

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

JUL 28 1987

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Crow Valley School (preferred) other names/site number Crow Valley Club

2. Location

street & number Crow Valley Road not for publication city, town Orcas Island (Eastsound vicinity) vicinity state Washington code 053 county San Juan code 055 zip code 98280

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked), public-local, public-State, public-Federal. Category of Property: building(s) (checked), district, site, structure, object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0 buildings, sites, structures, objects. Total 1.

Name of related multiple property listing: Rural Public Schools in Washington

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. 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 (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: Jacob J. [Signature] Date: 7/13/87. Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

In my opinion, the property meets (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: Date: State or Federal agency and bureau:

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register. (checked) See continuation sheet. determined eligible for the National Register. (checked) See continuation sheet. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:). Signature of the Keeper: [Signature] Date of Action: 8-27-87

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education: school

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)Other: gable front

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation wood, concrete

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walls wood: weatherboard

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roof wood: shingles

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other

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Crow Valley School is a one-story, wood frame, gable roof schoolhouse located in rural western Orcas Island (between Eastsound and West Sound) in the foothills of Turtleback Mountain. The school is located in a rural setting, surrounded on three sides by tall fir trees with a small stream running parallel to, and about 45 feet from the south side of the structure. Between the county road and the school's east elevation is a level playfield with a rock retaining wall. Behind the school's west end are the remains of the double outhouse that collapsed in 1986.

The rectangular one-story schoolhouse measures 40 feet six inches by 22 feet four inches and is covered with the original horizontal bevelled siding fastened with cut nails. The schoolhouse originally rested on a foundation of split cedar posts which has since been replaced by wood posts on concrete pier blocks. A new skirting was added around the foundation. The gable roof is covered with the original hand split shingles, and the original corbelled brick chimney rises atop the ridge at the rear. The side walls are lighted by four windows and two more windows flank the front entry. All windows are original four-over-four double-hung wood sash, and all but one retain batten shutters. (The missing shutter is in storage.) The windows are framed by simple wood surrounds. A small open porch with wood railing leads to the front door. The door has vertical and horizontal panels and is framed with simple board trim. The wall and roof edges are defined by cornerboards and raking trim boards. The only notable change to the structure occurred in the 1930s when the original porch, with stairs on either side and a solid railing, was modified. The porch now has an open railing and one set of steps.

The interior retains much of the character of the original one-room schoolhouse. The front door opens to a small anteroom sided in shiplap, which in turn leads to the single classroom which has a platform (raised four inches) at the opposite end of the room. The side and front walls have horizontal beaded siding and the back wall is sided in shiplap siding. The ceiling is treated in beaded siding, too. Vertical beaded wainscoting lines the room. The only notable interior alteration occurred in the 1940s when the left side of the platform was converted to a kitchen with cupboards and a small sink was installed. The flooring is the original tongue and groove fir.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Education

Period of Significance  
1888 - 1918

Significant Dates  
n/a

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
n/a

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
n/a

Architect/Builder  
Unknown

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Crow Valley School is historically significant for its association with public education on rural Orcas Island and is an outstanding example of a frame, gable roof, one-room schoolhouse from the territorial period. Built in 1888 and believed to be the oldest schoolhouse still standing in San Juan County, the modest structure has retained excellent integrity and continues to reflect its historic character as a pioneer educational facility and an early center of community life on Orcas Island.

Historical Background: The history of education in the San Juan Islands dates to the 1860s when school was first held in a church on San Juan Island. The same decade, the first log schoolhouses were constructed on San Juan and Lopez Islands, although none survive. These primitive schools, however, were actually private facilities. A common school system was not formally established until 1873 when San Juan County was established and the first public school districts were formed. District No. 5, organized that year, was on Orcas Island.

District No. 5 school was first conducted in a church (torn down in 1889). The next school on the island (District No. 6) was organized in 1874 and classes were held in a building that formerly housed a private school. That building, too, has been demolished. The third district on the Island (District No. 7) was organized in 1881 and school was conducted in a house near West Sound, but no traces remain of that structure. Then, in August 1888, the county board of commissioners received a petition from Districts 5 and 7 asking that a fourth district on Orcas Island be created from portions of their jurisdictions.

The new district--No. 11--served settlers in the Crow Valley area on the Island's west side between Eastsound and West Sound. Pioneer settler Peter Frechette donated a one acre parcel of his homestead claim for the site of the new school. (Frechette filed the claim in 1887, donated it to the district the next year, received the final patent in 1893 and the following year formally deeded the one acre parcel to the school district.)

Construction of the school began shortly after the land was donated in 1888. It was probably a community effort overseen by Peter Bostian who is credited with building a church of similar style in Eastsound in 1886. In 1888, Bostian started a brickyard and probably supplied the bricks used in the school's chimney.

The Crow Valley School was the only school ever established in the valley. In one early year (1895) records indicate the school had 42 pupils enrolled in grades one through five. Native American children and the children of white settlers in the area attended

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bowden, Angie Burt, Early Schools of Washington Territory, Seattle 1935, pp. 556-568.  
San Juan County Commissioners Minutes, Vol. 1, p. 338, August 1888, San Juan County Courthouse, Friday Harbor.  
San Juan County School Superintendent's Report to Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1893-1918, State Archives, Olympia.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository:

State Archives, Olympia  
San Juan County Courthouse, Friday Harbor

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property approximately two acres

UTM References

A 

1	0
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5	0	4	0	4	0
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5	3	9	0	3	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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Zone Easting Northing

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U.S.G.S. Quad: Eastsound, WA  
Quad Scale: 1:24,000

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is described thusly: Commencing at a road stake situated on the west side of County Road from Eastsound to Westsound in the Southeast quarter of the Northeast quarter of Section 28, Township 37 North, Range 2 West, W.M., in San Juan County, Washington, from which the quarter post between Sections 27 and 28 bears South

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the school grounds.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Bud McBride & Richard Schneider (edited by Leonard Garfield, OAHF)  
organization n/a date February 1987 (rev. May 1987)  
street & number Route 1, Box 83B telephone (206) 491-7488  
city or town Eastsound state WA zip code 98245

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classes there together. In 1918 (the year the school district was consolidated with others on the island) enrollment had dropped to 11 children spread through grades one through eight.

The design of the school reflects the first stage of common school development in rural Washington, with a simple front facing gable and a one-room interior. Some of the original single and double desks (with patents marked 1885) are in storage in the building. The two blackboards were homemade; one still exists along with the recitation bench, cast iron stove, and a large teaching aid that displayed multiplication tables and other lessons.

In addition to being the schoolhouse for the Crow Valley, the school played a special role in community life. As the only public structure ever constructed in the valley, the school functioned as a general community center and was the site of meetings, entertainment events, and church services. In 1918, the school was closed in a consolidation move but its role as a community center continued. Regular Sunday school services were held in the school and, when a preacher was available, church services were conducted. The school was also used for meetings of the Christian Endeavor Society and for a variety of social functions.

The local Crow Valley women's club, known as the Willing Workers, purchased the property for use as a club house in April 1928. Under the new ownership, the school continued to be the scene of social activities for the valley, including Easter Egg hunts and Thanksgiving and Christmas festivities. The club's mission was to help those in need and members made quilts, baby clothes or whatever else was necessary. Speakers and demonstrators were brought in to teach and instruct. To raise funds, members had a fall "fancy work" and bake sale at the school. In the 1930s, American Legion Post 93 met at the school before building their own facility. In the 1960s, the women's club, losing membership, was forced to sell the property to the present owners with the hope that it would remain in as original condition as possible.

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74°35'20" East 480.10 feet and the southeast corner of school house bears North 47°55' West 85.14 feet thence 165.0 feet; thence North 264.0 feet; thence East 443.52 feet; thence South 46°32' West 383.76 feet to the point of beginning; less county road.