



VIRGINIA
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

File no. 76-145
Negative no(s). 4361

SURVEY FORM

Historic name Catharpin School	Common name Red School Nursery
County/Town/City Prince William County	
Street address or route number 4641 Sudley Rd., Catharpin, Va.	
USGS Quad Gainesville	Date or period 1899, 1913
Original owner County	Architect/builder/craftsmen Mr. H.H. Anderson (1913 wing), Bryant Nalls (c1899 building).
Original use School	
Present owner John Norman	Source of name
Present owner address Norman Realty 9317 Grant Ave. Manassas, Va.	Source of date Arch. evidence, published accounts.
Present use Lawn & Garden Center	Stories 1
Acreage c10 acres. (Originally 1 acre.)	Foundation and wall const'n Concrete foundation, frame walls.
	Roof type Metal-covered gable roof.

State condition of structure and environs **Building & surrounding in good condition. Building moved several yards away from road in 1976.**

State potential threats to structure **None.**

Note any archaeological interest

Should be investigated for possible register potential? yes no

Architectural description (Note significant features of plan, structural system and interior and exterior decoration, taking care to point out aspects not visible or clear from photographs. Explain nature and period of all alterations and additions. List any outbuildings and their approximate ages, cemeteries, etc.)

The school house with its 1-story shed roof additions serves as the sales area and headquarters of the garden center. Greenhouses, growing areas, maintenance and storage buildings are all located behind the converted schoolhouse.

Exterior covering is 4 to 4½"-lap weatherboard painted red. Front door and some windows are replacements. Interior woodwork is plain box trim with bull's eye lintels.

Original color of school was yellow.

Coal shed on back of school demolished c1976.

Interior inspected? **Yes.**

Historical significance (Chain of title: individuals, families, events, etc., associated with the property.)

Catharpin School was the second public school in the Gainesville District, the first being at Haymarket. The first school building at Catharpin was erected in 1874 on one acre of land made available by the Buckley Family on the north side of Sudley Rd., in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of a private lane leading to Putnam's Ford on Bull Run at the Loudoun County Line (now Sanders Lane and part of S.R. 705). This land was part of the old Chapman farm, a large, absentee-owned plantation belonging to the family that owned and operated Chapman's Mill, now Beverley Mill, on Broad Run at Thoroughfare Gap. The Chapman farm was divided after the Civil War.

Before Catharpin School existed, children of families living on the old Chapman lands attended a private school at St. John's Episcopal Church, 1 mile west of Catharpin. The church was abandoned in 1890 and was demolished in 1909. No trace of the church exists, but the stones were used in the foundations of nearby houses and barns.

The first school, a small, one-room facility, was replaced in about 1898 by a larger, single-room structure, which still exists as the east room of the present school. In 1913 the second school was enlarged by the addition of the west wing. The second school was built by Bryant Nalls, a carpenter from Greenwich, Virginia. The carpenter for the west addition in 1913 was I.I. Anderson.

Upon the completion of the second school in about 1898, the first school building was moved to a location north of Sanders' stores (now Alvey's store), and was used as

Historical Significance (continued)

a chicken coop and later as a dwelling. Finally, it was again moved and used as a warehouse for Sanders' grist mill.

One of the first school teachers in the earlier school was Hugh Powell, who read law while his students worked at their lessons. Powell was admitted to the bar, and later moved to Texas, where he was elected mayor of Fort Worth.

Other teachers at Catharpin School include Katie Bell, the first teacher in the second school, and Etta Lynn, Ben Sanders, and Mattie Matthew. The first teacher of the enlarged school was Eleanor Cushing Wilkins Brower, and other teachers were Neville Dogan, Frances Dorsey (Mrs. Ernest Ristedt, and Alice Metz (Mrs. Luther Lynn). The schoolbell, presently installed in the bell tower, was purchased in Baltimore, selected by storekeeper Sanders, and paid for by the Catharpin Community League.

Classes were discontinued at Catharpin School in 1935. After a few years of disuse, the school was bought by Luther Lynn, who in about 1963 sold it to Mrs. Jack Alvey. Mrs. Alvey repainted and repaired the building for use as an antique shop (c1-2 yrs.). Used for storage by various people between W.W. II and c1963. In 1976 the present owner had the schoolhouse moved several yards away from Sudley Road and converted it to a sales area and headquarters of a garden center established there.

sources (continued).

E.R. Conner, III, "Catharpin, Virginia, a Trading Center of Western Prince William County," in Echoes of History, Nov. 1975, pp. 66-70.

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