

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Churchill Public School
other names/site number: Churchill Elementary School/48LA2797

2. Location

street & number: 510 West 29th Street not for publication: N/A
city or town: Cheyenne vicinity: N/A
state: Wyoming code: 56 county: Laramie code: 021 zip code: 82001

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 ___ nationally ___ statewide locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Claudia Nissly _____ 5/1/05
Signature of certifying official Date

SHPO
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 ___ See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register
 ___ See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain): _____

Linda McVellard 8/22/05
Signature of 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

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: Public Schools in Cheyenne, Wyoming, from 1911 to 1954

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Education Sub: school

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Education Sub: school

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Late 19th and 20th Century American Movements

Sub: Prairie School/American Foursquare

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: concrete

roof : built up tar and gravel

walls: brick

other: _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

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

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat. Education

Cat. Architecture

Period of Significance: 1911-1954

Significant Dates: 1911 (building date)

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

Architect/Builder: William Dubois, architect/Cuss Brothers, builders; 1951 addition: Morris Kemper

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: City of Cheyenne Planning Office, Cheyenne, WY.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property: ca. 1.6 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>13</u>	<u>514551</u>	<u>4554441</u>

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

All of Block 16, Hellman Addition

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

The boundary is the lots which the property occupies in Block 16 and includes structures, parking areas, playing fields/playgrounds, and landscaping

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Robert G. Rosenberg, Historian
organization: Rosenberg Historical Consultants date: 8/31/2004; revised 12/31/2004
street & number: 739 Crow Creek Road telephone: (307)-632-1144
city or town: Cheyenne state: WY zip code: 82009

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name: Laramie County School District No. 1
street & number: 2801 House Avenue
city or town: Cheyenne
state: WY zip code: 82001
telephone: (307)771-2100

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

CHURCHILL PUBLIC SCHOOL
LARAMIE COUNTY, WYOMING

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7. Description

Churchill Public School (Churchill Elementary) is located at 510 West 29th Street in a residential area in the northwestern section of the City of Cheyenne, Wyoming. The facade or south side of the building fronts on West 29th Street, and the school property occupies the entire block. There is a fenced playground on the southeast and northeast sides of the building. The remainder of the property is landscaped with lawn and hand-planted trees and shrubs. The building was constructed in 1911 with an addition built onto the west side in 1951.

This is a two and one-half story tan brick building (original component: 95' E-W x 65' N-S) resting on a concrete foundation with a full basement. The school building has a flat roof and brick stepped parapet, and a tall rectangular interior brick chimney protrudes from the center of the roof. A thin concrete cornice surmounts the second story windows. A similar thin concrete band is located below the first story windows. The basement is a garden level with above-grade windows. The facade consists of three segments, and the central component, which contains the main entrance, is slightly recessed. The entry features a round segmental arch and keystone. It has twin-leaf steel one-light doors flanked by narrow one-light sidelights and a multi-pane transom. The name "Churchill" is incised in a stone rectangle above the entrance. Windows in the first and second stories are aligned vertically and consist of banks of six in the extending east and west segments. Garden level windows are also aligned vertically but consist of four windows separated by brick segments. The original windows have been replaced with three-light units with aluminum frames. It appears that the top light in each window consists of an opaque panel. The recessed component of the facade has 2 two over two-light double-hung windows on each floor with a centered six-light unit on the second story directly above the entrance. The rear or north side of the original component consists of similar banks of windows aligned vertically on the first and second stories. A second-story fire exit is centered between the window bays and has a set of steel stairs for a fire escape. The east and west sides are identical, and each has a first floor entrance and a single window aligned above on the second floor. Each entrance consists of a twin-leaf one-light steel door with sidelights and transom. There are also four basement level windows.

In 1951, a one-story flat-roofed brick addition (140' N-S x 50' E-W) was constructed onto the west side of the building for additional classroom space. Part of the addition included a gable-roofed brick auditorium on the south end. The long walls of the flat-roofed addition consist of brick half-walls with multi-light glass block window panels in the upper portion. There are narrow functioning windows located below the glass blocks for ventilation.

The interior of the original building component has been renovated but still retains some of the original wood panel doors with transoms. However, most of the transoms were sealed over on the first floor in the

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1980s. Most of the hardwood floors have been covered with carpeting, except for white and black terrazzo tile near the east entrance. Interior walls are generally plaster, and the rooms retain their original dimensions and have high ceilings. The original blackboards in the classrooms have been either covered or replaced. However, the wooden trim and eraser trays remain intact. Steam registers remain in place, and there is decorative rectangular-shaped grillwork over the vents. One second-story room that was originally the principal's office retains etched glass partitions and transoms over doors. The interior of the 1951 addition resembles several other schools from that time period including Hebard, Mabel Fincher, and Corlett Schools, with tile and plaster covered hallways, minimal wood molding and trim, and acoustic tile ceilings with fluorescent lighting. Twin porcelain water fountains with shallow arched recesses are also present in the hallways.

The original building component retains fair physical integrity with the principal exterior changes being changes to window bays and the large 1951 addition. The addition uses similar colored brick, but the style and proportions do not match the original building. This addition affects the integrity of setting, design, and to a lesser extent integrity of feeling and association. However, the majority of the original building remains visible, especially on the north, east and south sides, so that it retains fair integrity of materials and workmanship.

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8. Significance

The Churchill Public School (currently called Churchill Elementary School), constructed in 1911, is the oldest remaining public school in the City of Cheyenne. It is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its direct association with the growth of education in Cheyenne. The building reflects the primary importance the Cheyenne community attached to the education of its youth from its inception as a railroad town in 1867. Universal education was one of the first critical issues dealt with by Cheyenne's first citizens and by the first Wyoming territorial legislature. The formation of school districts and the building of schools reflected how Cheyenne's citizens felt about the permanency of their community and their faith in its future. The Churchill School is a substantial brick masonry structure built with community pride and permanency in mind, and which incorporated the standard designs advocated by the early twentieth-century educational reformers. This school was also used for public assemblies and civic celebrations, a place for the community to come together. It is also eligible under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a unique example of early twentieth century school architecture and as the work of a master architect. The original component is an American Foursquare of the Prairie School of architecture, popular in residential buildings from 1900 to 1920, and adapted here for an educational edifice. It is also a lasting legacy of the prominent Cheyenne architect, William Dubois, who designed many important public and commercial buildings in the city and state over his forty-year career.

Historical Background

Public education was a primary concern of Cheyenne's citizens from its beginnings in 1867-68 as a "track town" along the first transcontinental railroad, the Union Pacific. The Territory of Wyoming was created in 1868, and Cheyenne was designated the temporary territorial capital. Cheyenne had the largest population of any city in the territory, and once designated as the seat of government, this position was vehemently defended by its residents. From about 1875 to 1887, Cheyenne enjoyed a boom period based largely on cattle ranching. Spectacular profits were made during the 1880s, and by 1884, the population of Cheyenne had soared to 7,000. It had evolved from a rough-hewn railroad town to a modern city. Cheyenne became the state capital when Wyoming won statehood in 1890.

As early as October 1867, the local paper encouraged the development of a school for the 120 to 125 school-age children residing in Cheyenne. The City Council appointed a committee to arrange for a school building, and the first public school in Wyoming was constructed in late 1867. School District No. 1 was organized in November 1868, and covered an area of 270 square miles and included six rural schools. By 1874, the Cheyenne school had an enrollment of 131.

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Churchill School is the oldest remaining public school in the City of Cheyenne. It was constructed in 1911 at a cost of \$32,100. It was designed by prominent Cheyenne architect William Dubois and constructed by the Cuss Brothers. It was located on a 1.60-acre parcel purchased from Pauline L. Hellman on January 25, 1911 at a cost of \$3,200.00. The school was named after James Otis Churchill, who served as the Superintendent of Schools in Cheyenne from 1885 to 1903. The Churchill Public School is depicted on the 1912, 1923, 1931, and 1959 Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for the City of Cheyenne, the last depicting the 1951 addition. The original building contained four classrooms on each floor and in the basement level.

Cheyenne, like the rest of America, sank into the Great Depression in the late 1920s. Only two schools were constructed during this depression era. The Corlett School, also designed by Dubois, was built in 1940 on the west side of Cheyenne, and the Mabel Fincher School, designed by Frederrick Hutchinson Porter, was also built in 1940 in what was then the northeast part of town.

World War II and the resulting war buildup rescued the American economy from the Great Depression. Fort D.A. Russell (renamed Fort Francis E. Warren) was chosen as the location of a Quartermaster Replacement Center, which had a tremendous positive impact on Cheyenne's economy. Although school construction was suspended during the war years, building resumed in the mid-1940s.

The post-World War II growth in population required the construction of a one-story, flat-roofed addition with six classrooms which was built onto the west side of the original building component in 1951-52. Part of the addition also included a gable-roofed brick auditorium on the south end. The new addition cost \$134,906 and was among the first projects designed by Morris Kemper, whose firm is still active in Cheyenne. Finally, in 1988, the third floor of the original component was remodeled at a cost of \$27,270.00. Currently, the building is used as an elementary school for grades 4-6. Its sister school, Corlett Elementary, houses grades K-3.

The architect, William R. Dubois studied at the Chicago School of Architecture in the late 1800s and received his architectural training at a firm in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In about 1900, his firm sent him to Cheyenne as the supervising architect for the construction of the Carnegie Library. Dubois soon established his own practice in Cheyenne.

During a career in Cheyenne that spanned forty years, Dubois designed a wide range of residential, commercial, industrial, and public buildings in Cheyenne and across Wyoming. His buildings exhibited varied architectural styles and influences, such as Beaux Arts Classicism and Romanesque Revival. He proved his ability to master evolving styles through the decades; by the early 1940s, his buildings reflected the very latest in styles, such as Streamline (Art) Moderne. It is impossible to understate the impact of this architect on

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Cheyenne and Wyoming. His massive commercial buildings in the Cheyenne downtown historic district lent the young town its character of permanence and reliability, and as the decades passed, his ability to adapt to changes in architectural styles gave Cheyenne the appearance of modernity.

Almost every Cheyenne student in the early and middle years of the twentieth century passed through one of the many Dubois-designed public schools. His schools, as well as his other public and commercial buildings, reflect the evolving range of Dubois' architectural styles. Churchill School, his first educational building design in Cheyenne, is a tall simplified building representing the American Foursquare design of the Prairie School but with a flat roof. In 1921, Dubois designed the Cheyenne High School (later called Central High School), using the more detailed and elegant Collegiate Gothic style. Dubois also designed the nearby Gibson Clark School in 1922, using a simple and clean version of Collegiate Gothic. He used a similar style in 1923 for Johnson Junior High School on the South Side. The premier example of the Collegiate Gothic style in Cheyenne is Lulu McCormick Junior High School (now the Emerson State Office Building), on which he collaborated with Frederick Hutchinson Porter. In 1940, Dubois designed his last public school, Corlett Elementary. By then, he was using elements of the Art (Streamline) Moderne architectural style, which he also applied to the Eagles' Building and the Greyhound Bus Depot in 1940.

In conclusion, Churchill School is the oldest remaining educational facility in Cheyenne and the first Cheyenne school designed by prominent architect William Dubois. It has been used continuously as an elementary school since it was constructed in 1911. It therefore represents a tangible physical link between the past and present in the history of education in Cheyenne. Although it has received an addition and interior renovations to meet the changing needs of the student body and community, the addition is over fifty years of age, and the main edifice still retains good integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, and therefore also retains integrity of feeling and association.

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Section 9. Major Bibliographical References

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- Ittelson, Ellen. *Historic Building Inventory Record*. Westside Survey, 1986, Cheyenne, Wyoming.
- Laramie County School District No. 1. Planning and Construction Office Files. Laramie County School District No. 1 Administration Building, 2810 House Avenue, Cheyenne.
- No Author. *Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of School District No. 1, Laramie County, Wyoming*. Cheyenne, Wyoming: The S.A. Bristol Company, 1923.
- Orr, Becky. "Building Blocks." *Wyoming Tribune-Eagle*, Cheyenne, Wyoming, 8 December 2003.
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- Starr, Eileen. *Architecture in the Cowboy State, 1849-1940*. Glendo, Wyoming: High Plains Press, 1992.