

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED DEC 03 1979
DATE ENTERED FEB 5 1980

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Wasilla Elementary School (AHRS SITE NO. ANC-110)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

No Number
(Original Townsite)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Wasilla

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Alaska, at large

STATE

Alaska

CODE

02

COUNTY

Matanuska-Susitna Div.

CODE

170

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

__DISTRICT

__PUBLIC

__OCCUPIED

__AGRICULTURE

__MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

__PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

__COMMERCIAL

__PARK

__STRUCTURE

BOTH

__WORK IN PROGRESS

__EDUCATIONAL

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

__ENTERTAINMENT

__RELIGIOUS

__OBJECT

__IN PROCESS

__YES: RESTRICTED

__GOVERNMENT

__SCIENTIFIC

__BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

__INDUSTRIAL

__TRANSPORTATION

__NO

__MILITARY

OTHER: Historic Building

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Harold Newcomb & Wasilla-Knik-Willow Creek Historical Society (907) 376-5572

STREET & NUMBER

Anchorage-Fairbanks Highway

CITY, TOWN

Wasilla

VICINITY OF

STATE

Alaska 99687

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

City of Wasilla

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Wasilla

STATE

Alaska 99687

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (907) 274-4676

DATE

June 20, 1979

__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Office of Heritage Resources Survey
Alaska Div. of Parks, 619 Warehouse Dr. (907) 274-4676

CITY, TOWN

Anchorage

STATE

Alaska 99501

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE <u>July, 1979</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED | | (to historic park) |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Wasilla elementary school is a one-room rectangular, wood-framed gable-roofed building with exterior dimensions of approximately 22 ft. x 36 ft. The white-painted horizontal siding, trim and gable-end brackets are quite typical of the 1917 era. The wood windows are a horizontal sliding sash. The roof, now covered on the east half with corrugated steel, is believed to have originally been entirely asphalt roll roofing, as currently remains on the west half. The roofing is badly deteriorated, showing some bare sheathing boards. The siding is covered with roofing felts at some locations, and several windows are boarded over. The floor is wide wood planking and, like the wooden substructure, appears sound. The chimney and stove at the rear (north end) are missing. The original Gloria Gas Lamps have been replaced with fluorescent fixtures, which should be removed.

The building, as originally constructed was on a site about three blocks from the present location; placed on a wooden foundation. Approximately fifteen years later a concrete basement was installed beneath it. It was further remodeled and slightly altered in later years when used for church services. The school has most recently been relocated (in order to save it) to the Wasilla Historical Park. Here it now rests on a new wood post foundation, in proximity to other older buildings of similar relatively small scale, most appropriate to the feeling of early-day Wasilla.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699 | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Public Meetings |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

As the first school, and then church, in the founding of the town of Wasilla, this structure represents the oldest extant fabric of the community's social, political and educational life. In addition to the many future citizens educated here, it epitomizes, in a significant way, the lifestyles of the generations after 1917--through weddings, funerals, political and public meetings touching the lives of a large percentage of the people who lived in Wasilla and vicinity during the town's formative first half century.

As Wasilla's first school, built in 1917, this was one of the earliest permanent buildings in the new town. It served the community well for about half a century, and as such is a landmark in symbol as well as fact.

The first public sale of lots for the townsite of Wasilla did not occur until June 20, 1917. Then, the action of the people in promptly organizing a school district was highly commendable.

Local citizens petitioned officials in the Clerk of the Court office, at Valdez, to establish the initial school district, having an area of 36 square miles, within which the town of Wasilla was embraced. An election of a School Board of three members, consisting of a clerk, treasurer and director was held on August 2, 1917. The order creating the School District named Frank B. Cannon, Orville G. Herning and Howard Wilmoth as supervisors of the election.

Specifications for the bids for the new school were prepared by October 24. Bids were opened on October 29, and a pioneer builder named Meehan was awarded the contract. On October 30, Mr. Meehan went to Anchorage to get materials for the school. The lumber arrived on November 2. By November 7, O.G. Herning recorded in his diary that "school house is under cover." Miss Ora D. Clark, the first teacher and a pioneer Alaska educator of great stature, arrived on November 24. School opened on November 26. (A big dance, with 40 in attendance, had been held in the pioneer school house on November 16, to celebrate its near completion.)

The school remained the focal point of community events until a larger new school was built in 1934, a year before the 1935 Matanuska Valley Colonists arrived in Palmer. Some of the colonist children then enrolled in Wasilla schools, and the new school was soon overflowing. The first school building was put into use again with the overflow of students attending school there. The first public library was established here. It consisted of a single locked book case.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Personal interviews of old time residents; Palmer and Anchorage newspapers; files of the Wasilla-Knik-Willow Historical Society (Museum) at Wasilla. Letter-books and correspondence; diary of Orville George Herning, Knik, Alaska; and pioneer Alaskan educator, Miss Ora D. Clark, Anchorage Historical & Fine Arts Museum.

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY -1
 QUADRANGLE NAME USGS Anchorage C-7 QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:63 360 Series

UTM REFERENCES

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|------|---------|----------|---|--|--|--|
| A | 0,6 | 3,7,0 | 5,8,8 | 6,8 | 2,9 | 8,9,1 | B | | | |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | | | |
| C | | | | | | | D | | | |
| E | | | | | | | F | | | |
| G | | | | | | | H | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION West half of Lots 4 & 5, Block 8, Wasilla Original Townsite Sec. 10, Twp. 17 N, R 1 W, Seward Meridian. (Lots 3,4 & 5 currently leased to City of Wasilla for use as the "Wasilla Historical Park"). Original site, approximately 3 blocks away, is marked "school reserve" in the 1917 Townsite plat.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

| | |
|---|--|
| NAME / TITLE <u>Dorothy G. Page, President</u> | Assisted by Michael S. Kennedy, Historian and Robert A. Mitchell, AIA, Historical Architect Office of History & Archaeology, Anchorage, AK |
| ORGANIZATION <u>Wasilla-Knik Willow Creek Historical Society</u> | DATE <u>(907) 274-4676</u> <u>August 7, 1979</u> |
| STREET & NUMBER <u>Box 874</u> | TELEPHONE <u>376-2005 Museum</u> <u>376-5631 Home</u> |
| CITY OR TOWN <u>Wasilla</u> | STATE <u>Alaska 99687</u> |

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

William Shvane

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 11/23/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 ATTEST: *W. Ray Luce*
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 2/5/80

DATE 2-4-80

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| RECEIVED | DEC 03 1979 |
| DATE ENTERED | FEB 5 1980 |

Wasilla Elementary School (AHRS SITE NO. ANC-110)

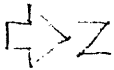
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1 of 1

The first organized Wasilla church was also established in this original school building. School classes were held during the week, while the church conducted services on Sundays. In later years, after the newer elementary school was enlarged, and plans for a high school were underway; this first school became a full-time church with the Rev. Wentner Harvey and his wife, Mary, taking it over as the Church of Christ.

Prior to being moved to the established Historic Park, the school building had been in use (only for storage) for many later years. Almost from the beginning it served as a community hall for public and political meetings and rallies, weddings, funerals and the focal point for the social life of an emerging community, second only to earlier Knik, which is on the National Register of Historic Places.

DEC 08 1979



60'

DIANEEN AVE. 140'

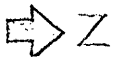
NE CORNER ORIGINAL TOWNSHIP

WASILLA LIBRARY

ALLEY

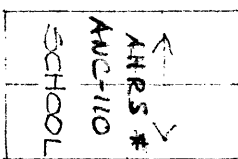
150'

WASILLA MUSEUM

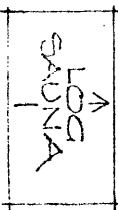
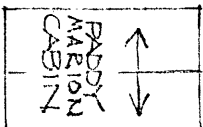
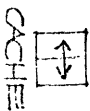


IRREVERSIBLE

30'-11/2"



22'-11"



LOTS 3, 4, & 5 BLOCK 8 WASILLA TOWNSHIP

STOREHOUSE



SMOKEHOUSE



WASILLA HISTORICAL PARK

PRIVATE PROPERTY

BOUNDARY STREET

LAND OWNED BY JENNIE WASEY
LEASE OPTION TO BUY BY CITY OF WASILLA
SUB-LEASED TO WASILLA-KNIK-WILDW CREEK HISTORICAL SOCIETY