for the school. It has thus been excluded from the boundary.

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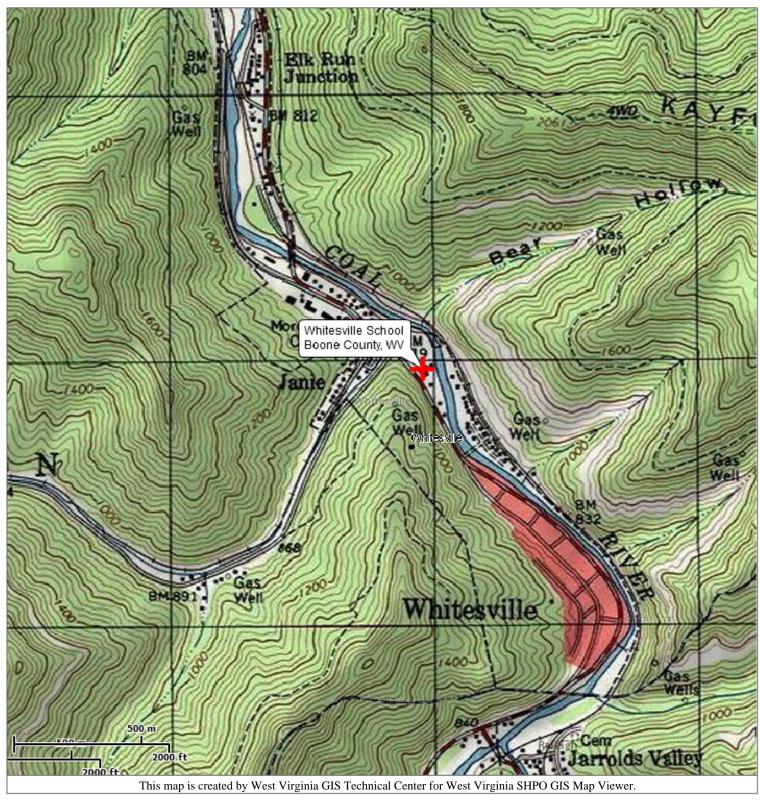
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Photographer: WVSHPO Date: March 7, 2013

- Photo 1 of 10 Exterior overview of the front of Whitesville School. Camera is facing north.
- Photo 2 of 10 Exterior close-up of the front entrance of Whitesville School. Camera is facing southeast.
- Photo 3 of 10 Exterior detail of the stone and ceramic work above the entrance. Camera is facing east.
- Photo 4 of 10 Exterior rear of Whitesville School, looking at the one story addition to the east and the gymnasium to the west. Camera is facing south.
- Photo 5 of 10 View of the stone wall which surrounds the rear boundary of the school and National Register boundary. Camera is facing northeast.
- Photo 6 of 10 Interior view of the hallway with double stacked lockers and recessed classroom entrances. Camera is facing south.
- Photo 7 of 10 Interior view of an original loudspeaker box in a classroom. Camera is facing northeast.
- Photo 8 of 10 Interior view of the gymnasium bleachers. Camera is facing west.
- Photo 9 of 10 Interior view of the gymnasium and stage. Camera is facing northeast.
- Photo 10 of 10 Exterior view of the Johnston Field dedication memorial with the athletic field and fence in background. Camera is facing north.

Whitesville School



Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator (Auxiliary Sphere)

Map Created on 8/23/2013

Architectural





User Notes:

USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangles: Whitesville

Boone County, WV Zone 17 452946 Easting 4203943 Northing National Register

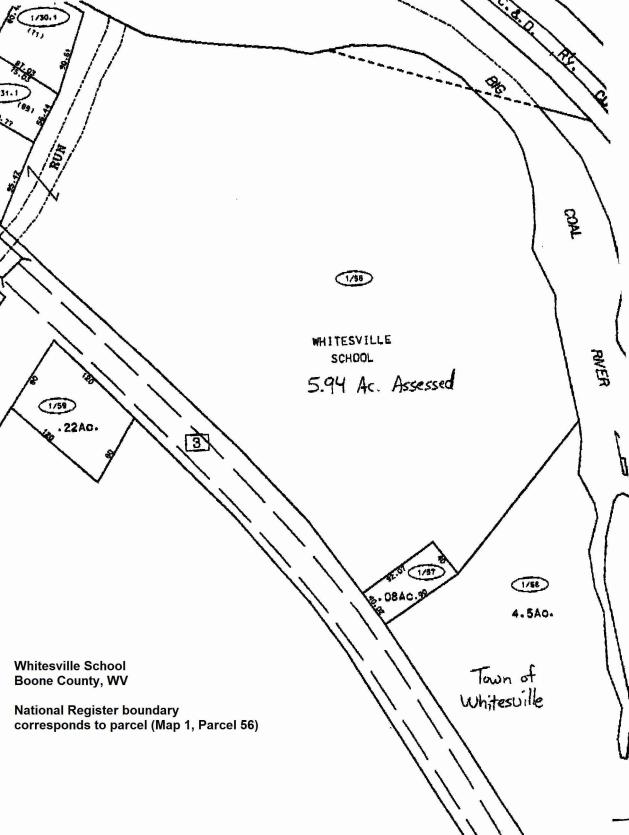
Point

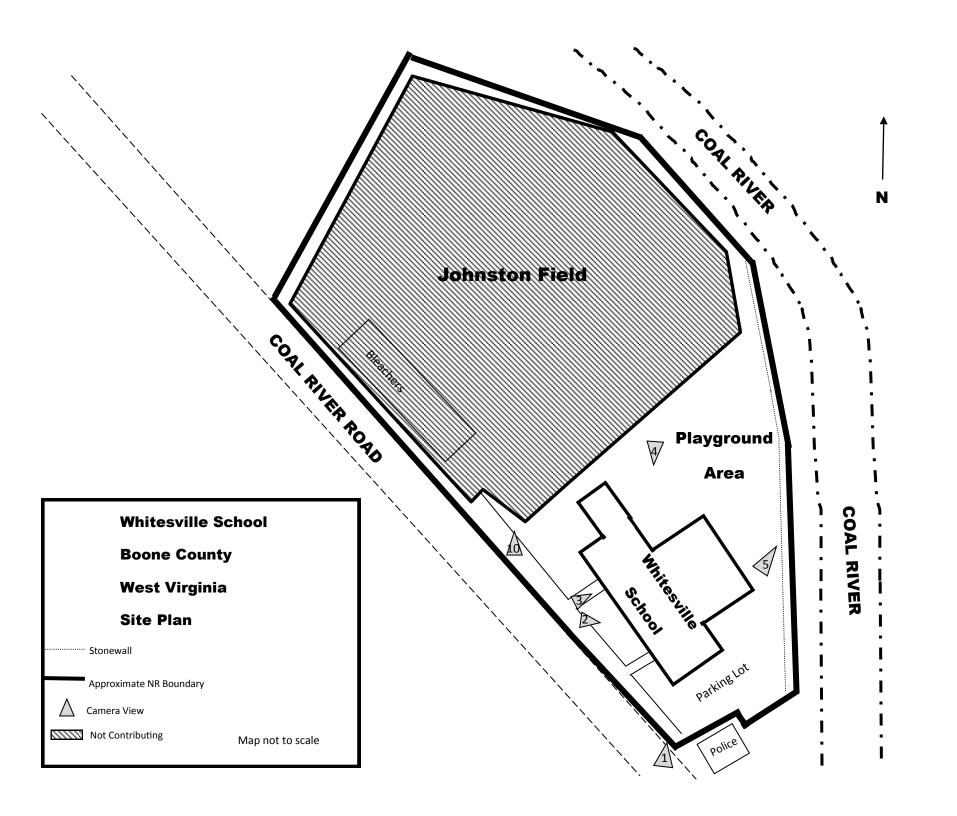


Disclaimer:

The West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office Interactive Map is designed to provide professional consultants, state/federal agency employees and the public with a means to make informed decisions with regards to the cultural resource location.









Photograph 1: Exterior Whitesville School, overall view, camera facing north.



Photograph 2: Exterior Whitesville School, close-up of entrance, camera facing southeast.



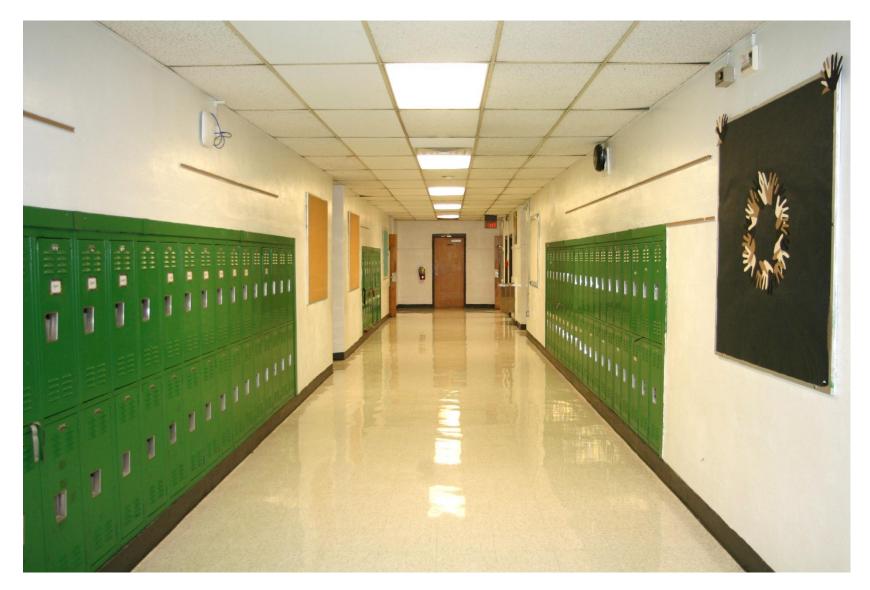
Photograph 3: Exterior Whitesville School, close up of the entranceway ceramic tiles, camera facing east.



Photograph 4: Exterior Rear of Whitesville School, showing the small one story addition and gymnasium, camera facing south.



Photograph 5: Exterior stone wall in the rear of the property, camera facing northeast.



Photograph 6: Interior hallway showing lockers, camera facing south.



Photograph 7: Interior showing the original speaker box, camera facing northeast.



Photograph 8: Interior view of gymnasium bleachers. Camera is facing west.



Photograph 9: Interior showing the Auditorium/ Gymnasium with stage, camera facing northeast.



Photograph 10: Exterior showing the dedication plaque for Johnston Field, camera facing north.