

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**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: Dry Pond School

Other names/site number:

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 4680 Pine Grove Road

City or town: Lindside State: West Virginia

County: Monroe

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☒**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

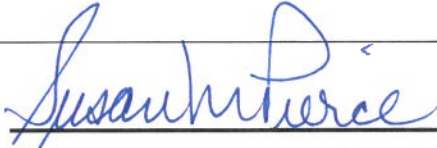
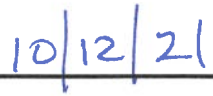
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B C D

		
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer		Date
West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office		
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		
In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.		
Signature of commenting official:		Date
Title :		State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
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

- Private: ☒
- Public – Local ☐
- Public – State ☐
- Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

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

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

Education: School

Current Functions

Vacant/Not in Use

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Late 19th and Early 20th Century Revivals: Neoclassical

Materials:

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation – Stone; Walls – Wood (clad in novelty drop siding), Concrete Block; Roof – Metal; Other – Brick (chimney)

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Constructed circa 1923, the Dry Pond School is located in the small unincorporated rural community of Orchard in Monroe County, West Virginia. The school, a one-story, wood-clad Neoclassical-influenced schoolhouse with unique recessed front entrance, sits on the top of a hill overlooking rolling farmland and woods; a small windbreak of trees and shrubs separates the schoolyard from the adjacent fields. Three small, noncontributing outbuildings dot the immediate grounds. A small, 1950s cinderblock addition juts from the rear of the building and a newer metal roof replaced the original in 2017. The interior of the building is mostly intact with more modern materials found in the addition. The original structure was classified as a “two room” schoolhouse, but the original building has, in fact, only one large main room with two closet rooms near the front entrance.¹ The school was converted into a community center after its closure by Monroe County Schools in June 1961.² Despite these modest changes, the school retains integrity of design, materials and workmanship and the rural landscape contributes to the overall feeling and setting.

¹ Cook, William C. *West Virginia Educational Directory 1929-30*. 1929.

² “Board of Education Proceedings.” *The Monroe Watchman*. June 8, 1961.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

Narrative Description

Setting

Dry Pond School is located directly south of the intersection of Pine Grove Road and Dry Pond School Road. The school sits on top of a hill overlooking rolling farmland, woods, and Dry Pond Primitive Baptist Church to the east (Photo 9). To the west, south, and north is the wooded unincorporated residential community of Orchard, which generally hugs Pine Grove Road. Across this road to the southwest are the nearest two buildings of this community, a one-story twentieth century residence, and a nineteenth century two-story residence. The school is a part of a one-acre plot that is bordered by shrubbery, bushes, and trees on its north, east, and south perimeter and the Pine Grove Road to its west. Two wooden outbuildings lie a little over 50 feet to the east of the structure adjacent to the border of the parcel, a one wooden outbuilding lies 120 feet southeast on the parcel's boundary. A concrete slab pathway leads from the road to the entrance. A gravel driveway leads up the south elevation of the building from Pine Grove Road.

Dry Pond School

ca. 1923

1 Contributing Building

The school is a one-story, seven-bay, front facing t-plan building with a moderately pitched, combined hipped and front-gabled roof on the original structure and dropped shed roof over the rear addition. The building appears to be modestly influenced by the Neoclassical style, constructed with wood frame walls and stone masonry foundation. Its prominent feature is the front elevation's entryway. The main building is approximately 60 feet by 28 feet, the rear addition is approximately 45 feet by 15 feet.

Both the gable and hipped sections of the roof are moderately pitched. The entire roof is constructed with corrugated metal paneling. The original structure's roof has a slight eave overhang with a wide band of wooden trim immediately below. The rear addition has dropped secondary corrugated metal sheet shed roof.³ On the rear slope of the original hipped roof is a brick masonry chimney placed almost symmetrically along the front entrance. The addition also has a slope chimney coming out of the kitchen, constructed of concrete block. The roof on the original structure looks in much better shape than the addition, especially the eaves, which are wooden and painted white. The eaves of the shed roof on the addition are unpainted wood and show signs of substantial water damage. The foundation of the original structure is made of rough cut, regular course sandstone. The addition's foundation is concrete block.

Front (West) Elevation

The front of the schoolhouse features the prominent cross-gabled entrance that gives the building its unique character (Photo 1). A decorative cornice can be seen straddling just under the roof, except under the front gable, where the cornice ends in two cornice returns. The entryway is crowned by the front gable roof with a small oeil-de-boeuf window, about a foot in

³ According to the owner, these rooves were replaced in c.2017-18.

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State

diameter, near the peak of the gable pediment. Flanking the corners of the exterior wall on either side of the front gable wall are two wooden Doric-influenced pilasters that run the length of the wall from the foundation to the cornice returns. Leading up to the porch are three wooden steps which lead to the 1/1, five-paneled wooden door with a single panel transom above it. Before reaching the door, however, one must first proceed through the small, closed porch, which is approached through a segmentally arched entryway. Just above this entryway is a painted rectangular oriented wood strand board with an inscription, "DRY POND COMM CENTER BUILT 1923." The entire front facing façade is clad in wooden novelty drop siding painted white. The front entrance hall structure's porch is flanked by two of the front façade's six windows. All of these windows are 6/6 double hung sash windows. The other four are found in two pairs on either side of the entrance hall on the main structure. These windows are not original to the structure and were replaced c.2000 with the present vinyl windows. Above these windows, within the original frame, are wooden boards that fill up that void left by the smaller, modern windows.

North Elevation

The northern elevation is clad in the same method as the front elevation on the original portion (Photo 4). There are four symmetrically placed windows, exactly the same as the replacement windows seen on the front elevation. These window frames also feature the wooden boards that fill the gap left by the smaller windows. The wooden pilasters that are found on the front elevation are also found here flanking the ends of the walls of the original structure. Below the wood cladding, on the stone foundation wall, is a small basement window under the second-from-the-right window on the main floor. The addition is present on this elevation towards the east. It is not constructed plumb with the rest of the building and sits two or three inches back from the original wall. Its wall is made of concrete block, its shed roof sits five or inches below the main roof.

Rear (East) Elevation

The 1950s concrete block rear addition was used as a kitchen and cafeteria. The additional structure is not centered on the rear of the original building, falling short about 15 feet north of the south extreme of the main building (Photo 2). Present here are four 4/4 irregularly placed partial casement windows. The top two panels are stationary and do not pivot like the bottom six that form 1/1 three-panel swinging doors. These windows are also not symmetrical, the three on the right sit roughly the same distance apart from each other, while the fourth and southernmost window sits closer to the south elevation and farther from the other three windows.⁴ This is due to the fact that the addition is broken up into two rooms on the inside.

⁴ To the left and down of the left, solitary windows are significant signs of scorching due to the presence of a modern cooking grill.

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

South Elevation

Monroe County, WV

County and State

The south elevation is fairly similar to the north elevation, having four symmetrical placed windows of the same make (Photo 3). There are two air conditioning units present here, placed on both of the exterior windows closest to the ends of the wall. The pilasters are also present on the corners of the original structure's wall. The wooden boards seen present here over the windows are also seen on the front and north elevations. Over the right window's air conditioning unit is an OSB board that fills up the area where there would usually be a bottom sash between the unit and the top sash of the window. The addition's south elevation wall sits back roughly 15 feet back from the original structure's wall. The addition has an outside entrance on this wall, placed near-center. There is a single glazed wooden door with three horizontal panels beneath the three vertical windows on the top half of the door. A metal screen door is present. The door is raised a little over a yard from the ground and can be accessed by a concrete landing with three concrete steps leading up to it from the south. A metal railing can be found on the west side of the short stairway.

Interior

The interior of the building includes four rooms, two in the original section and two in the 1950s addition. The original structure consists of the "main room", once used as a classroom, and the foyer. There are two wooden doors placed next to each other allowing movement between these two rooms. A sliding partition wall is placed in the middle of the main room separating these two doors. This would allow movement between the rooms when the sliding partition was closed.⁵ Two closet rooms are also present on each side of the foyer. Each closet has a window on the far end, these are the two windows immediately flanking the front entrance on the outside.

The floors in the original structure are made of 4-inch oak boards. The walls and ceiling are covered in yellow painted wood beadboard (Photo 12). A chalkboard is present in the rear wall of the main room. The main room has four windows on the north and south walls, allowing sufficient daylight into the room throughout the day. Light fixtures original to the period of construction can also be found in this room.

The door to the 1950s edition is on the rear wall of the main room. Next to it is a wooden sliding window, or "food pass" window, which was added during the building's time as a community center.⁶ The walls of the addition are made on concrete block (Photo 13). The floors are made of poured concrete. The ceiling is made of grey painted plywood. The first and larger room in the northern part of the addition structure is the dining room. There are three casement windows on the rear wall. The smaller room to the south is the kitchen, with one casement window on the rear wall. A wooden door connects the two and a wooden door with an exterior screen door is on the opposite wall and used as the rear entrance.

⁵ It is unclear how the space in the main room was originally utilized in the time immediately following construction. The schoolhouse was categorized as a "two-room" schoolhouse in the state educational directory in the years after its construction.

⁶ The building served as a community center until 2013, when it became vacant.

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State

Both the original and addition portions of the schoolhouse are currently being used for storage by the owner. The form and layout of the rooms can still be determined, and much of the original materials are present, including the beadboard and light fixtures.

Sheds

unknown built date

2 Noncontributing Buildings

To the east and south of the schoolhouse are two sheds both in poor condition. Both are constructed of vertical wood channel board paneling and surrounded by an overgrowth of vegetation. Both sheds have corrugated metal-sheet shed roofs. The northern shed has an opening on the left section of its front façade where there once was a door. The hinges are still present and attached to a wooden remnant of the door. Bushes and small trees are growing out of the doorway. Another opening for a vertically opening wooden shutter-like window is on the right side of the front façade. The two hinges are on the bottom of the piece of wood, with a lock at the top, indicating that the shutter opens out and down. The southern shed, 120 feet southeast of the main structure, is not easily visible from the school. This building is larger than the northern shed and appears to be of the same material; vegetation obscures most of the building. Both sheds are noncontributing due to a significant loss of material integrity and for likely falling outside the period of significance.

Privy

unknown built date

1 Noncontributing Building

The third outbuilding is a privy. It is of similar construction to the other outbuildings, with a metal shed roof and vertical wood channel siding. It is immediately neighboring the northern shed, the privy just to the south. It is divided into two smaller rooms, both each with its own exterior door. The left door is three or four inches higher than the door on the right. Both doors are made of wood and in poor condition. The hinges of each door face each other, indicating that the door opens outward in opposite directions towards each other. The doors are kept in place by wooden latches. Both doors are designated by gender by metal panels, the one on the left inscribed with, "Ladies", and the other with, "Men." The school building has never had indoor restroom facilities, but this privy is likely from its time as a community center. The privy is noncontributing due to a significant loss of material integrity and for likely falling outside the period of significance.

Integrity

The setting of the property seen today is very similar to what the vicinity would have looked like at the time of the school's construction. Some new buildings and structures are present locally, but the school still resides in an agrarian locality, with other period structures and buildings nearby. The Dry Pond School has never been moved and sits in its original location. The building and property still reflect the historic design and layout of the school and its grounds, but the interior appears to have been altered some since its use as a community center. It is unclear if the school was originally a one room schoolhouse or if it was a two-room schoolhouse. The building is laid out in a way that would point towards it being a two-room schoolhouse, but if there was a wall dividing the main room in two, it is no longer extant.

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State

Original building materials and design features are still present including interior and exterior siding, light fixtures and wood stove, fenestration, and decorative Neoclassical elements. The only newer materials found on the exterior of the building are the new vinyl windows and the new metal roofs on both the main and additional structure. However, the new windows mimic the multipaned original and the metal roof retains the original shape and pitch. The workmanship is still easily seen on the main structure of the building. The Neoclassical features, such as the Doric-inspired pilasters and cornice are evidence of this. A quotidian feeling given by the simple construction and relatively small scale is present in the minds of any visitor to this school building, as well as the feeling of tradition given by the classical influences of the building's exterior. The building and property are still closely associated with the past. The current lack of indoor bathrooms is just one example of direct links to the site's past and the time period of construction.

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

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.)

- ☒ 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.

Criteria Considerations

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

- ☐ 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

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

Areas of Significance

Education

Period of Significance

1923 – 1961

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Dry Pond School represents a once-common example of rural educational building and was constructed during an era of significant progressive activity and spending in the West Virginia public school system. The one-room school, which opened in 1923, is also significant as a unique vernacular schoolhouse with modest Neoclassical influence. The school served the children of the rural Monroe County communities in the vicinity of the village of Orchard for almost four decades before closing due to school consolidation. The Dry Pond School is eligible at the local level under Criterion A: Education as a unique example of a rural schoolhouse built during a period of great investment in public education in the state of West Virginia. The period of significance begins at the construction of the school in 1923 and ends with the closing of the school in 1961, after which it was used as a community center before closing its doors in 2013.

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

History of Monroe County before its Founding

Monroe County can be found in the southeastern extreme of the State of West Virginia. Its waters are divided by three watersheds, the Greenbrier, the New, and the James River watersheds. It is placed along the Allegheny Front, which divides the Ridge-and-Valley Appalachians and the Allegheny Plateau. The area was first inhabited by the native peoples of North America. In Pre-Columbian times, West Virginia was home to numerous cultures, including the Hopewell and Fort Ancient cultures. By the era of Monroe's early white settlement in the 1730s, the land making up the present county was used as a seasonal resource by many groups, such as the Shawnee, Delaware, and Cherokee.

White settlers, mostly of Scotch-Irish and German nationality first entered the area of Monroe County in the 1750s. Settlement in the mid-18th century was intermittently interrupted with conflict with native people brought on by the political tension between the European empires of Britain and France. Significant bloodshed was seen in Monroe County and other areas in the Alleghenies during the French and Indian War, Pontiac's Rebellion, and Lord Dunmore's War.

After the 1780s, peace was restored in present Monroe County and settlement and the growth of early Euro-American communities resumed unhindered by conflict. The county was established in 1799 and named after James Monroe, the future fifth president of the United States.⁷ The area grew into a prosperous rural agrarian region at this time, which for the most part is still present today in the county.

⁷ Morton, Oren F. *A History of Monroe County, West Virginia*. 1916

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State

Public Education in Monroe County from the 18th to 20th Centuries

According to widely accepted local tradition, the first school in the county was taught in the year 1795 by a Mr. Samuel Harper near Second Creek. During the late 18th and early 19th centuries in western Virginia, private citizens were solely responsible for the establishment of schools and the employment of teachers. These common primary schools were widely referred to at a later time as “old field schools.”⁸ Partial government funding for these schools did not come until Virginia’s “Literary Fund” was established in 1810. This was a state program to help indigent families afford to send their children to school. This fund continued in the state of Virginia until the onset of civil war, when the fund was “applied to the military defense of the State.”⁹

During the 19th century, the government and citizens of Monroe County did much to improve the educational environment of their communities and by 1835 there were 29 common schools and one district free school. In 1820, the county had also established its first board of commissioners, made up of nine members, who were responsible for the distribution of the Literary Fund to the poor children. In 1835, there were four hundred such children.

In the 19th century, most of the schools present in the county were of simple construction, mostly small, crude log, or wooden frame buildings. This is an 1851 account of one of those field schools near Sweet Springs:

“...the schoolroom was dimly lighted, much of the illumination sifting in through a row of blocks of greased paper set in one of the log walls. The sheets of paper were about eight by ten inches in size, sticks being used to hold them in place. Below this narrow, horizontal window was a sloping board held up by pegs. This was the writing board. The benches were puncheon slabs, the legs of which were pegs set into auger holes. The only back to the bench was a narrow rail-board.”¹⁰

It was not until after West Virginia’s statehood in 1863 that a free system of schools was introduced to Monroe County and by the 1870s, the conditions of education were improving in the county. In 1876, J.D. Beckett, the county superintendent, visited the six school districts of Monroe County: Union, Sweet Springs, Second Creek, Wolf Creek, Springfield, and Red Sulphur Springs. In all, he recorded 70 white schoolhouses and 6 black schoolhouses in the county. In the future district of Dry Pond Schoolhouse, Red Sulphur, Beckett found that most of the schools were generally built of log and had improved much in regard to teaching and cleanliness, saying that the majority of schools were in “good order” and had “prompt obedience, hard study and good recitations” present amongst the pupils.¹¹ This free school system allowed every child to attend school without direct cost and illiteracy diminished significantly. At the

⁸ Ambler, Charles H. *A History of Education in West Virginia*. 1951

⁹ *Highlights of the History of Monroe County Schools 1799-1999*. 1997

¹⁰ Morton, Oren F. *A History of Monroe County, West Virginia*. 1916

¹¹ Ibid.

Dry Pond School

Monroe County, WV

Name of Property

County and State

time of Morton's writing in 1916, Monroe County had an illiteracy rate of only 5.5%, much lower than the state rate of 8.3%.¹²

Educational Atmosphere of the 1920s

By the time of Dry Pond School's construction in 1923, the traditional system of education was changing dramatically in West Virginia. Prior to the turn of the twentieth century, education had been rooted in the basic understanding of arithmetic, reading, and writing. In most communities, that was sufficient, but there was a movement among academics for the modernization of the public school system in the state and a growing promotion of a high school education.

The period between 1920 and 1925 saw statewide spending on education tripled before it was curtailed by conservatives in the state legislature due to the declining economic condition of the state economy in the mid to late 1920s (as a result of the decline of major industries like coal mining).¹³ The newly established, or reorganized from a previous iteration, State Board of Education of 1908 went to work immediately reforming the means and material of education throughout the state, with a specific aim at rural communities like Dry Pond. In 1909, the board published, "The Manual of the Course of Study for Elementary and High Schools." This pointed out its goals as better preparing rural schools being taught by one teacher by covering all necessary subjects and trimming down the formerly required material in the older system of the former state board.¹⁴ Other guiding and governing documents such as, "Training and Certification of Teachers in West Virginia", "A Definite Proposal to Equalize Education Opportunity" by E.L. Bowman and Dr. L.V. Cavins in 1925, and others similar to these works were being rapidly published in the state during this period. According to Charles Ambler in his book, *A History of Education in West Virginia* (1951), "the new school of educators superseded the old school in leadership."¹⁵ Education in West Virginia was forever changed into a more modern and progressive version of its former embodiment, following the rest of the nation into the American century as peers in contemporary public education.

The school districts of Monroe County were playing no small part in their effort to modernize their school systems. By 1921, all six school districts had a high school and local governments were pushing to modernize their communities' school buildings. During this time, several inspections by the state board had found the buildings in use in much of Monroe County were not suited to the standards and widely outdated to the present conditions.¹⁶ Union High School was a particular target of both the state board and the local government, being noted as a "Second Class" school in the 1921-22 state educational directory. A vocal county citizen and former principal of Union High School, John T. Fitzgerald, wrote a letter in the *Monroe Watchman* published on April 11, 1921, that called on voters in the Union school district to vote in favor of the newly proposed local bonds and levies that would sponsor construction of

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ambler, Charles H. *A History of Education in West Virginia*. 1951

¹⁴ A Manual Containing the Graded Courses of Study for the Elementary and High Schools of West Virginia. 1909

¹⁵ Ambler, Charles H. *A History of Education in West Virginia*. 1951

¹⁶ "Union District Special Election." *The Monroe Watchman*. April 7, 1921

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State

additions and new school buildings in the district. Red Sulphur Springs school district also had this 'special election', which was held on April 23rd.

Dry Pond Schoolhouse

It was likely with funds similar to those voted on in Red Sulphur Springs in 1921 that the construction of Dry Pond Schoolhouse in 1923 was funded. The earliest mention that was found of the "Dry Pond School" was in the *West Virginia Educational Directory: 1921-22*. It was under the jurisdiction of the Red Sulphur Springs District school system in Monroe County. Its first teacher was a "C.B. Mann" and at this time, the children attended school in a small one room building near the present location of the extant, larger schoolhouse. It was likely that this smaller building did not meet the needs of the community in its short existence.¹⁷ The schoolhouse was constructed sometime after June 1923 as a "two room" schoolhouse. It is uncertain whether it was actually constructed in this manner, but the scaling of the building and the interior layout of the doors (two doors leading from the foyer) seems to point towards the current large room once being split into two. Throughout most of the school's existence it was recorded that the school had two teachers.

The building's construction resulted in the consolidation of five one room schoolhouses in the area. An advertisement posted on June 7th, 1923, in the *Monroe Watchman* announced that the Red Sulphur Springs board's wish to create a new two-room schoolhouse had come to fruition and informed of the closing of the former five schools:

"Further ordered, that the Board meet in special session at Dry Pond School-House on Monday, June 18th, 1923, at 10 o'clock a.m., for the purpose of receiving sealed bids for the erection of a new 2-room School-House on the site recently selected and purchased by the Board...At the same time and place the Board will proceed to sell at public auction, for cash, to the highest bidder, the following named school properties which have been discontinued, viz: Dry Pond, Orchard, Pleasant Grove, Mt. View, and Fairview."¹⁸

The building was constructed as a one-story, hipped roofed structure. It was built in a more vernacular fashion, but it had modest neoclassical influences, like pilasters and cornices present in its architecture. This appears to be common among other schoolhouses being built in the region at the time.¹⁹

The first two teachers appointed at this new building were P.E. Ryan and Miss Vada Lowe, who would teach first and second grade respectfully.²⁰ By the publication of the 1929-30 directory, Dry Pond School still retained its two teachers and had 33 students. In the Red Sulphur Springs district there were five other larger schools, resulting in the closing of more one-room schoolhouses. Consolidation was progressing throughout the county, ever faster as the years

¹⁷ *West Virginia Educational Directory, 1920-21*

¹⁸ "Bids for Schoolhouse Invited." *The Monroe Watchman*. June 7th, 1923

¹⁹ It is unclear as to when the school was electrified. The present light fixtures look as if they date to the 1930s.

²⁰ "Bids for Schoolhouse Invited." *The Monroe Watchman*. June 7th, 1923

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State

passed.²¹ Between 1929 and 1934, the county went from having 102 schools to 91, then in 1940, that number dropped to 82, 1945 to 63.²²

The 1940s seem to be the heyday of the Dry Pond school. During this time, the school retained two teachers, Clara Belcher and Zula Schultz and had 45 pupils in 1940, 43 in 1945, and 49 in 1950.²³ The school was now a functioning elementary school, teaching the first through eighth grades and was classified as a "First Class", or "model" school. All of the other schools in Monroe County were also registered under these categories during this decade, showing the overall improvement of their education system since the 1920s. It was sometime during the 1950s that a concrete block addition was added to the main building to accommodate a dining room and kitchen for the school.

By the time of the Dry Pond's last recording in the educational directory in 1960, consolidation was still in progress.²⁴ At this time, there were only 22 schools in the county. Dry Pond's (and the county's) attendance had dropped. In its last year, it only had one teacher, Edith H. Skaggs, who taught 36 pupils through the first and sixth grades. The *Monroe Watchman* records the closure of the school in its June 8, 1961, publication of the Monroe County Board of Education proceedings, "The Dry Pond school was closed, the children to be transported to Ballard and Peterstown next year. Edith Hinton Skaggs, teacher at Dry Pond, was transferred to the Wikel school."²⁵

Reasons for Closure

The consolidation of Monroe County's schools in this time between the 1920s and 1960s was in most part due to the modernization of transportation and infrastructure in the county. School buses began running in the county in 1933, which could transport children once restricted to traveling on foot to schools more than ten miles away from their homes. The reorganization of the school systems in the state of West Virginia at this time also played a major role in the consolidation of schools. Between 1863 and 1933 the state education systems operated under local jurisdictions. In 1933, the state legislature, pushed by the financial effects of the Great Depression, transformed the local, district system into the present county unit system. In an effort to continue modernizing school buildings and ease the administrative burden, the new Monroe County school board sped up the process of consolidation.

Current Use and Ownership

After the closing of the school, the building was utilized as a community center for local events and activities. The main school room was converted into a dining and recreational space. The building was used in this capacity until 2013, when it was left vacant. In 2017, Rhonda

²¹ *West Virginia Educational Directory, 1929-30*

²² *West Virginia Educational Directory, 1934-35; 1940-41; 1945-46*

²³ *West Virginia Educational Directory, 1940-41; 1945-46; 1950-51*

²⁴ *West Virginia Educational Directory, 1960-61*

²⁵ "Board of Education Proceedings." *The Monroe Watchman*. June 8th, 1961

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State

Dortch purchased the property at a public auction. She now plans to rehabilitate the building into a community center again.²⁶

Conclusion

Dry Pond Schoolhouse stands out as one of the few standing examples of an era of great change in the State of West Virginia's educational system. Additionally, it reflects the shared mindset of the people of Monroe County in their effort to modernize their schools, to improve the education of their children and to give them a better chance of success in a more complicated world. John T. Fitzgerald, a former principal at Union High School, wrote a letter addressed to the readers of the *Monroe Watchman* on September 15th, 1921, about the forthcoming school year at Union High School. His letter is a good example of what the people of Monroe County thought about the importance of education in their rural community in the 1920s:

“Union District High School will open September 19, next Monday. This date in my opinion is a fortunate one. The boys will have time to cut their corn before starting to school... We have every reason to believe that a number of boys as well as girls will be with us this session. The boys surely will not dare to start out in life these days without at least a High School Education.”²⁷

The Dry Pond School is a physical embodiment of West Virginia's rural educational history and a testament to the evolution of teaching and learning in the Mountain State in the early and mid-twentieth century. There is no better way to showcase the impact these small buildings had on rural communities than to preserve the Dry Pond School for the continued education and use of Monroe County residents and visitors.

²⁶ Information based on correspondence with the current owner. 2020-21.

²⁷ “Opening of the Union District High School.” *The Monroe Watchman*. September 15th, 1921

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State

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- . “Notice to the Public: Sale of Schoolhouse.” *The Monroe Watchman*. May 12, 1921, L edition.
- . “Red Sulphur Springs Notice to Trustees.” *The Monroe Watchman*. September 1, 1921, L edition.
- . “Schools and Trustees of Red Sulphur District.” *The Monroe Watchman*. July 21, 1921, L edition.
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Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

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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 # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
 - ☐ Other State agency
 - ☐ Federal agency
 - ☐ Local government
 - ☐ University
 - ☐ Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): ME-0294

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: ~ 1 acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

1. Latitude: 37.486734

Longitude: -80.729034

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries are legally defined by parcel number 32-03-0011-0044-0000 of the Red Sulphur District of Monroe County, West Virginia (DRY POND E. SIDE OF SEC. RT.27; 1.AC). The legal description of the parcel is also found in Deed Book 288, page 751.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries selected encompass the historic school and all associated outbuildings.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: James Marshall, Governor's Intern (additional research and editing provided by Rhonda Dortch, Bluestone Mountain Farm, and Emily Vance, WV SHPO)
organization: West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office
street & number: The Culture Center, 1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
city or town: Charleston state: West Virginia zip code: 25305
e-mail: James.E.Marshall@wv.gov
telephone: 304.558.0240
date: July 2021

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

Figures Log

Figure 1. USGS Topographical Map

Figure 2. Setting Overview Map

Figure 3. Sketch Map with Photo Vantage Points

Figure 4. Floor plan with Photo Vantage Points (not to scale)

Figure 5. 1995 Photograph from WV SHPO Historic Property Inventory Form

Figure 6. Pond Schoolhouse shortly after construction, date unknown (from *Highlights of the History of Monroe County Schools 1799-1999*)

Figure 7. Dry Pond Schoolhouse shortly after construction, date unknown (image from the collection of Belinda Anderson)

Figure 8. School children, date unknown (image from the collection of Belinda Anderson)

Figure 9. School children in front of school, circa 1950s-61 (image from the collection of Ethel Long)

Figure 10. School children standing at either the North or South elevation, circa 1930s (image from the collection of Belinda Anderson)

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State



Figure 1. USGS Topographical Map

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

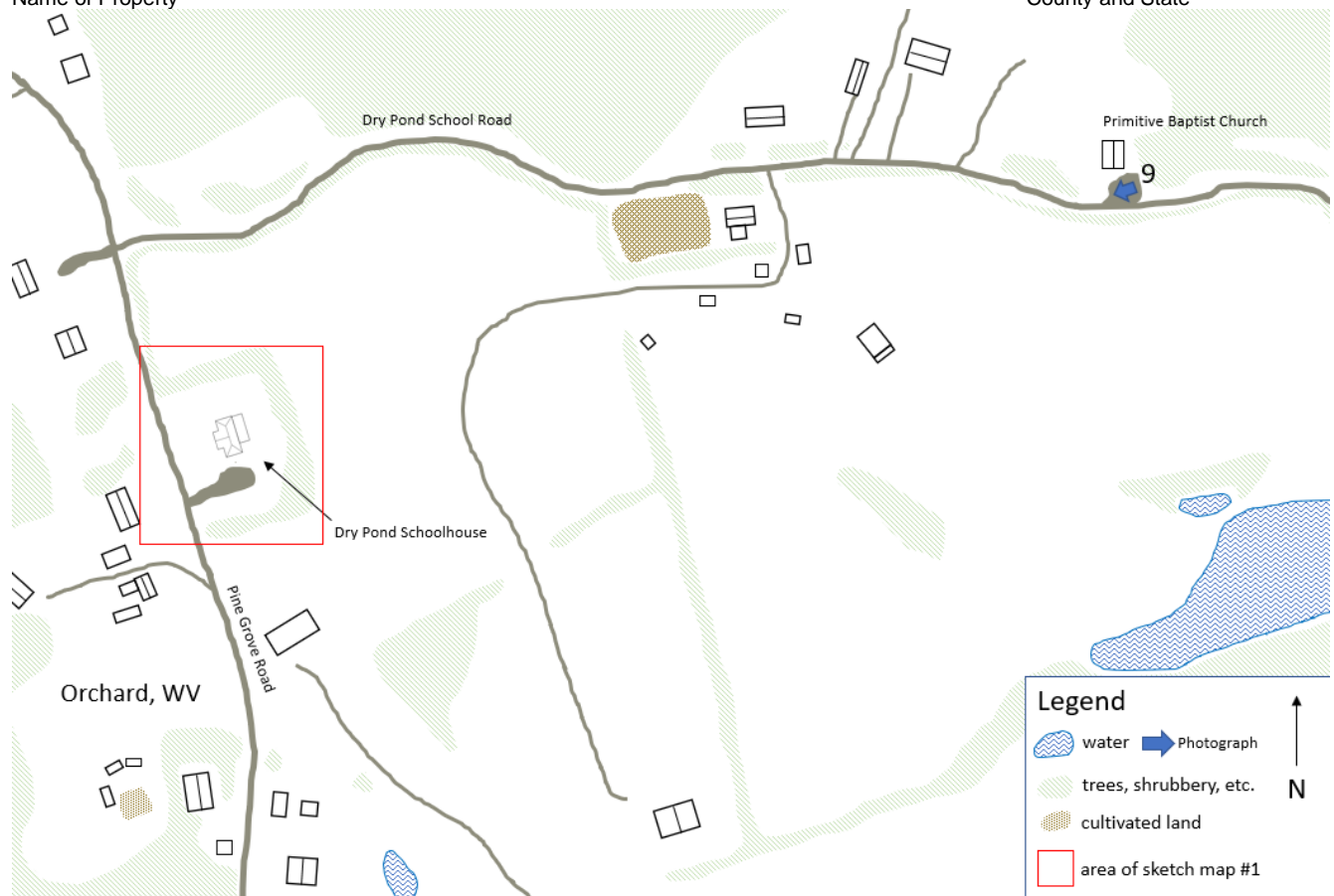


Figure 2. Setting Overview Map

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

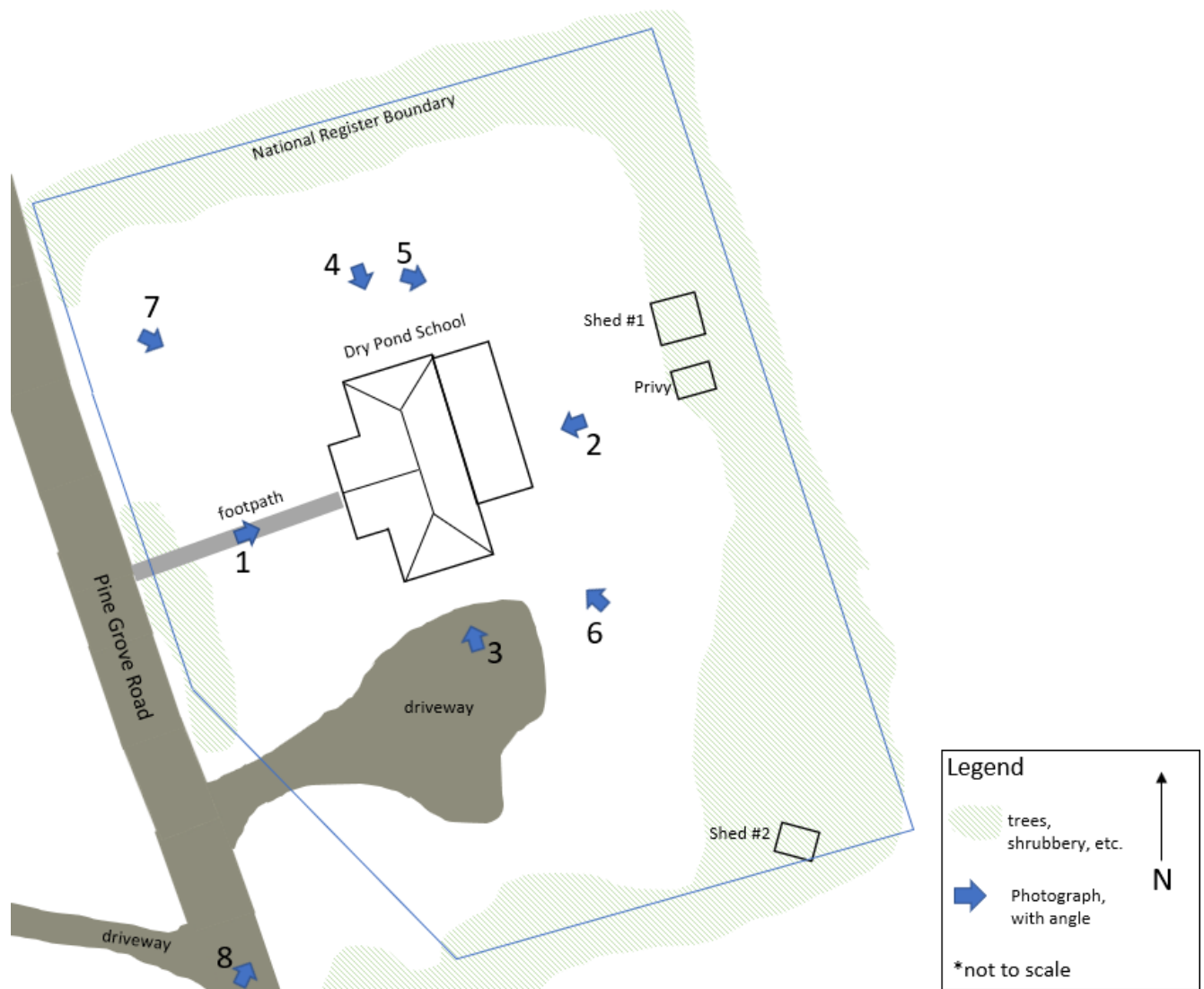


Figure 3. Sketch Map with Photo Vantage Points

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

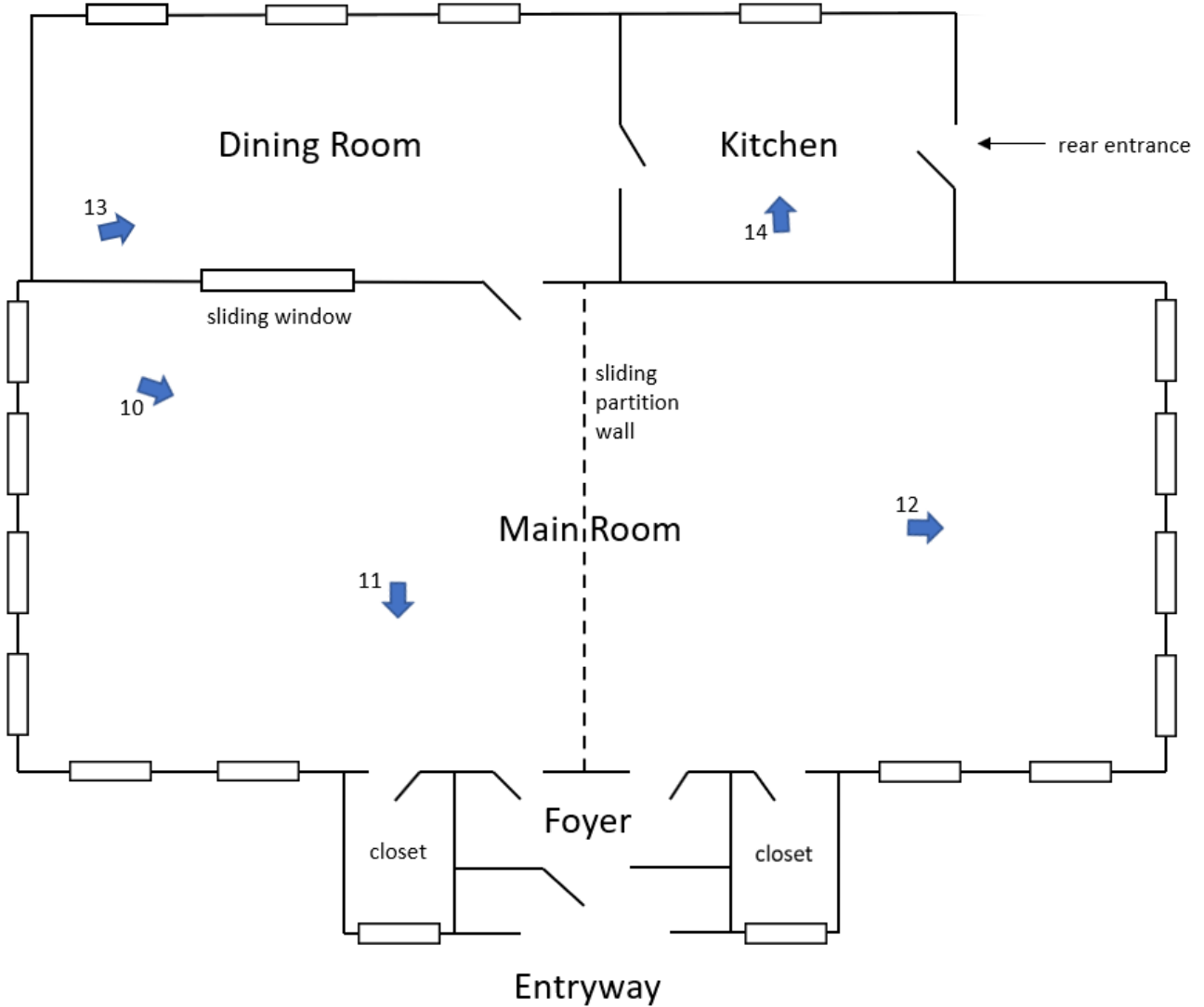


Figure 4. Floor Plan with Photo Vantage Points (not to scale)

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Figure 5. 1995 Photograph from WV SHPO Historic Property Inventory Form. Shows original 9/9 sash windows and the former asphalt shingle roof. From Wyoming/ Cloverdale Transmission Line Survey, #C9-5, ME-0294.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

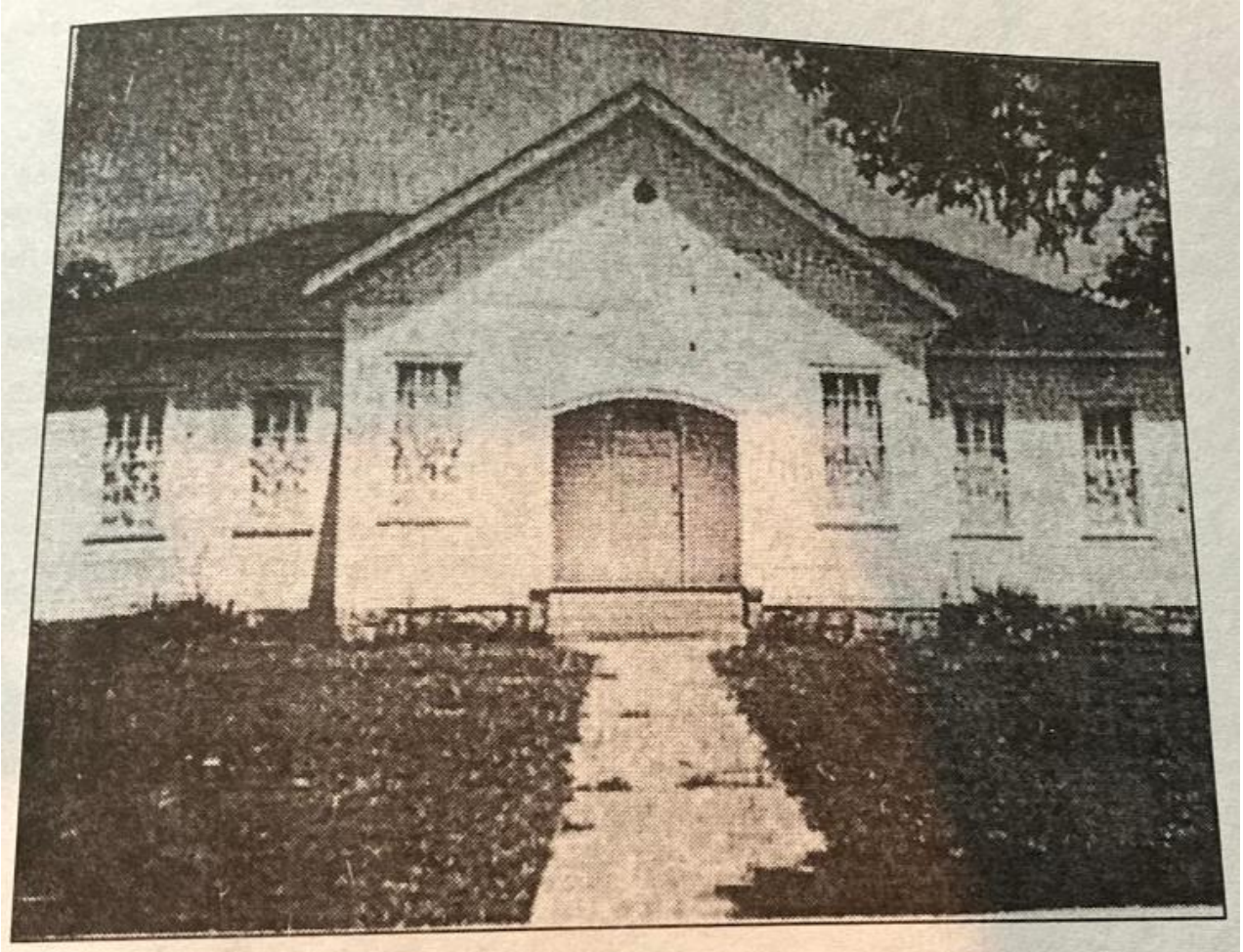


Figure 6. Dry Pond Schoolhouse shortly after construction, date unknown (from *Highlights of the History of Monroe County Schools 1799-1999*)

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Figure 7. Dry Pond Schoolhouse circa 1930s (image from the collection of Belinda Anderson)

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Figure 8. School children in front of the school, circa 1930s (image from the collection of Belinda Anderson)

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Figure 9. School children in front of school, circa 1950s-1961 (image from the collection of Ethel Long)

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Figure 10. School children standing at either the North or South elevation, circa 1930s (image from the collection of Belinda Anderson)

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Dry Pond School

City or Vicinity: Orchard

County: Monroe

State: West Virginia

Photographer: James Marshall

Date Photographed: May 30th, 2021 (interior photographs provided by Rhonda Dortch, taken 2020-2021)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 14. Front Elevation looking northeast.

2 of 14. Rear Elevation looking southwest.

3 of 14. South Elevation looking northwest.

4 of 14. North Elevation looking southeast.

5 of 14. Eastern section of the property with two of the outbuildings, looking southeast.

6 of 14. Rear section of the schoolhouse looking northwest. Rear entrance to 1950s addition in center.

7 of 14. Schoolhouse and rear outbuildings, looking southeast.

8 of 14. Dry Pond Schoolhouse as seen from Pine Grove Road, looking northeast.

9 of 14. Dry Pond Schoolhouse (center) as seen from Dry Pond Primitive Baptist Church on Dry Pond School Road, roughly 480 yards away, looking southwest.

10 of 14. View looking towards the front of the main room in the original section of the building.

11 of 14. View of the northern closet, left of the entrance.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State

12 of 14. View of the original light fixtures looking towards the south elevation of the original building.

13 of 14. View of the Dining Room in the 1950s addition.

14 of 14. View of the Kitchen in the 1950s addition.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 1 of 14. Front Elevation looking northeast.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 2 of 14. Rear Elevation looking southwest.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 3 of 14. South Elevation looking northwest.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 4 of 14. North Elevation looking southeast.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 5 of 14. Eastern section of the property with two of the outbuildings, looking southeast. Shed # 1 is on the left and the privy is on the right. Vegetation along the border of the parcel can also be seen.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 6 of 14. Rear section of schoolhouse looking northwest. Rear entrance to 1950s in center.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 7 of 14. Schoolhouse and rear outbuildings, looking southeast.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 8 of 14. Dry Pond Schoolhouse as seen from Pine Grove Road, looking northeast. The driveway is also visible as the slight dip in the yard and continues to where the vehicles are located.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 9 of 14. Dry Pond Schoolhouse (center) as seen from Dry Pond Primitive Baptist Church on Dry Pond School Road, roughly 480 yards away, looking southwest. A farm with two principal barns and a nineteenth century farmhouse lies in between the school and the church.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 10 of 14. View looking towards the front of the main room in the original section of the building. Note original light fixtures.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 11 of 14. View of the northern closet, left of the entrance. Note original light fixture and what appears to be original trim and door.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 12 of 14. View of the original light fixtures looking towards the south elevation of the original building.

Dry Pond School
Name of Property

Monroe County, WV
County and State



Photo 13 of 14. View of the Dining Room in the 1950s addition.

Dry Pond School

Name of Property

Monroe County, WV

County and State



Photo 14 of 14. View of the Kitchen in the 1950s addition.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.