

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received DEC 12 1985
date entered JAN 9 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Crestone School
and/or common Crestone Community Building

2. Location

street & number Cottonwood Street and Carbonate Avenue n/a not for publication
city, town Crestone n/a vicinity of
state Colorado code 08 county Saguache code 109

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	n/a in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	n/a being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Town of Crestone, Colorado c/o Mayor James K. Murray
street & number Box 75
city, town Crestone n/a vicinity of state Colorado 81131

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Saguache County Courthouse
street & number
city, town Saguache state Colorado 81149

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date Ongoing federal state county local
depository for survey records Colorado Historical Society, OAHF, 1300 Broadway
city, town Denver state 80203

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Crestone Schoolhouse, in the mountain town of Crestone, Saguache County, in south-central Colorado, is thirty-five miles northwest of Saguache, the county seat. Crestone is located at the foot of the rugged Sangre de Cristo Mountains and Crestone Needle, on the east edge of the San Luis Valley. The school, on its original two and one half acre lot site, has a rural setting with dirt streets and alleys forming the boundaries. Cottonwood Street runs along the east side of the property, an alley at the north rear, and Carbonate Avenue, which was never graded, at the south front.

Similar in design to other late 19th century rural schools in Colorado, the Crestone School is a one-story two-room frame building with a front gable. Entrance is through a projecting gabled vestibule/cloakroom. The main entry door has a raked blocking head above a transom. One window is placed to each side on the main wall surface. The building is unusual in its length--88" long with seven bays. It was constructed in two phases--the original front (south) section dates to 1880s and measures 38 feet by 20½ feet. The front section has a foundation of cedar pilings placed at three foot intervals. The rear (north) end was added in 1901. It contains three windows on each side and has a foundation of uncoursed stone rubble.

Each side wall contains seven windows, all double hung, two over two wood sash with rake blocking pediment lintels and trim painted green. The walls differ only in placement of entry doors. The west wall has a double door at the center¹ and a transomed door at the north end of the wall. The east side has only one door at the south end with a shed-roofed hood.

The exterior of the building, originally board and batten, was sided with clapboard at the time the rear addition was completed. The roof, originally covered in wood shingles, now has asphalt shingles. The walls have spaces between the outer and inner walls filled with soil.

The interior is original with ten foot ceilings and walls faced with wainscoting. There is a center ceiling beam, 17" by 13", supporting the ceiling. The chimney is believed to be of brick from the local brick kiln. All the floors are of three inch tongue and groove fir.

The rear of the schoolhouse is a utility room which was converted to a make-shift kitchen with an old Majestic coal and wood range to provide the heat. A linoleum rug covers the floor and there are exits on each side of the room. Both classrooms have individual heating systems; Waterbury coal and wood, fresh air circulating furnaces. (Picture #1, the fresh air ducts are seen below the window line.)

The school bell, cast by C.B. Bell Company, Hillsbro, Ohio in 1912, originally hung at the top of a wooden tower at the north end of the building. When the timbers began to deteriorate, the tower was dismantled and the bell was stored. In 1976, it was placed at the east side of the building on a pyramid of Crestone Conglomerate Rock as part of Crestone's Centennial Celebration. (Picture #9).

The grounds also contain a small/shed-roof wood shed at the north rear of the school building and is of pre-1935 construction date and a contributing element. On the playground on the west side of the building, contains the remains of the timber structure for the old rope swing and teeter-totters. The metal swings were put up in the 1950s. (Picture #10) Two frame outhouses of c. 1910 vintage are also located on the school lot.

¹The center door was enlarged in 1970 to better accommodate funerals.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	___ architecture	<u>XX</u> education	___ military	<u>XX</u> social/
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ humanitarian
<u>XX</u> 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
<u>XX</u> 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

Specific dates 1880; 1901 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Crestone schoolhouse is significant as the only school serving the Crestone area from the 1880s to the 1940s including the mining and lumber camps and the agricultural community along the eastern perimeter of the San Luis Valley. The schoolhouse, a symbol of stability in the community, also served as a social, religious and political gathering place. Its doors were always open free of charge to clubs, fraternal orders, box socials, weddings, shivarees and Saturday-night dances. The building was also used as the precinct polling place and for political rallies. It served as the town hall where the Crestone town council and schoolboard held monthly meetings. Religious services took place in the building as did funerals. The elaborate Christmas program, where all the students had the opportunity to perform, was the social highlight of the year.

The town of Crestone came into existence as a result of the discovery of rich gold bearing float in Burnt Gulch, one mile east of Crestone, in 1878. It is the only surviving mining town in a 25 mile-long mineral belt. As miners flocked to the Crestone area in the late 1870s for the first of three mining booms, George Adams, owner of the Luis Maria Baca Grant No. 4, and E.A. Reser, purchased twenty acres of the Henry Werline Homestead, north of the grant. On November 4, 1880, they filed the town plat for Crestone with the Saguache County Clerk and Recorder.¹ On the plat, Adams and Rester designated two and one half town lots on the corner of Carbonate Avenue and Cottonwood Street for the school. After a summer term of three months in the home of Mrs. Worth, Saguache County established School District No. 8 which included Crestone and the surrounding communities.² Work began ca. 1880 to build a one-room schoolhouse through contributions of local materials and volunteer labor. Grades one through eight were taught, with the teacher paid by the parents of the children in attendance.

As the search for gold and silver intensified, new mining camps sprang up over night. Since Crestone had the only established school, many miners and sawmillers moved there with their families (Map 3). A second mining boom in 1890 and a third in 1900 increased the population to 2,000 by 1900.

Among the areas covered by School District No. 8 was the Baca Grant Ranch. The Baca Grant No. 4, the principal Spanish land grant in Colorado, covered 100,000 acres including the land where many of the early gold and silver strikes were made. The Baca Grant, the only one of five original land grants to remain intact, played a prominent role in the history of Crestone.⁴ Mr. Alfred Collins, a longtime resident of the Baca Ranch, served as president of the Crestone School Board for many years. Collins, a progressive educator, instituted two enterprising ideas at Crestone School in the 1930s - the teaching of high school subjects and a hot lunch program.

Later as some of the mines in the neighboring camps began to close down, school districts were absorbed by Crestone, such as district No. 29 in the agricultural community of San Isabel. To accommodate the increased school enrollment, another classroom was added in 1901 to the original Crestone School. Grades five through eight were taught in the old classroom (Woods Hall) and the primary grades, one through four, were in the new addition. For two years, from 1930 to 1932, the ninth and tenth grades were taught in the small utility room.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property .43

Quadrangle name Crestone Quadrangle-USGS Map

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	3	4	3	8	6	10	10	4	12	0	15	4	16	10
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

School property - Lots 7, 8, & W $\frac{1}{2}$ 9, Block 22 - Section 12, Township 43 North, Range 11 East.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

Barbara Norgren
name/title George Harlan
Preservation Consultant
organization Crestone Board of Trustees date June, 1985
7453 E. Jefferson Drive
street & number P.O.Box 7 telephone 740-7860
Denver Colorado 80237
city or town Crestone state Colorado 81131

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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 *Barbara Sudler*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 11-27-85

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

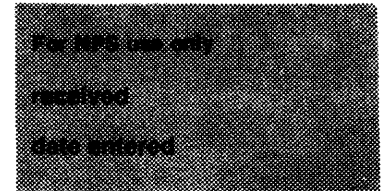
Almond Byers
for Keeper of the National Register
date 1-9-86

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation sheet Crestone School

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In 1947, the Moffat School District and the Crestone District were consolidated with the primary grades remaining in Crestone for two years. In 1949, all grades were bused to Moffat.

Since its construction, the school served purposes other than just educational. Because there was no church or community meeting place in Crestone, the school also became the community center. In honor of Crestone's first religious leader, Reverend Wood, the one room schoolhouse became known as Woods Hall, and served the social, religious and political needs of the community. After 1900, Parker Hall, above Sarah Parker's store, replaced Woods Hall as the social center. When Parker Hall was later remodeled into living quarters, the town's social and community activities returned to the Crestone School. On March 16, 1966, the schoolhouse was deeded to the town of Crestone and was designated as the Crestone Community Center.³

¹George Harlan, Postmarks and Places, Alamosa: Ye Olde Printing Shoppe, 1976, p. 93.

²Lori Goehl Lovato, Crestone: The Mining Town, Alamosa: O & V Printing, Fall 1982, p.18.

³George Harlan, Postmarks and Places, p. 110.

⁴Ralph E. Livingston, Crestone, Boulder: Roundup Press, No. - Dec. 1978, p. 5.

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Livington, Ralph E. Crestone. Boulder: Roundup Press, 1978.

Lovato, Lori Goehl. Crestone: The Mining Town. The San Luis Valley Historian:
Alamosa: O & V Printing, Fall 1982.

U.S.G.S. Map - Crestone Quadrangle, Colorado, Saguache, CO - 7.5 minute series.
1967 - Photo revised 1982.

Clason Map of the San Luis Valley - George Clason - Denver, CO Copyrighted 1908.