

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION FILE  
Tennessee State Historic Preservation Office

Listing Name: Birchwood School  
Address: 5623 TN-60  
City: Birchwood  
County: Hamilton  
Associated MPS: N/A

Listing Date: 12/18/2026  
Reference Number: SG100012408



NEW YORK, RICHMOND COUNTY,  
Messiah Lutheran Church,  
205 Jefferson Boulevard,  
Staten Island, SG100012403,  
LISTED, 12/16/2025

NEW YORK, RICHMOND COUNTY,  
St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church,  
7558 Amboy Road,  
Staten Island, SG100012404,  
LISTED, 12/16/2025

NEW YORK, ULSTER COUNTY,  
Pine Street African Burial Ground,  
Address Restricted,  
Kingston vicinity, SG100012413,  
LISTED, 12/18/2025

OHIO, CUYAHOGA COUNTY,  
Church of the Holy Spirit-Nazarene Baptist Church,  
8411-8415 Wade Park Avenue,  
Cleveland, SG100012414,  
LISTED, 12/18/2025

OHIO, FRANKLIN COUNTY,  
Market-Mohawk Historic District,  
101-323 E. Town St., 201 S. Grant Ave., 200-301 E. Rich St., 199-380 S. Fifth St., 215-380 E. Main St., 150  
E. Mound St., 365 S. Fourth St.,  
Columbus, SG100012406,  
LISTED, 12/18/2025

TENNESSEE, DYER COUNTY,  
Cole-Boston House,  
1481 Ditmore Road,  
Newbern vicinity, SG100012392,  
LISTED, 12/18/2025

TENNESSEE, HAMILTON COUNTY,  
Birchwood School,  
5623 TN-60,  
Birchwood, SG100012408,  
LISTED, 12/18/2025

TENNESSEE, MONTGOMERY COUNTY,  
Dunlop House,  
517 Madison Street,  
Clarksville, MP100012390,

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

## 2. Location

Street & Number: 5623 TN-60  
City or town: Birchwood State: Tennessee County: Hamilton  
Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  N/A Zip: 37308

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D



9/29/2025

**Signature of certifying official/Title:**

**Date**

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

**State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

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

**Signature of Commenting Official:**

**Date**

**Title:**

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

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	1	buildings
0	0	sites
2	4	structures
1	0	objects
5	5	Total

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

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: school

RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL: meeting hall

RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

MODERN MOVEMENT

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

WOOD; BRICK; STONE; METAL; ASPHALT;  
CONCRETE; SYNTHETIC: vinyl

**Narrative Description**

The Birchwood School building is located on flat, relatively open grassy ground. It is bordered on the west by State Route 60, and on the north, south, and east by residential homes. Two paved driveways access the property. The northernmost driveway access the Industrial Building parking lot and service alley behind the school. The southernmost driveway access the parking lot for the school building, gymnasium, and outdoor recreational facilities. There are no National Register-listed properties within five miles of the school building. The nearest is Blythe Ferry, located six miles north (NR Listed 01/05/1983).

**BIRCHWOOD SCHOOL BUILDING – 1930 (CONTRIBUTING BUILDING)**

The Birchwood School is an irregular plan, single story, building. Unless otherwise noted, the school is clad in brick, sat upon a concrete foundation, and capped by a gable roof covered in asphalt shingles. A soldier brick belt course is located about two feet above the ground. Due to the complexity of the property, the historic Industrial Building and Gymnasium additions are described in their own subheadings. Because they were constructed as additions and attached to the original Birchwood School Building, they are not considered separate inventoried resources.

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*West Elevation*

The west elevation serves as the façade of the building. The façade is symmetrical with hipped roof projections at either end. A decorative concrete rectangle surrounded by brickwork is visible just beneath each projection's roofline. All windows on the façade are original, metal, sixteen light windows with a central awning section. Windows also feature brick lintels. Basement vents can be seen on the foundation. **(Photographs 1 – 3)**

The facade is defined by its centrally located entrance. The entrance is sheltered by a front gable projection. A deep incised arch shelters the porch. The entrance is filled with two replacement doors with nine light stationary windows. Above the entry is a transom with four-part sunburst design. Above the transom is a decorative, arched, wood fan design. The north and south walls of the porch feature five light, stationary, metal windows. The gable field of the entrance is filled with vertical vinyl siding. This is a change from the historical appearance of the school **(See Figure 1)**. Flanking the entrance are two sixteen light metal windows and brick pilasters. Ten concrete steps flanked on either side by concrete banister with concrete railing lead up to the concrete porch. **(Photographs 1 – 3)**

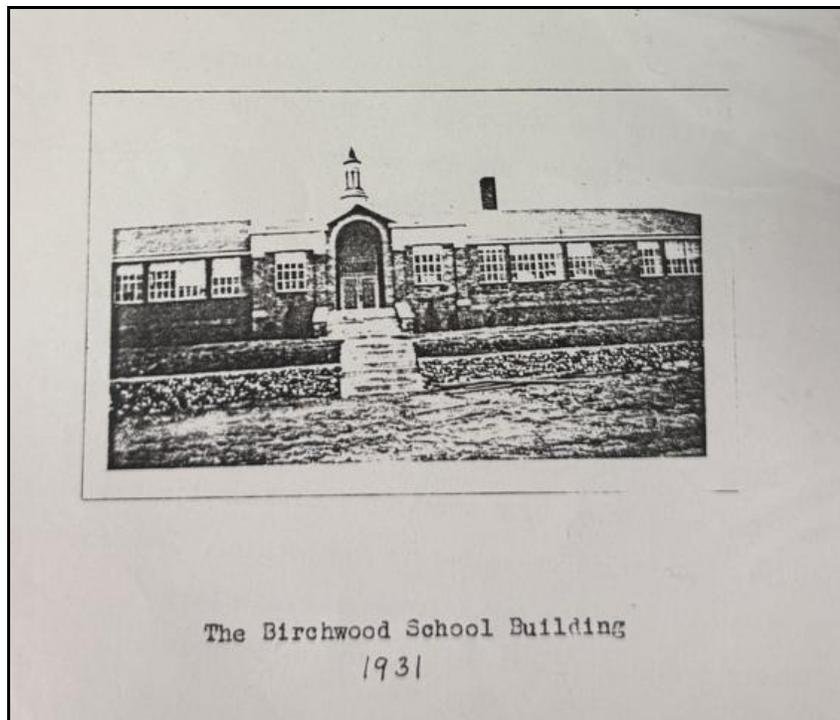


Figure 1: Historical photograph of the Birchwood School Building entrance, 1931. Courtesy of John W. Wiggins, "A Survey and Study of Birchwood Consolidated School Community Hamilton County, Tennessee," pg. 57.

*South Elevation*

The south elevation features seventeen windows along its length. Many of the windows are paired. An interior brick chimney is also visible, near which is a metal door with concrete pad. The door's placement indicates that the door replaced one-half of an original paired window. A metal door with a single fixed light is located on the western end of the elevation. Decorative brickwork with a concrete keystone is located directly above the door, and a concrete ramp flanked by metal railing accesses the door. It is sheltered beneath a gable roof breezeway that connects the 1930 school building with the 1950 industrial building addition. This industrial building will be described in its own section. The breezeway itself is supported by

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four wood columns and was constructed at the same time as the industrial building. The floor of the breezeway is concrete, and the ceiling is clad in vinyl. **(Photograph 4)**

#### *East Elevation*

The east elevation is largely defined by the large gym addition, described later. On the original school section, there are two distinct portions to the east elevation: a front gable extension that projects westward, and the component that parallels the façade. The front gable extension features centered metal, single light, replacement double doors flanked on either side by two sets of paired windows. The gable field is covered in vinyl, and an arched louvered vinyl attic vent is visible beneath the gable peak.

A portion of the east parallel elevation is visible between the gable front projection and the gym addition. It features paired, sixteen light metal windows. Directly beneath the windows are concrete steps with a metal railing that lead down to the basement area. An interior brick chimney is also visible on this portion of the building. The only architectural feature on the remaining portion of the parallel elevation, visible on the north side of the gym addition, are two replacement metal double doors with single light transom. It is accessed by a concrete ramp that slopes downwards

#### *North Elevation*

The north wall of the gable extension features six sets of paired windows. The third bay (from the northeast corner) is occupied by a replacement metal door. The brick around the door suggests it was filled with a single window. Likewise, the sixth bay (from the northeast corner) had one of its paired windows replaced with a metal door that opens onto a poured concrete pad. **(Photograph 7)**

#### Interior

The Birchwood School Building features a variety of flooring types. Because of this, each type is noted in its own section. Most of the doors are replacement wood or metal doors with metal door surrounds, unless otherwise noted. The original school building is roughly L-Shaped and includes the double-loaded corridors, classrooms, library, and cafeteria. The main entrance opens into a small vestibule. Immediately east and west of the entrance are the principal's and clinical office, respectively. Carpet and drywall are present in the principal's office. A door on the east wall accesses the waiting room. The waiting room is floored with carpet and covered in drywall. The clinic room floor is covered in a different type of vinyl tile and features drywall. **(Photograph 17)**

East of the entry vestibule is the main corridor, which runs north to south and has vinyl floor. The corridor wall is covered in plaster. Interspersed throughout the hallway, at the ceiling level, are three light, wood, casement, hopper windows. The west rooms of the main corridor are all classrooms. Four additional corridors, each running east to west and generally shorter, are interspersed along the eastern wall. The original lockers are visible on the west wall. Classrooms along the main corridor are large and generally rectangular in shape. All classrooms retain the original wardrobes for students to place their belongings, a character defining feature of the school. The floors are covered in the original hardwood, windows feature original wood surrounds, wood baseboard is present, and the walls and ceiling are covered in plaster. Only two classrooms in this hallway have been substantially altered: the classroom immediately south of the principal's office features carpet floor, ACT ceiling, and partitioned counterspace; and the southernmost classroom, which features replacement Luxury Vinyl Plank and ACT ceiling. Below the plank flooring is asbestos tile. **(Photographs 18-22, 26)**

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Along the east wall of the main corridor are an arrangement of secondary rooms. At the northern and southern end of the corridor are paired boys and girls restrooms. The floors are red tile. The bottom portion of the walls are covered in red tile, and the top portion are plastered. Directly east of the main entrance on the main corridor's east wall is the music room. It features carpet, vinyl wallpaper, and ACT ceiling. It has been altered to serve as a faculty room. **(Photographs 18-19)**

The south wing features rows of metal double lockers on the south wall. Single light double doors on the east end of the hall lead outside. Classrooms are covered in asbestos tile, feature plaster walls, and ACT ceiling. Doors along this hall are two panel, six light, wood doors. The original library is located in the northeast corner of the wing. It is covered in asbestos tile and features ACT ceiling. The north and east walls are brick, and the south wall is drywall. The library office is accessible via wood, two panel, nine light double doors on the west wall of the library. **(Photographs 23-24)**

Along the south wall is the home economics rooms, kitchen, and science laboratory. Both the home economics and science lab have vinyl tile floor, drywall, and ACT ceiling. The south and east wall of the kitchen are brick. The kitchen floors are vinyl tile, and the walls drywall. **(Photograph 25)**

In between the northern and southern wing is the cafeteria. It used to be the old gymnasium before the 1950s addition to the building. As such, it is a large, rectangular space with high ceilings. It too features Vinyl Tile Flooring, plaster walls, and ACT ceiling. The kitchen area is located along the eastern wall of the cafeteria and is separated from the eating area by two wood doors separated by multiple serving windows. The kitchen is floored with red tile. The bottom half of the kitchen walls are covered with porcelain tile, and the top half drywall. **(Photographs 29-30)**

The northernmost wing is defined by classrooms on its north wall, with a single classroom and bathroom on its south wall. The westernmost classroom retains the original wood floors, wood baseboard and trim, plaster walls, and closet. An ACT ceiling is also present in this room. The remainder of the classrooms have been altered with a combination of Vinyl Tile Flooring, drywall, ACT ceiling, and carpet.

The final major feature of the original building is the new library. It was the former cafeteria. The floors are carpet, the walls brick, and the ceiling has exposed metal beams. Like the gym, it features a higher ceiling and is a larger space than the other areas of the school. Replacement double doors are visible on the east wall. Different brickwork around the double doors indicates a larger opening once pierced this wall before it was infilled and the double doors installed. **(Photograph 28)**

### **Industrial Building Addition – 1950**

The Industrial Building is a single story, hipped roof, brick building sat upon a poured concrete foundation. All windows are original, metal, ten light, awning windows with brick lintels, unless otherwise noted.

#### *West Elevation*

The west elevation serves as the façade. Four sets of single windows and one set of paired windows are visible on the façade. Replacement metal double doors with a small, single fixed light are at the southern end of the elevation. A concrete ramp flanked on either side by simple metal railings leads to the door. The door is sheltered by a metal, flat roof breezeway. The breezeway is supported by wood columns. It spans the length of the façade and wraps around the north elevation, where it terminates below the gable roof

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breezeway that connects the original Birchwood School Building to the Industrial Building Addition. **(Photographs 5-7)**

*South Elevation*

Three sets of paired windows are the only visible architectural feature on the south elevation. **(Photograph 6)**

*East Elevation*

Two sets of paired windows are visible on the southern end of the east elevation. Directly north of the second pair is an eight light awning window. North of the eight light window is a four light, metal, fixed, vertical window. A well house is attached to this elevation. It is a small, brick, single room building capped by a hip roof covered in asphalt shingles and accessed by a single metal door. **(Photograph 6)**

*North Elevation*

The north elevation is connected to the south elevation of the Birchwood School Building by a breezeway. The entrance is recessed and sheltered beneath the breezeway. The entrance is filled with a replacement metal door with metal door surround. The top of the door is crowned with decorative brickwork and a concrete keystone. East of the door are paired windows. **(Photograph 5)**

Interior

Unless otherwise noted, the walls are brick. All floors are covered in vinyl tile and the ceilings are covered with ACT. All doors are replacement wood doors with metal surrounds. The main entrance opens into a corridor, which leads into an open waiting area. A door on the west wall of the room leads into the former music room. The east and south walls of the music room are drywall. There are three entrances visible on the north wall of the waiting room. The two westernmost entrances open into a storage room, and the easternmost entrance opens into a restroom.

An exit is visible on the west wall of the music room. A door on the north wall opens into the health department room. The walls are covered in drywall. Cubicles are set up to partition the space for use as offices. A door to the east wall of the health department opens into a hallway. To the north, a door leads outside. An entrance on the east wall of the hallway accesses an examination room. It is covered in drywall.

**Gym Addition – 1950**

The gym addition is primarily two stories in height with a flat roof. It is clad in brick and sat upon a poured concrete foundation.

*South Elevation*

The south elevation serves as the façade and consists of two primary components: the large gym space, and a single story, hip roof wing that connects to the original Birchwood School Building.

Metal double doors are located on the eastern end of the single-story portion. They feature a single stationary light with a single light metal transom above. To the west of this door are three sets of paired, metal, five light, awning windows with concrete sills. **(Photograph 8)**

An identical double door entrance with transom is located on the larger, two story portion of the gym. The entrance is sheltered by a flat roof porch supported by three metal columns. The northeast corner of the porch is enclosed to create a small room. To the west of the door are two pairs of windows consisting of four, three

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light, metal, awning windows with concrete sills. On the second story are four sets of window gangs consisting of five, metal, awning windows with concrete sill. Evenly spaced along the entire elevation are full height, simple brick pilasters. **(Photograph 8)**

#### *East Elevation*

The two story gym portion is flanked on either side by single story, flat roof wings on the east elevation. Identical metal double doors with metal door surrounds are located on the north and south ends of the gym building. Six, full height, brick pilasters are evenly spaced along the gym building. A pair of two light, metal, awning windows with a concrete sill is visible on the northern wing. **(Photograph 9)**

#### *North Elevation*

The one story flat roof wing extends the entire length of the north elevation and connects to the existing Birchwood School Building. A single fixed light metal window is located on the eastern end of the one-story wing. To the west are nine sets of windows consisting of two, two light, metal, awning windows. A continuous concrete sill connects all the windows and the space between them. To the west of these windows are four sets of fixed, metal, six light vertical ribbon windows with concrete sill. The second story of the gym features the same window and pilaster configuration as the south elevation. **(Photograph 10)**

#### Interior

The Birchwood Gym Addition is a large, rectangular building appended to the northeastern side of the original building. The addition is accessed one of two ways; either by a corridor south of the cafeteria or through the library. The gym itself has a high ceiling with exposed metal rafters. The floor is the original waxed narrow slat wood floor, and the walls are painted concrete block. The original wood bleachers are located on the north wall of the gym.<sup>1</sup> The stage occupies most of the gym's west wall. It is flanked on either side by full height brick pilasters, and a flat awning slightly extends beyond the stage. This roof and the wall between the two pilasters is covered in a panel-like siding. The floor of the stage is wood, and heavy curtains frame it. The back of the stage can be accessed via two doorways and short staircases from the hallway between the gym and the cafeteria kitchen.

North of the gymnasium are the locker rooms and showers. These spaces are defined by their red tile floors and ACT ceilings. Walls are partially covered by porcelain tile, with the top half being exposed concrete block. The exception is the varsity boys room, with carpet as the floor covering. **(Photographs 31-35)**

#### **STONE RETAINING WALL – 1930 (CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE)**

A stone retaining wall runs the length of the original school building along State Highway 60. It consists of naturally shaped stone joined by concrete. The top portion of the wall is covered in concrete. The wall was constructed from stone gathered nearby by members of the Birchwood community. The wall is Contributing because it dates to the Period of Significance, contributed to the functioning of the property as a school, and retains integrity. **(Photograph 11)**

#### **BIRCHWOOD SIGN – 1950 (CONTRIBUTING OBJECT)**

The Birchwood Sign was constructed circa 1950. It is made of brick and sat upon a concrete foundation. The sign resembles a U in shape, with the horizontal sections of the U capped by rowlock course brick. A changeable marquee sign is nestled between the arms of the U. Atop the marquee is a sign that reads

<sup>1</sup> They were made by Wayne Iron Works in Wayne, Pennsylvania and are retractable.

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“Birchwood Elementary.” The sign is Contributing because it dates to the Period of Significance, contributed to the functioning of the property as a school, and retains integrity. **(Photograph 3)**

**WELL HOUSE – 1950 (CONTRIBUTING BUILDING)**

The well house is a small, single room brick buildings sat upon a poured concrete foundation with a single entrance on its east walls filled with an original metal door with metal door surround. It features a front gable concrete roof. The well house is Contributing because it date to the Period of Significance, contributed to the functioning of the property as a school, and retain integrity. **(Photograph 12)**

**GAZEBO – 1930 (CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE)**

The Gazebo is made of wood and is square in shape. It features an elaborate design uncommon for other gazebos. It is accessed via the west side. The floor is wood, and it is enclosed by elaborate railing with primarily diagonal stylistic details. Four posts with two brackets support an asphalt shingled gable roof. A sunburst design is visible in the gable fields of the roof. The Gazebo is contributing because it dates to the Period of Significance, contributed to the functioning of the property as a school, and retains integrity. **(Photograph 7)**

**TENNIS COURT – 1980 (NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE)**

The Tennis Courts feature three court spaces. It is made of concrete and is enclosed by a chain link fence. The Tennis Court is non-contributing because it was not present during the Period of Significance and is less than fifty years old. **(Photograph 13)**

**PLAYGROUND – 2025 (NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE)**

The playground consists of modern equipment located on the northern and southern ends of the track. It is non-contributing because it was not present during the Period of Significance and is less than fifty years old. **(Photographs 14-15)**

**TRACK – 1980 (NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE)**

The track is oval in shape, features five lanes, and is made of asphalt. It is non-contributing because it was not present during the Period of Significance and is less than fifty years old. **(Photographs 14-15)**

**CONCESSION STAND – 1980 (NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDING)**

The concession stand is a rectangular, concrete block building sat upon a poured concrete foundation and capped by a front gable roof covered in metal. A door is located on the north elevation, as well as a serving window. It is non-contributing because it was not present during the Period of Significance and is less than fifty years old. **(Photograph 16)**

**BASEBALL DIAMONDS – 1980 (NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE)**

Both sites are diamond in shape and are enclosed by a chain link fence. The field is grass. It is non-contributing because it was not present during the Period of Significance and is less than fifty years old.

**INTEGRITY**

The Birchwood School retains the integrity necessary to communicate its historical significance. The school remains in the same place it was located historically, thus ensuring it has integrity of location. Though there has been some development and growth around it, the school continues to possess a rural setting with single

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family homes and small commercial businesses scattered around. The building also retains integrity of materials, design, and workmanship. There have been some alterations to the building. This includes changes to entryway roofline, and some changes to interior classroom spaces, such as the installation of modern carpet. However, the school retains many of the character defining features it possessed during its Period of Significance, including its brick construction, historic additions, circulation patterns, original classrooms and their associated wardrobes, some original wood and tile floors, and original gym space. As such, it retains integrity of materials, design, and workmanship. The combination of the aforementioned integrity ensures that it retains integrity of feeling and association, thus making it eligible for listing in the National Register.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**  
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

SOCIAL HISTORY

**Period of Significance**

1930-1975

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

James, R. Maxwell & Smith, Gordon L.

Maxwell, E.C. (Contractor)

- 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.)

Property is:

N/A

- 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.

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### **Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

The Birchwood School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its local educational and social significance. Birchwood School is located in the rural community of Birchwood in Hamilton County. The school building was constructed in 1930 when the previous school burned. Its modern facilities, dedicated professional staff, and student enrichment opportunities quickly established the new Birchwood School as a significant center for educational excellence in the area. Birchwood School offered grades one through twelve. Students could take advantage of courses in reading, writing, arithmetic, physics, biology, and English. They had access to a large library and a robust school newspaper and yearbook publishing operation. The school building also served as an important gathering place for the community. Plays, socials, and music lessons were widely attended by adults in the community. The Period of Significance is 1930-1975. This corresponds with the year the school was constructed and concludes with the default fifty-year mark.

### **Narrative Statement of Significance**

#### ***BRIEF COUNTY AND COMMUNITY CONTEXT***

Birchwood School is located in the small community of Birchwood near Chattanooga in Hamilton County, Tennessee. Originally, the community was part of James County, the so-called “lost county” of Tennessee. The Tennessee General Assembly created James County in January 1871. It consisted of 185 square miles and was named after Reverend Jesse J. James, a Methodist minister and native of Sullivan County. Historian James N. Monroe stated that politics played a role in its creation. Those who inhabited James County were primarily Republicans, compared to the largely Democratic Chattanooga and urban areas. Its creators hoped the county’s proximity to Chattanooga would jumpstart their own economy and provide a tax base for the construction of schools, roads, and other important infrastructure. Before its dissolution, thirteen towns and communities called James County home, including Ooltewah, Harrison, Apison, Thatcher’s Switch, and Birchwood. Several ferries also sprung up along the Tennessee River, including Vann’s Ferry, Field’s Ferry, Teenor’s Ferry, McCalline’s Ferry, Daughtery’s Ferry, and Blythe’s Ferry (NR Listed – 1/5/1983).<sup>2</sup>

Despite the optimism of its founders, James County struggled to improve its infrastructure and economic circumstances. Steamboat traffic on the Tennessee River bound for Chattanooga did result in the construction of some warehouses, but the impact on the county economy was never felt in a real way.<sup>3</sup> Bonds were issued by the county to fund road improvement, but they were insufficient. In 1920, the county only featured twelve miles of gravel roads. James County also struggled to fund local schools. To compound the county’s struggles, the courthouse, located in Ooltewah, burned down two times, first in 1890 and again in 1913.<sup>4</sup> On December 11, 1919, a referendum “For the Abolishment of James County” was presented. It was approved by a vote of 953 for annexation, and 78 against it. Thus, in 1919, the county was dissolved and

<sup>2</sup> James N. Monroe, “James County,” Tennessee Encyclopedia, Tennessee Historical Society, October 8, 2017, <https://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entries/james-county/>

<sup>3</sup> “The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee,” page 6, Birchwood Community Center Collection, Birchwood, Tennessee.

<sup>4</sup> “The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee,” page 3, Birchwood Community Center Collection, Birchwood, Tennessee.

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absorbed by Hamilton County, and the official transfer of its records to Hamilton County occurred on January 5, 1920.<sup>5</sup> It was the first county in the United States to be consolidated with another one.

The exact year the community of Birchwood was established is not clear. Available sources suggest that white settlers lived in the area since the early 1800s and consisted primarily of people who migrated from North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. Likewise, it is not clear how the community received its name. One theory suggests that it was named after birch trees that stood near the small settlement.<sup>6</sup> Not much is known about the early settlement period, the antebellum period, or the Civil War years. This lack of information is due, in large part, to the remoteness and inaccessibility of the area. Like most communities in James County, Birchwood suffered from an unreliable road network. Local historians described the people living in Birchwood as “cut off from the county seat” because of “impassable roads.” There were also no railroads that serviced the Birchwood community. A few diaries suggest that many settlers in the area were farmers, and that the community suffered hard times during the Civil War.<sup>7</sup>

One of the first comprehensive looks at the community of Birchwood came in 1933 following a survey of the community. Birchwood was, like many rural communities in Tennessee, overwhelmingly agricultural and consisted almost exclusively of small family farms. Of the 107 farms identified, eighty-nine, or 83%, consisted of 160 acres or less. A further forty-two farms, or 39%, were smaller than eleven acres.<sup>8</sup> Farmers grew corn, wheat, oats, and sorghum as their principal crops. Wheat grown in the community was taken to flourmills at Georgetown and Charleston, while five local gristmills processed grown corn. These crops were supplemented by fishing, locally produced honey, milk cows, beef cows, pigs, and vegetable gardens.<sup>9</sup> Typical homes in the area lacked most of the modern conveniences found elsewhere during the same period, though over half the population did own an automobile.<sup>10</sup> Birchwood was home to nine total religious congregations, including four Baptist, two Methodist, two Holiness, and one Presbyterian congregation.<sup>11</sup> Recreational opportunities included the occasional tent show, musical program, or play. It should be noted

<sup>5</sup> The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee,” page 4, Birchwood Community Center Collection, Birchwood, Tennessee; James N. Monroe, “James County,” Tennessee Encyclopedia, Tennessee Historical Society, October 8, 2017, <https://tennesseencyclopedia.net/entries/james-county/>. Monroe summarizes the life of James County as follows: “Created of political rivalry, plagued by chicanery throughout its history, insufficiently capitalized to provide proper services, deficient in natural resources, and unable to take advantage of nearby industrialization, the county had based its hopes on an agrarian economy dependent on the efforts of self-sufficient farmers, but as their labors provided an inadequate tax base, the result was substandard banking, communication, and transportation facilities.”

<sup>6</sup> “The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee,” page 1, Birchwood Community Center Collection, Birchwood, Tennessee.

<sup>7</sup> “The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee,” pages 3-4, Birchwood Community Center Collection, Birchwood, Tennessee

<sup>8</sup> John W. Wiggins, “A Survey and Study of Birchwood Consolidated School Community Hamilton County, Tennessee,” Theses, M.A., University of Tennessee August 1933, pg. 28.

<sup>9</sup> “The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee,” pages 3-4, Birchwood Community Center Collection, Birchwood, Tennessee, pgs. 4-6.

<sup>10</sup> Wiggins, “A Survey and Study of Birchwood,” pg. 39. Regarding the automobile, Wiggins had the following to say: “The automobile is more of a necessity in this community than it is in one less isolated, but there are some families who sacrifice more necessary things in order to own an automobile.”

<sup>11</sup> Wiggins, “A Survey and Study of Birchwood,” pg. 15.

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that many of these activities were held at the nominated Birchwood School, which was constructed a couple years prior to the completion of the survey.<sup>12</sup>

#### **BRIEF EDUCATION CONTEXT**

Early education in Tennessee was decentralized and limited in scope. Tennessee's first constitution did not mention education. It was not until the 1806 Cession Act that Tennessee officially recognized education as a core part of their plan to improve the state and the lives of its citizens. Subsequent legislation provided the framework to establish an academy in each county, but the overall lack of funding and inability to enact these laws did not create a public school system. The 1830s saw a widespread push across the state for education reform. In response, the Tennessee General Assembly recommended the establishment of a board of commissioners to oversee the state public school fund in 1836. Robert H. McEwen was selected as the first superintendent of this board. McEwen made several important recommendations for improving the public school system, including a grading system for school performance, better overall school facilities, and a per diem for the school commissioner. Unfortunately, an investigation into McEwen's tenure revealed that he was stealing from the very school fund he administered. The scandal emboldened opponents of the public education system, who pointed to McEwen's embezzlement as evidence that public schools were less efficient than private ones.<sup>13</sup>

It was not until the end of the Civil War and onset of Reconstruction that Tennessee made a concerted effort to create a universal public education system. Lawmakers passed legislation in 1867 to reorganize, supervise, and provide maintenance to public schools. The act also reestablished the State Superintendent of Education office, created different revenue streams to fund education, and established the means by which to supervise the implementation of the act in Tennessee counties. It is important to note that though the act strengthened the state's public education system, it also enshrined segregation in schools as the law of the land. Tennessee did not desegregate until well into the twentieth century.<sup>14</sup>

Efforts to create a robust public education system yielded mixed results. By 1901, sixty-nine percent of white Tennesseans were enrolled in school, a large increase from previous years. However, school funding and the disparity in the quality of education between rural and urban areas remained large issues. Most schools in operation were primary school, which meant that students seeking a high school (secondary) education may not have any options to attend locally. A flurry of acts and legislation passed by the General Assembly

<sup>12</sup> Wiggins, "A Survey and Study of Birchwood," pg. 14.

<sup>13</sup> Cynthia Griggs Fleming, "Elementary and Secondary Education," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, Tennessee Historical Society, October 8, 2017.

<sup>14</sup> Fleming, "Elementary and Secondary Education," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, Tennessee Historical Society, October 8, 2017; Mary S. Hoffschwelle, "Public Education in Tennessee," *Trials, Triumphs, and Transformation: Tennessean's Search for Citizenship, Community and Opportunity*, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, 2014, <https://dsi.mtsu.edu/trials/hoffschwelle>. The segregation of Tennessee Schools negatively affected African American students during the era of Jim Crow. Black schools were critically underfunded compared to white schools, especially in poorer rural counties. Despite these challenges, Black communities worked together to fund, build, and supply schools for their own students. These schools quickly developed a reputation for educational excellence, and since then many have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places in recognition of their educational, social, and cultural importance. For more information on Black schools in Tennessee, see Mary S. Hoffschwelle, *The Rosenwald Schools of the American South* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006) and Jimmie Lewis Franklin, "Civil Rights Movement," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, Tennessee Historical Society, 2017.

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targeted these struggling areas. An act in 1899 required counties to establish a secondary school facility, and the General Education Act of 1909 aimed to alleviate funding shortages.<sup>15</sup> They did so by setting aside one-quarter of the state's gross revenue for public education, sixty-one percent of which was allocated to the counties. The remainder of the percentage was deposited into a fund to ensure each county could provide its students a universal school length term, regardless of the revenue the county generated.<sup>16</sup> Other legislation in 1907 and 1917 replaced district school directors with county school boards, created a compulsory education bill, and required teacher certification.<sup>17</sup>

The arrival of the Great Depression in the 1930s dealt Tennessee's public school system a major setback. State and local officials partnered with local communities and other philanthropic organizations to ensure schools were able to continue operating. New Deal organizations like the Public Works Administration (PWA), Works Progress Administration (WPA), and National Youth Administration (NYA) helped build new schools and conducted limited repairs on existing ones. Education took on an ever-larger role after World War II as the country and state grew economically. Following the war, state curriculums following the war required discussions on topics such as freedom, democracy, and civic responsibility.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, the Civil Rights Movement emphasized the unjust nature of segregation in both school and society. The Supreme Court outlawed racial segregation in U.S. public schools on May 17, 1954, following the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education*. Tennessee schools began integrating shortly thereafter.<sup>19</sup>

Education in Birchwood and the area consisting of early James County largely aligns with this broader context. Many of the early schools were held in churches. Information also suggests that local Henry Starnes built a two-story building in 1883, with the first story used as a school and the second as a Masonic Lodge. Starnes' school offered students a three-month term.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps the most influential person in early education in the area was Robert T. Rutherford and his Rutherford Academy. Rutherford moved to the Birchwood area in the nineteenth century and built a school on land he purchased there. Uniquely for nineteenth-century schools, Rutherford offered education to the surrounding community for free initially. The county paid for the school with the minimal funds it had, and Rutherford likely fronted the rest. However, when the funds ran out, Rutherford switched to a subscription model.<sup>21</sup>

The school offered a nine-month term, including a "normal school" offered during the summer for young teachers-in-training. Grades offered included first through eleventh grade. Rutherford and his academy gained a reputation in the area for excellence in education that continued until his death in the early twentieth century. Nearby Chattanooga Medical School permitted any graduate of Rutherford Academy to complete the Medical School's four-year program in three years because students gained many of the important fundamentals under Rutherford's tutelage. To ensure that his students learned, Rutherford enacted a strict set

<sup>15</sup> Fleming, "Education and Secondary Education," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*. This same act also gave counties the authority to levy special school taxes for establishing a secondary school.

<sup>16</sup> Hoffschwelle, "Public Education in Tennessee," *Trials, Triumphs, and Transformation*.

<sup>17</sup> Paul H. Bergeron, et. al., *Tennesseans and Their History* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2007) pg. 224.

<sup>18</sup> Hoffschwelle, "Public Education in Tennessee," *Trials, Triumphs, and Transformation*.

<sup>19</sup> Fleming, "Elementary and Secondary Education," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*.

<sup>20</sup> "The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee," page 15, Birchwood Community Center Collection, Birchwood, Tennessee.

<sup>21</sup> Wiggins, "A Survey and Study of Birchwood," pg. 47.

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of rules for attending students. Baseball was eliminated as a sport in later years, boys and girls were not permitted to have dates, and no pupil was allowed to attend a social or party at night.<sup>22</sup> Though one would expect this to cause resentment amongst the students who attended, for years afterwards, students returned to the Academy for reunions and to visit their old teacher. These class reunions continued even after he passed away.<sup>23</sup>

Other schools in the area included the Salem School (est. 1851, consolidated with Birchwood in 1940s), Gravel Hill School (consolidated with Eastview and Birchwood in 1950), Friendship School, and Meadowview School. Uniquely, many of the schools were located closely to each other, as indicated by the attached hand drawn map.<sup>24</sup> (**Figure 2**)

The first iteration of the Birchwood School also played an important role in the community before the new one was constructed. The first school was constructed in 1915 and employed two teachers. It was a wood frame building with multiple hipped roof projections and batteries of large windows to allow light into the classrooms and shared spaces. By 1929, the school boasted nine teachers. It was originally located at the corner of Highway 60 and DeFriesse Road.<sup>25</sup> Birchwood offered, even then, grades one through twelve. The average senior class size from 1922 to 1929 was roughly 9 students. The largest graduating class was the Class of 1927 with eleven students; the smallest, Class of 1924 class with two graduates.<sup>26</sup> The school featured a library open to both the students and Birchwood Community and a chapel. Courses including reading, writing, and arithmetic, with the additional music department and communication club, which were quite popular with the students. By 1926, Birchwood had gained a reputation for its educational excellence, with half of the 1926 class attending college or university. The school publication, *The Blue and Gold*, wrote on January 26, 1927, that when “students come to school for the purpose of learning in anyway they can, and doing everything that they can, provided there is something to learn in doing it; when they take part in contests and in school activities and help carry them out. That is what I call school spirit.”<sup>27</sup>

Two years after *The Blue and Gold* publication, the Birchwood School burned down when the boiler overheated.<sup>28</sup> Despite the setback to the community and students, plans to rebuild the school started immediately. In 1930, the nominated building was completed and opened to the community and its children. This marked a new era for both the school and surrounding area, an era which ultimately led

<sup>22</sup> Wiggins, “A Survey and Study of Birchwood,” pg. 48.

<sup>23</sup> “The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee,” page 15, Birchwood Community Center Collection, Birchwood, Tennessee.

<sup>24</sup> “The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee,” pages 15-16, Birchwood Community Center Collection, Birchwood, Tennessee; Wiggins, “A Survey and Study of Birchwood,” pages 50-58. The Salem School was constructed in 1851 and included on its property dorms and additional small house for faculty and students. After it closed and students consolidated with Birchwood in the 1940s, the building took on use as a community meeting place. S.E. Mullins, an agricultural extension agent, would host community events there. Gravel Hill School was located in Meigs County when it was established.

<sup>25</sup> “The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee,” pages 15-16

<sup>26</sup> “Birchwood High School 1922—1959,” Scrapbook, Birchwood Community Center Collection.

<sup>27</sup> *The Blue and Gold*, Birchwood, Tennessee, January 26, 1927, pages 3-4, Birchwood Community Center Collection.

<sup>28</sup> “Birchwood School Now and Then 2013-1915,” 2013, page 23, Birchwood Community Center Collection.

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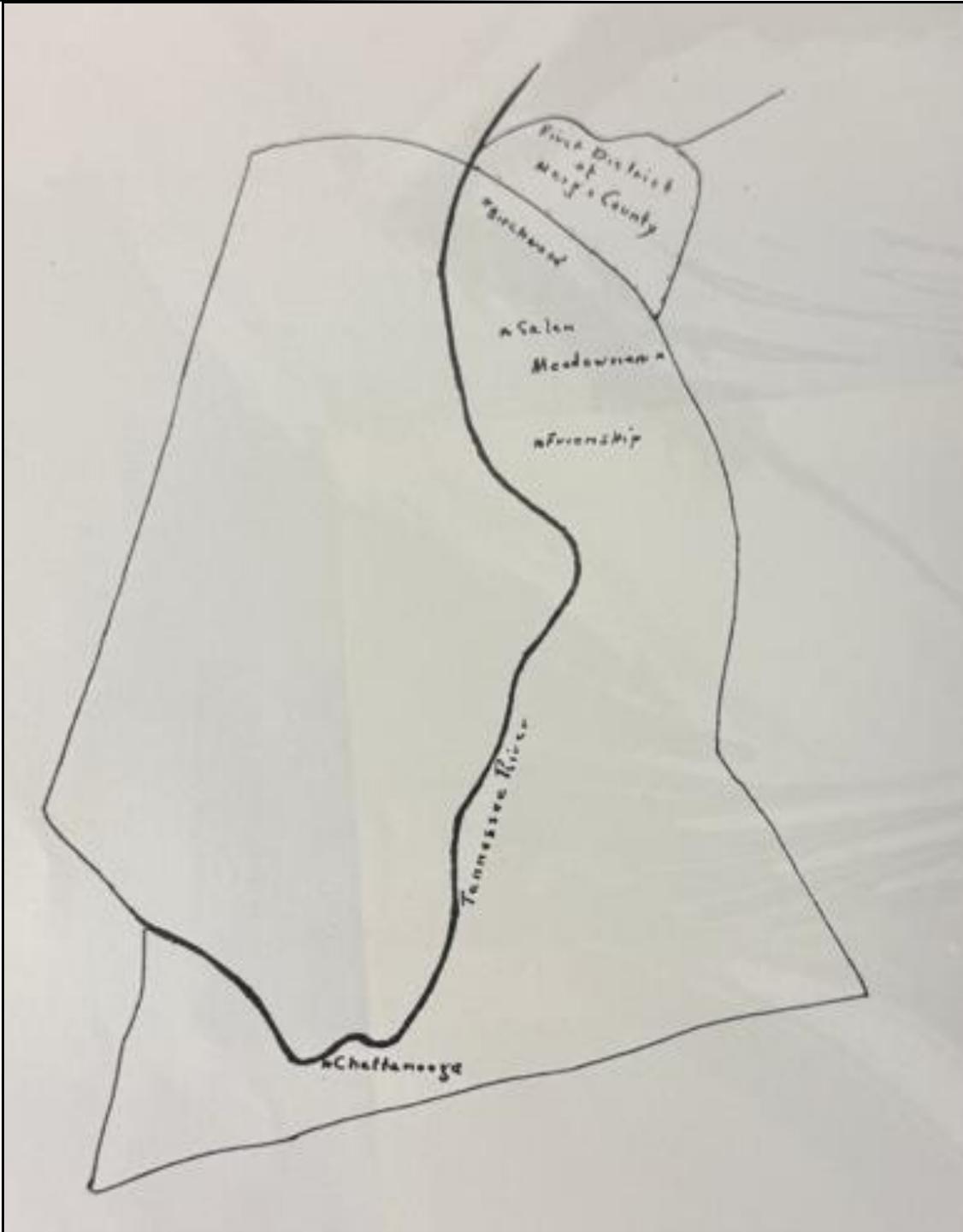


Figure 2: Map depicting the relationships of early school buildings in the area, 1931. Courtesy of John W. Wiggins, "A Survey and Study of Birchwood Consolidated School Community Hamilton County, Tennessee," pg. 53.

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Wiggins to conclude in his 1933 survey that though the schools in the area had improved, “there are reasons to believe that Birchwood had better educational advantages than any other community in James County.”<sup>29</sup>

***EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE***

The new building was completed in 1930 as a substantial physical investment in the education of Birchwood and the surrounding area’s students. Designed for grades one through twelve, the original school featured seventeen rooms, each with more than four hundred square feet of total classroom space. Students had access to their own hall lockers, and elementary rooms featured wardrobes in which students could store their materials. These same lockers and wardrobes remain in the school and are an important feature of the original 1930 building. A cafeteria, library, and gymnasium/auditorium were included in the original building design. Its spacious design was pierced throughout with large windows, providing natural light and ventilation to the student population. The building was initially heated by a furnace and featured many other modern conveniences, including electric lighting, indoor toilets for both boys and girls, and indoor water system. By 1933, seventy high school students, 197 elementary students, and twenty-one teachers populated the new Birchwood school.<sup>30</sup>

It was not just the physical plant of the school that was an investment in education. A list of the school’s equipment in early 1933 demonstrates a plethora of then-state of the art equipment to offer students an education above and beyond the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Students could make use of a library with over two thousand volumes, two globes, one large dictionary, and two complete sets of maps. A total of \$1,345 went into purchasing biology, physics, chemistry, agricultural, cooking, and sewing equipment.<sup>31</sup> This equates to an investment of \$33,631 in 2025, a large sum for a rural school.<sup>32</sup>

The growth of the community and scholastic population at Birchwood, beginning in the 1950s, prompted the expansion of the school to accommodate student needs. The industrial shop and attached breezeway was constructed in the 1950s, and the current gym/auditorium and multipurpose room were added shortly thereafter. The new gym came with its own standardized stage, concession stand, and retractable wood bleachers. The old cafeteria was moved to the former gym area. Plans were also drawn up for the construction of a lighted recreation field on the property in 1950, though it is unclear if that came to fruition.<sup>33</sup> Later, a portable classroom was added to house additional kindergarten students in 1973.<sup>34</sup> It has since been removed.

True to both its early history and its mission statement, the Birchwood School offered its students access to a thorough education and many enrichment opportunities not traditionally offered in typical schools. As mentioned earlier, the school invested a sizeable sum over the years in specialized courses like biology,

<sup>29</sup> Wiggins, “A Survey and Study of Birchwood,” pg. 46.

<sup>30</sup> “The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee,” pg. 16; Wiggins, “A Survey and Study of Birchwood,” pgs. 55-65.

<sup>31</sup> Wiggins, “A Survey and Study of Birchwood,” pgs. 56;

<sup>32</sup> “CPI Inflation Calculator,” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, [https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation\\_calculator.htm](https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm), accessed August 5, 2025.

<sup>33</sup> *Blue and Gold*, Volume IX, No. 1, February 1950, Birchwood, Tennessee, Birchwood Community Center Collection.

<sup>34</sup> “The History and Heritage of Birchwood and Salem, Tennessee,” pg. 17; “Birchwood School Now and Then 2013-1915,” pg. 27.

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physics, and chemistry. However, the school also offered vocational agriculture and vocational home economics so that students could gain practical skills. Indeed, the construction of the industrial shop opened up opportunities for vocational students in agriculture to learn how to work on machines and repair equipment, a valuable skill for both those who went into farming and those who would move to Chattanooga for industrial jobs. Future Farmers of America, Senior 4H, Junior 4H, an oration club, agricultural competitions, junior and senior class plays, and field trips were also offered to students. Guidance counselors were also on hand to help students choose their career paths.<sup>35</sup>

Perhaps one of the most popular extracurricular enrichment activities offered to students was the publication of the school's newspaper, the *Blue and Gold*. Named after the school's colors, the *Blue and Gold* ran articles that covered everything from student life, sports and scores, faculty spotlights, major school announcements, and articles of general community interest. In 1946, the school purchased a mimeograph to allow students to print and design their own newspaper, rather than having White Wing Press in Cleveland print the newspapers for them. The article outlining this new development cited that this would allow for a larger, more thorough newspaper than before at a lower cost to the school. Each student class also had an opportunity to edit and publish a single newspaper edition by themselves. The newspaper announcing this development was developed by Birchwood Juniors.<sup>36</sup> Later, starting in 1951, students published *The Birch*, the school's yearbook.<sup>37</sup>

No school is complete without offering athletic opportunities for the students. In the early years, the sports teams were known as "Birchies" before transitioning to the "Birchwood Braves." Initially, basketball was the only sport offered to students. The addition of a baseball field and a track further expanded the sports available for students. Cheerleading also proved a popular extracurricular activity.<sup>38</sup>

For students, the end result of the educational and extracurricular activities offered at Birchwood was a quality education and encouraging atmosphere that led to alumni success. For example, of the twelve students who graduated in the 1951 class, five went on to attend college. Students who graduated from Birchwood entered a variety of careers. Many attended college and went on to work in important industries, like Helen Bare who worked in the Chemical Research department for the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in Florence, Alabama. Others worked locally for the Veteran's Administration in Chattanooga.<sup>39</sup> Many alumni also recall the school as a place where lasting friendships were made. Former student Darwin Lane remembered that the school was a "close knit community, where the oldest kids took care of the youngest and the teachers took a genuine interest in student's lives." Another alumnus, Eugene McCallie, stated that it was the "perfect small-town country school."<sup>40</sup>

<sup>35</sup> "Directory 1965-1966 Hamilton County Schools," 1966, Birchwood Community Center Collection.

<sup>36</sup> *Blue and Gold*, Vol. 4., No. 2, 1946, Birchwood, Tennessee, Birchwood Community Center Collection.

<sup>37</sup> "Birchwood School Now and Then 2013-1915," 2013, page 24, Birchwood Community Center Collection

<sup>38</sup> "Birchwood School Now and Then 2013-1915," 2013, page 24, Birchwood Community Center Collection

<sup>39</sup> *Blue and Gold*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1943, Birchwood, Tennessee, Birchwood Community Center Collection. Many Birchwood alum also served in the military. The Birchwood Community Center features a display that remembers the sacrifices of Norman Lane, Larry Leamon, Billy Farris, and James Brown, all Killed in Action.

<sup>40</sup> Kevin Hardy, "B is for Biscuits: The Disappearing Country School," Sunday, May 5, 2013, timesfreepress.com.

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Birchwood School was also known for its community outreach programs and as a place to host community events. For example, Wiggins noted in his 1933 survey that the broader community and adult population benefited from the school. The large library allowed anyone to check out books and magazines. This policy was an intentional one sponsored by the school for the express purpose of encouraging more adults to read. Though no specific number is provided, Wiggins noted that a “large number” of adults took advantage of this program regularly. Likewise, the school also offered “unusual” opportunities for anyone wishing to study or learn music. Musical instructors for both vocals and instrumentals offered music lessons, available to all, once a week in the high school.<sup>41</sup> Other events, like annual spring festivals and community gatherings, were hosted year after year on school grounds.<sup>42</sup> Former Principal Ronnelle Blankenship remarked that Birchwood was “a true community school” that served not only a central meeting place, but as “the anchor of this community” throughout its history.<sup>43</sup>

The decline of the school began in 1976 when the Hamilton County School System (HCSS) made the decision to move grades 9-12 to Central High School in nearby Harrison. The last graduating high school class consisted of twenty-six students.<sup>44</sup> Grades kindergarten through eight remained in the building. During the latter half of the twentieth century, many of the families that once lived in Birchwood moved closer to Chattanooga, which detracted from the scholastic population. The HCSS also continued to consolidate the larger school system throughout the county. In 1995, grades six through eight were moved to the newly constructed Hunter Middle School, also in Harrison. From 1995-2013, the school served as the Birchwood Elementary and taught grades kindergarten through fifth. Despite losing many of the older grades, the Birchwood School and its teachers remained dedicated to providing a quality education and extracurricular activities to its students. A computer lab, book room, music classes, photograph dark room, Accelerated Reader program, D.A.R.E., dance classes, art clubs, and karate instruction all provided the elementary students with rich and varied opportunities.<sup>45</sup> When the last students left in 2013, care of the school fell to the Birchwood Area Society Improvement Club (BASIC). Since then, members of BASIC have cared for the building and kept the tradition of the grounds as a central community resource alive. Important activities hosted on the property include the Sandhill Crane Festival, and BASIC has also partnered with Chattanooga Food Bank to distribute food from the building.<sup>46</sup> A publication commemorating the history of the school in 2013 perhaps summarizes the impact of the school on the community best. The author noted that Birchwood, though no longer an educational facility, retained and embodied the desire of its teachers to instruct, and students to learn and prepare themselves for the future. Despite its closing, it would always be remembered as “a place where lifetime friendships have been forged, a place that has been our home away from home, and a place that will be in our hearts forever.”<sup>47</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Wiggins, “A Survey and Study of Birchwood,” pg. 41.

<sup>42</sup> *Blue and Gold*, Vol. 2, No. 4, April 1945, Birchwood, Tennessee, Birchwood Community Center Collection.

<sup>43</sup> Kevin Hardy, “B is for Biscuits: The Disappearing Country School,” Sunday, May 5, 2013, timesfreepress.com

<sup>44</sup> “Birchwood Schol Now and Then 2013-1915,” pg. 23, Birchwood Community Center Collection.

<sup>45</sup> “Birchwood Schol Now and Then 2013-1915,” pg. 27-32, Birchwood Community Center Collection.

<sup>46</sup> Kevin Hardy, “B is for Biscuits: The Disappearing Country School,” Sunday, May 5, 2013, timesfreepress.com

<sup>47</sup> “Birchwood Schol Now and Then 2013-1915,” pg. 33, Birchwood Community Center Collection.

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

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property** 9.6 **USGS Quadrangle** Birchwood 119-SW

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 35.357680 | Longitude: -84.992420 |
| 2. Latitude: 35.358840 | Longitude: -84.992730 |
| 3. Latitude: 35.358750 | Longitude: -84.991840 |
| 4. Latitude: 35.359240 | Longitude: -84.991960 |
| 5. Latitude: 35.358200 | Longitude: -84.989310 |
| 6. Latitude: 35.357130 | Longitude: -84.989930 |
| 7. Latitude: 35.357230 | Longitude: -84.990240 |

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The National Register boundaries for Birchwood School correspond with the attached boundary map and align with the parcel boundary. Hamilton County Tax Map: 023N A 008

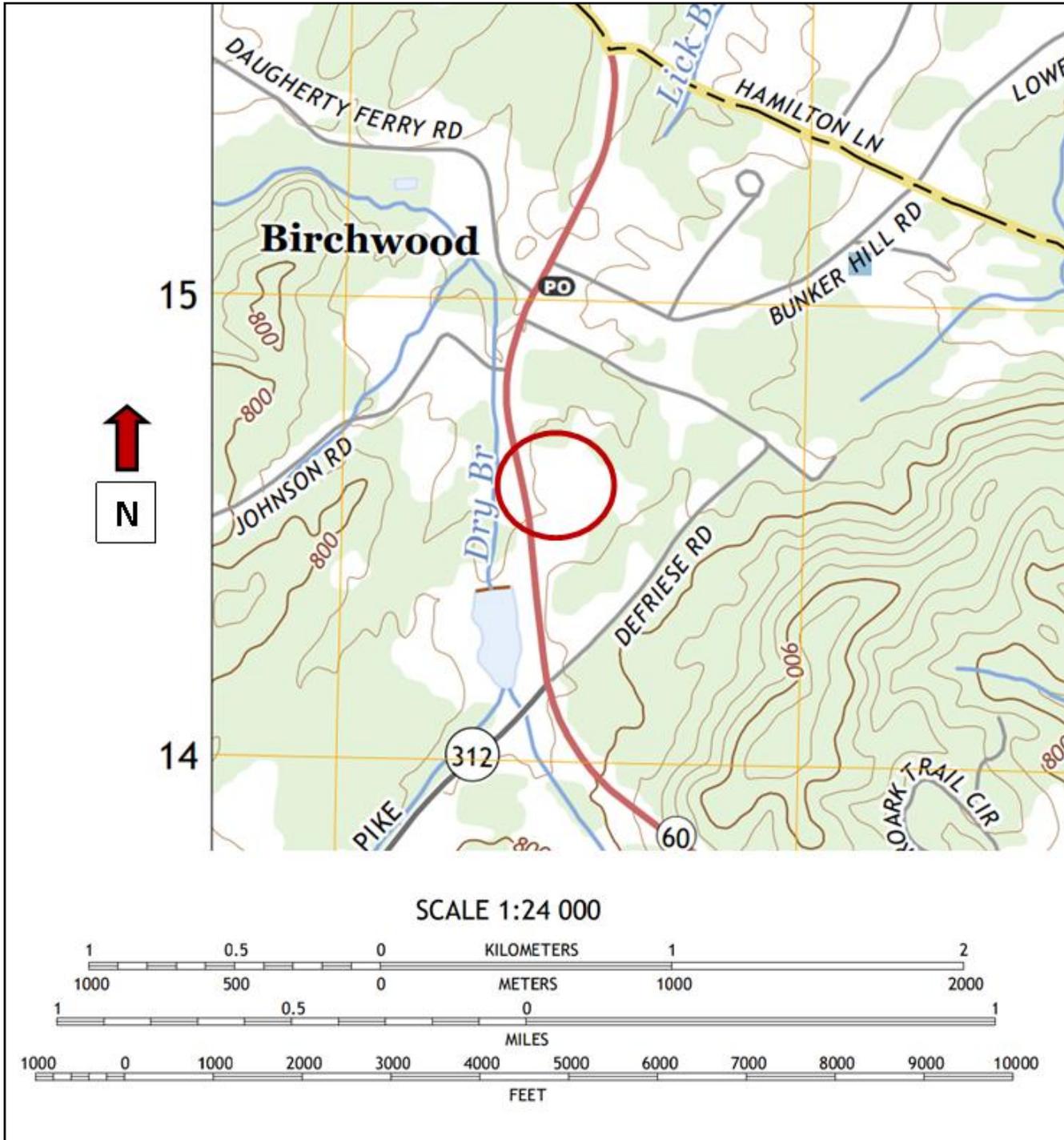
**Boundary Justification**

The National Register boundaries contain all the land and resources historically associated with the Birchwood School during its Period of Significance.

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USGS Topographic Map



Birchwood School indicated by red circle. Map courtesy of the United States Geological Survey.

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**Boundary Map**



Shaded blue area indicates the boundaries of the Birchwood School. Each numbered vertices corresponds with its associated latitude and longitude point in Section 10. Map courtesy of the Hamilton County Assessor of Property, 2025.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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Name Sylvia Beavers / J. Ethan Holden

Organization BASIC of TN. Inc. / Tennessee Historical Commission

Street & Number 5623 Highway 60 Date 3/20/2025

City or Town Birchwood Telephone 423-303-6874

E-mail beaversjs@outlook.com State TN Zip Code 37308

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Birchwood School  
Name of Property

Hamilton County, TN  
County and State

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**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Birchwood School  
City or Vicinity: Birchwood  
County: Hamilton County State: Tennessee  
Photographer: Rebecca Schmitt  
Date Photographed: April 29, 2025

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

- 1 of 35. Façade and Stone Retaining Wall. Photographer facing southeast.
- 2 of 35. Façade. Photographer facing northeast.
- 3 of 35. Façade. Photographer facing northeast.
- 4 of 35. Façade and Covered Walkway. Photographer facing northeast.
- 5 of 35. Industrial Arts/Agriculture Building. Photographer facing southeast.
- 6 of 35. Industrial Arts/Agriculture Building. Photographer facing northwest.
- 7 of 35. School and Industrial Arts/Agriculture Building. Photographer facing southwest.
- 8 of 35. School and Gymnasium. Photographer facing northwest.
- 9 of 35. Gymnasium. Photographer facing southwest
- 10 of 35. Gymnasium. Photographer facing south.
- 11 of 35. Stone Retaining Wall. Photographer facing northeast.
- 12 of 35. Well Houses. Photographer facing southwest
- 13 of 35. Tennis Court. Photographer facing southwest.
- 14 of 35. Playground and Track. Photographer facing northeast.
- 15 of 35. Playground and Track. Photographer facing southeast.
- 16 of 35. Concession Stand. Photographer facing southeast.
- 17 of 35. Interior, Entrance. Photographer facing east.
- 18 of 35. Interior Hallway with Lockers. Photographer facing northwest

Birchwood School  
Name of Property

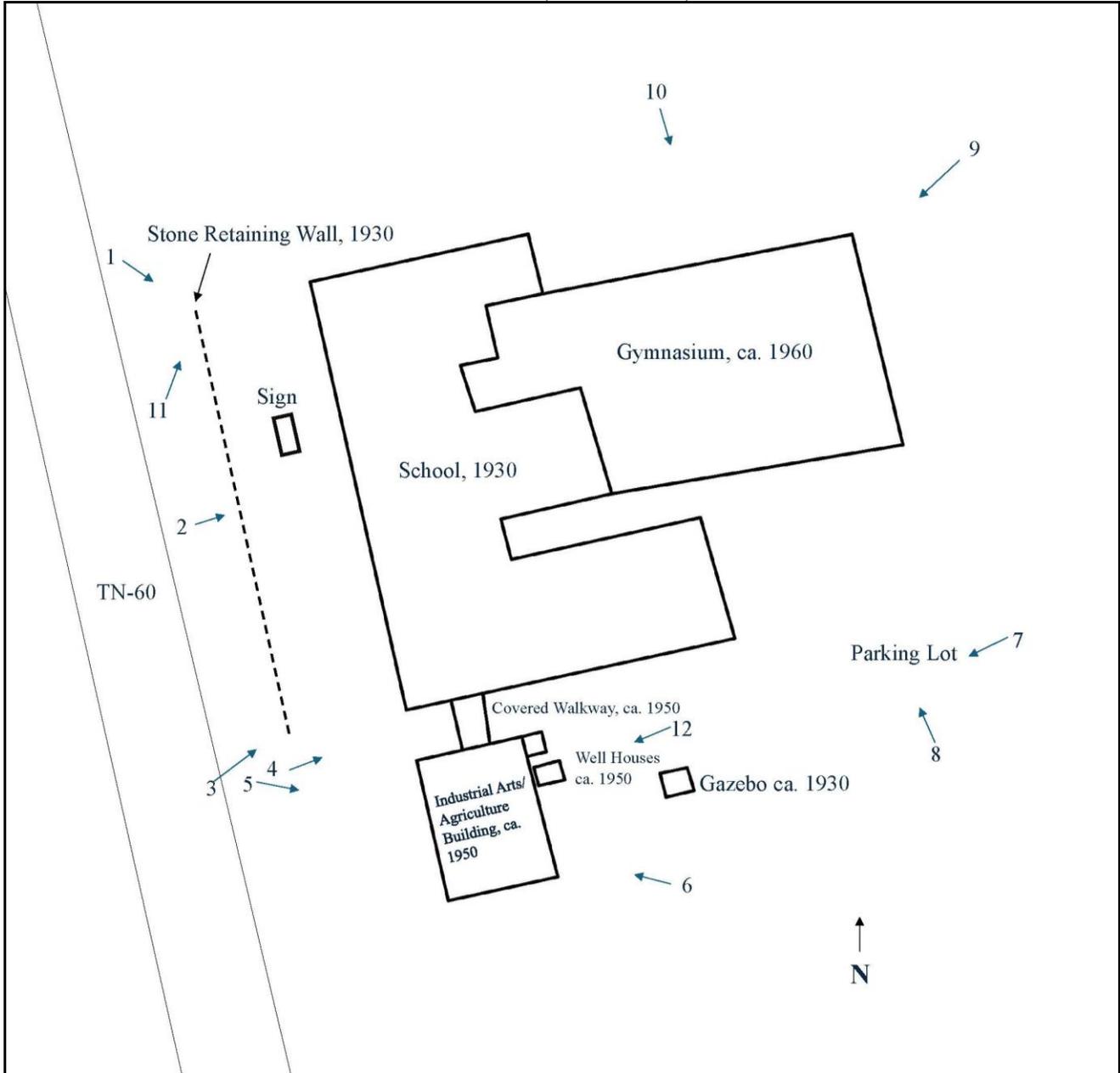
Hamilton County, TN  
County and State

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- 19 of 35. Interior Hallway. Photographer facing south.
- 20 of 35. Representative Classroom. Photographer facing southwest.
- 21 of 35. Representative Classroom. Photographer facing southwest.
- 22 of 35. Representative Classroom. Photographer facing southeast.
- 23 of 35. Interior Corridor. Photographer facing east.
- 24 of 35. Library #1. Photographer facing northeast
- 25 of 35. Science Lab. Photographer facing east.
- 26 of 35. Representative Classroom 2. Photographer facing southwest.
- 27 of 35. Interior view of central hall. Photographer facing east.
- 28 of 35. Library #2. Photographer facing northeast.
- 29 of 35. Cafeteria. Photographer facing east.
- 30 of 35. Kitchen. Photographer facing south
- 31 of 35. Interior Hallway. Photographer facing north.
- 32 of 35. Interior Corridor. Photographer facing west.
- 33 of 35. Gymnasium. Photographer facing northwest
- 34 of 35. Gymnasium. Photographer facing east.
- 35 of 35. Boys Dressing Room. Photographer facing northwest.

Birchwood School  
Name of Property

Hamilton County, TN  
County and State

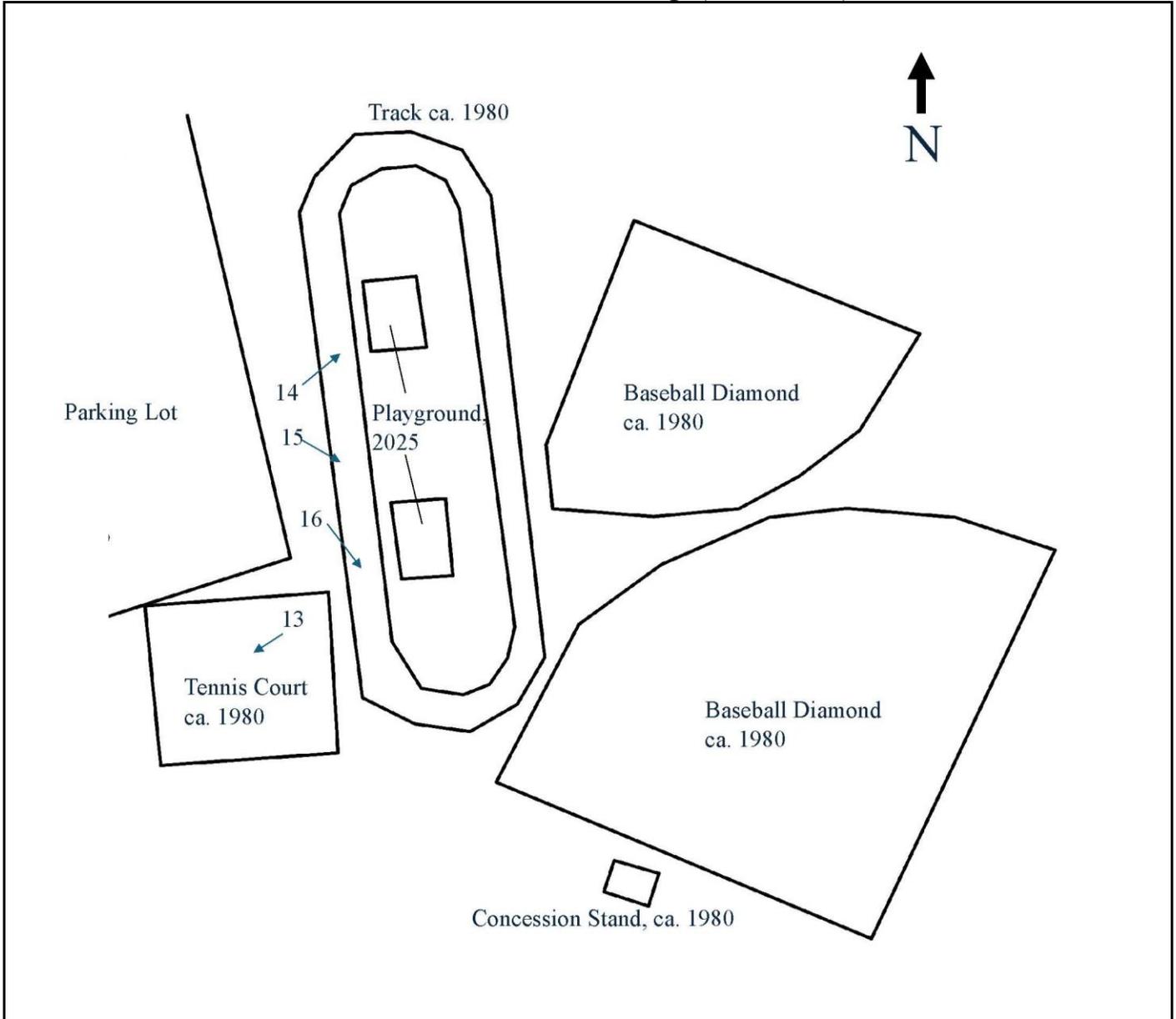
Site Plan (Not to Scale)



Birchwood School  
Name of Property

Hamilton County, TN  
County and State

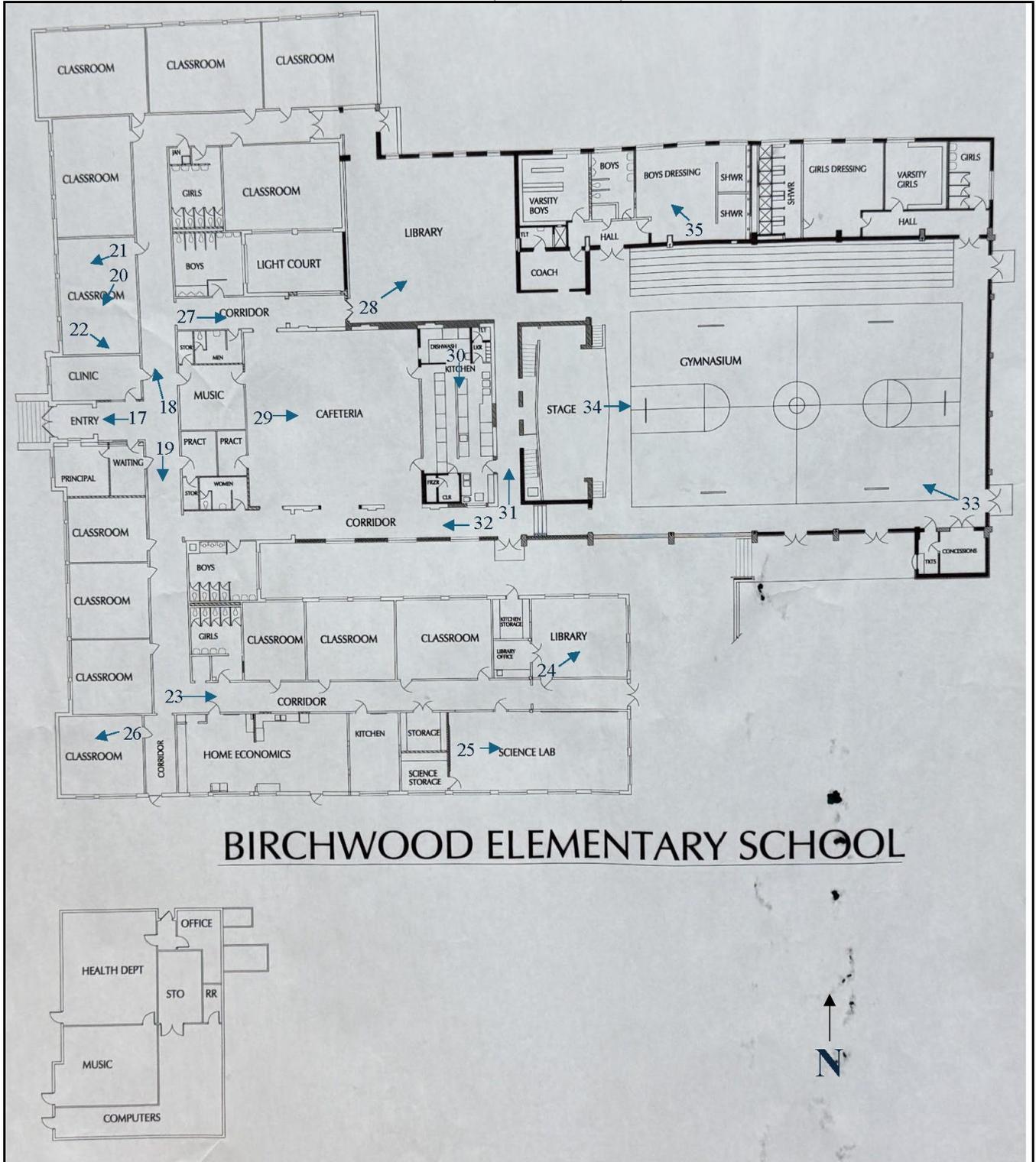
Site Plan, Recreational Buildings (Not to Scale)



Birchwood School  
Name of Property

Hamilton County, TN  
County and State

Floor Plan (Not to Scale)



**BIRCHWOOD SCHOOL  
BIRCHWOOD, HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

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**BIRCHWOOD SCHOOL**  
**BIRCHWOOD, HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

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**BIRCHWOOD SCHOOL  
BIRCHWOOD, HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

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**BIRCHWOOD SCHOOL  
BIRCHWOOD, HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

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**BIRCHWOOD SCHOOL  
BIRCHWOOD, HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

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**BIRCHWOOD SCHOOL  
BIRCHWOOD, HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

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**BIRCHWOOD SCHOOL**  
**BIRCHWOOD, HAMILTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE**



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