

MOCANAQUA SCHOOL  
Intersection of Pond Hill Road (S.R. 0239),  
and Main Street  
Mocanaqua  
Luzerne County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-6187

HABS  
PA  
40-MOCA,  
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY  
National Park Service  
Philadelphia Support Office  
U.S. Custom House  
200 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MOCANAQUA SCHOOL

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Location: Intersection of Pond Hill Road(S.R. 0239) and Main Street, Mocanaqua, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania

USGS Shickshinny, Pennsylvania Quadrangle  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:  
18.404120.4554780

Significance: The Mocanaqua School, built in 1923, is significant in association with the development of education in the borough of Mocanaqua, a coal company town, during a period of population growth due to the expansion of the West End Coal Company's mining activities. It is also locally significant as an example of an early twentieth century Functional style school building designed by Wilkes-Barre architect, Ralph M. Herr, who designed at least seven school buildings in Northeastern Pennsylvania prior to 1924.

Description: The two story structure faces west on Main Road, set back from the road on a slightly elevated 2.5 acre lot. A playground is situated to the south. At the first floor, two main entrances are separated by windows. Corner piers, each containing windows, extend beyond the entrances at either end of the building. At the second floor, windows cover the central segment of the building and the corner piers. The two side elevations contain windows on each floor. All windows on the front and side elevations are replacements(1960) of anodized aluminum. Original windows were double-hung, four pane, wood sash on all elevations(see photos PA-6187-10&11). The front and side elevations are of red brick. The brick work includes a decorative soldier course above each window, along with corbels and reinforced concrete sills below each window. Spandrel panels separate the windows between stories. At the roof line, a white wood cornice supported by brackets surrounds the front and side elevations. The basement level is stucco covered and contains windows on the front and side elevations. The rear elevation is covered with wood siding and contains the original double-hung windows at each floor. A red brick, two story addition(1960), is attached to the rear elevation on the north end. The rear facade of the addition contains anodized aluminum, awning windows. The interior contains, on the basement level, a boiler room for the oil furnace, two storage rooms, a multi-purpose room of 1,008 square feet with a

stage, and a lavatory for girls and one for boys. The first floor contains two classrooms, a learning center of 366 square feet, and a room of 320 square feet used for health services and as a teachers' lounge. The second floor contains four classrooms.

History:

When the Mocanaqua school was built in 1923, it replaced an older school building on Nicely Street, Mocanaqua borough. The new, six classroom school building was designed by Wilkes-Barre architect, Ralph M. Herr, and cost \$45,000. When it was completed, the Mocanaqua School, also known as the Brick School, was one of two elementary schools in the township. No high school ever existed in the township. The school was renovated in 1960. Enrollment at the Mocanaqua school in 1967 was 203 pupils, declining to 189 in 1972. Continued enrollment decline caused the Nanticoke Area School District to close the school in 1980.

Sources:

Historic Photographs: No Historic Photographs Found.  
Repositories Searched: Wyoming Historical & Geological Society, Wilkes-Barre, PA; Pennsylvania Bureau for Historical Preservation, Historical Resource Survey Collection, Harrisburg, PA.

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Pawlowski, Marlene M., AICP. "Community Facilities, Utilities, and Services." *Comprehensive Community Development Plan: Conyngham Township, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, Wilkes-Barre, PA: Luzerne County Community Development Office, August 1981.*

*The Pennsylvania School Journal. New School Buildings Number, The Pennsylvania School Journal, Harrisburg, PA, December 1924.*

Historian:

Robert A. Janosov, Historical Consultant, January, 1996

