

410

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

DATE 5/93

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Frances School Gymnasium

other names/site number n/a for other name; Site #: CN-1

2. Location

street & number 100 Elementary Circle  not for publication

city or town Marion  vicinity

state Kentucky code KY county Crittenden code 135 zip code 42064

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)

David L. Morgan David L. Morgan, Executive Director/State Historic Preservation Officer 1-6-93  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office  
State of 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 certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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:)

Signature of the Keeper Patricia Andrews Date of Action 3/1/93

Name of Property

County and State

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

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation: Gymnasium

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation: Gymnasium

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other, No Style

---

---

---

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Wood Weatherboard

roof Asphalt Shingles

other Steel (interior supports)

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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

**Period of Significance**

1938 - 1940

**Significant Dates**

1938

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

**Cultural Affiliation**

n/a

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Frances Gymnasium  
Name of Property

Crittenden County, Kentucky  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** approximately nine acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	6
---	---

3	9	8	4	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	1	1	9	5	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

  
Zone Easting Northing

3 

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

  
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

**Dycusburg Quad**  
**Verbal Boundary Description**

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

**Boundary Justification**

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

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title L. Martin Perry

organization Kentucky Heritage Council date August 1, 1992

street & number 300 Washington Street telephone 502/564-7005

city or town Frankfort state KY zip code 40601

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

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

name Crittenden County Board of Education (Dr. Dennis Lacy, Superintendent)

street & number Post Office Box 362 telephone 502/965-3525

city or town Marion state KY zip code 42064

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Frances Gymnasium  
Marion, Crittenden County, Kentucky

The **Frances School Gymnasium** (CN-1) is a gambrel roofed structure which combines a balloon frame and steel beam support systems. Built in 1938 with the aid of Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds, it stands beside a one-story brick school built ca. 1960. The rectangular gym is sheathed in wood weatherboard, measures 102' x 60', and opens on its short side to the east. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation about 80 yards back from State Route 70 in the rural Crittenden County town of Frances. Frances is located 8 miles south of Marion, the county seat, at the junction of SR 70 and 855.

The school and gym occupy a site with a slight rise. Adjacent properties are typical of crossroads towns, with dwellings, detached businesses and farm fields interspersed. The low density of buildings gives the site a rural feel. Behind the school is a playground with a ball field, swings, and climbing bars, all of which appear old enough to date to the building's construction.

The roofing material consists of asphalt shingles that date to later than 1938. The roof is punctured by hipped roof dormers, five on each side, and a chimney, roughly centered on each long side. The sides of some of the dormers are clad in green asphalt shingles; it is believed that these were the 1938 roof covering. The structure looks very much like a barn due to the gambrel roof and the majority of window openings being located in the oversized dormers.

Double wooden doors on the west side provide access to a hand-dug basement with a dirt floor. This portion of the structure provides storage and houses the HVAC for the school and gym. Two non-original metal doors open on the east, or front, side atop poured concrete steps. A covered breezeway, ca. 1960, connects the school and the gym.

The interior measures 59'6" x 98'7" and has a red, white, and blue color scheme. Wooden benches line the north and south walls; a raised stage is at the west end. Walls are covered with horizontally laid 3" tongue-and-groove boards above a wainscoting of 5" vertical beadboard. The wooden roof rafters, and the floor-to-ceiling steel framework, are exposed.

The building is in good repair and currently is being used by the school. In addition to the front doors and roofing material, several of the windows were replaced in the last six or seven years. The rest of the building appears to date to the 1938 construction. The play area behind the structure does not contain all of the features called for in the 1938 WPA application (see Statement of Significance), but it is unclear if all those features were actually built.

The structure retains integrity of feeling, association, materials, workmanship, location, and design. Integrity of setting within the site has been lost, but the school complex remains within a setting that seems unchanged since 1938.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1 Frances Gymnasium  
Marion, Crittenden County, Kentucky

The **Frances School Gymnasium** (CN-1) meets National Register Criterion A and is significant within *New Deal Era Construction in Western Kentucky, 1933-1943*, a historic context and Multiple Property Listing approved for evaluations by Kentucky's Historic Preservation Review Board and the State Historic Preservation Office. The gymnasium is a good local example of ~~the education~~ building property type defined by the context. The structure, constructed in 1938, is important for showing that recreation for children was given a priority in the rural school experience. The gym is also important for documenting the partnership between school and community because it provided space for various community activities, within the framework prescribed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). This structure also is important for indicating Crittenden County's attitude during the late 1930s to school consolidation. Because the structure blends a variety of uses (educational, social, recreational, cultural) it is an important reflection of New Deal program goals, that projects would serve the public good broadly.

The Francis Gymnasium was a medium-sized Crittenden County WPA project on the basis of cost. The initial grant for the Frances Gymnasium project was approved in 1936 for \$8,706, and was reduced to \$7,429.03 within the same grant cycle. An additional \$2,153 was approved for a playground "consisting of swings, see-saws, slides, softball fields, basketball court, volleyball court, tennis court, sidewalks, and retaining walls (WPA project index, Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives)." For an undiscovered reason, the project was not built or funded in 1936, perhaps because local matching funds for the project were not available.

Facts about the project being rescinded and about its design have been difficult to obtain. Issues of the *Crittenden Press* from 1936-1939 were searched for evidence of the project. This Marion-based county newspaper reported several Frances events but gave virtually no coverage to the gymnasium construction project. Records in the Crittenden County Board of Education do not illuminate issues about the project, either, such as an architect's or builder's name, where the design originated, why the 1936 grant was not used, etc. (Conversations with Tomek, July, 1992). Members of the Board of Education could provide no additional information about the structure. Discussion with architects involved in the 1960s construction of the adjacent elementary school provided no further information about the gymnasium's architect or design source (Conversation with Ranney, July 16, 1992).

The project was certainly modest enough to be feasible. Crittenden County completed WPA-assisted projects with much larger budgets (\$93,761 in 1937, and \$69,539 and \$78,232 in 1939) for road improvement projects in Marion, the county seat, and road construction throughout the rural part of the county. The largest grant for a single building (\$40,639) erected a High School and auditorium in Marion in 1937 (WPA index, KDLA).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2Frances Gymnasium  
Marion, Crittenden County, Kentucky

The scale of the Frances Gymnasium project resembles dozens of county projects funded by the WPA for under \$10,000. These included "Community Sanitation" projects that built sanitary privies with concrete vaults, "Housework Assistance" for incapacitated homemakers, work on library book maintenance, and labor at clothing plants known as "Sewing Rooms." These smaller projects were typical activities funded by the WPA throughout Kentucky.

These projects gave high priority to creating employment opportunities for displaced workers. Their budgets proposed labor-intensive tasks with little encouragement to use project funds for purchase of construction materials. Especially on medium- and small-sized projects, WPA funds would pay only for labor, and require those benefitting to provide materials. For instance, those receiving sanitary privies had to provide the concrete and forms and WPA funds paid the workers (Conversation with Vinson, 8/12/92). This preference for labor- over-material expenditures is further documented by many project budgets that called for demolition of existing buildings and salvage of materials for construction of another structure on the same site.

The revised Francis Gymnasium project application in 1938 reflected this priority on labor costs and utilization of existing materials. The grant of \$6,723 paid workers to

"construct an auditorium and classroom addition, with basement, adjacent to present frame school building, wreck an abandoned school building, and salvage materials for use on this project. Construct a corridor and passage between the new gym and old classroom section of Francis School; and perform incidental and appurtenant work, including grading and landscaping grounds, at Frances, Crittenden County (WPA Indexes, KDLA)."

An additional \$4,438 was budgeted for landscaping and recreational equipment, presumably those fixtures specified in the 1936 grant.

Completion of the structure in 1938 resulted in a multi-purpose building available for the entire community of Frances. The gymnasium was intended to serve school children during the day and the community after school hours: it was the scene of recreation activities, stage plays, and other special events for Francis and the surrounding area.

The ongoing process of school consolidation makes structures such as the Frances Gymnasium valuable because they document historical attitudes toward the appropriate components of a rural school. Today, school consolidation limits the number of places where schools in counties are found, frequently placing large complexes in the county seat. This effort to build centrally-located facilities is served by

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8/10 Page 3/1

Frances Gymnasium  
Marion, Crittenden County, Kentucky

---

ubiquitous local roadways, greater access to motor transportation, and school budgets inclined toward large single buildings in one place--different conditions than existed in the 1930s. This trend also suggests that rural schools, such as Frances', are more likely to be closed and absorbed into the county complex than they are to build new multi-purpose structures today.

The process of school consolidation was well underway by the time that the Frances Gymnasium was built. Thus, the gym's construction documents that the forces encouraging central location of Crittenden County schools in the late 1930s could not prevent Frances School from being expanded by adding a gym and playground. Were such decisions to be made today, the outcome may be different.

Item 10: Geographical Information

Verbal Boundary Description: The property is designated as parcel 16 on Crittenden County Property Identification Map #49. The nominated area coincides with the parcel's current boundary. Attached maps depict that boundary.

Verbal Boundary Justification: The area selected includes the contributing resource, i.e., the gymnasium, and the land which historically surrounded it. That setting is important and relates to the gymnasium as a recreational resource of the county school system. Funds from the New Deal Era programs impacted that setting, some of which can be viewed today. It is evident from the application for funds which resulted in construction of the building that the people responsible for the structure saw its setting as integral with the resource itself. The nominated area intends to incorporate the area which coincides with the historical view of the resource: a gymnasium and surrounding grounds.



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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

NRIS Reference Number: 93000046 Date Listed: 3/1/93

Frances School Gymnasium      Crittenden      KY  
Property Name:                      County:              State:

Multiple Name

-----  
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*Patrick W. Andrews*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

*3/1/93*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

In Section 2 of the nomination form, an incorrect county code was listed. The correct code for Crittenden County is 055. In Section 7, the building material steel will not be entered in the data base (National Register Bulletin 16a, p.27, instructs that only exterior building materials are listed in Section 7). The nomination form is officially amended to make these corrections.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file**
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Frances School Gymnasium  
Crittenden County, KY

Section number      Photos      Page   1  

---

## Photograph Identification Sheet

Same information for all photographs

Property Name: Frances School Gymnasium

Location: 100 Elementary Circle, Frances (Crittenden County), Kentucky

Photographer: Ardell Jarrett

Date of Photograph: 1991

Location of Negatives: Kentucky Heritage Council, 300 Washington, Frankfort, KY

Photo 1: Front and north side of gym  
view to south-southwest

Photo 2: rear of gym  
view to east

Photo 4: north and rear sides of gym  
view to south-southeast

Photo 3: part of back and south side of gym  
view to northeast

Photo 5: interior of gym  
view to west

Photo 6: interio of gym  
view to south