

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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

*Actual receipt by NCRS probably
11-17-81*

1. Name Lamar Community Center

historic Lamar State Graded School, District No. 5

and/or common Lamar Community Center (preferred)

2. Location NE of St. Croix Falls

street & number _____ not for publication _____

city, town St. Croix Falls vicinity of _____ congressional district Third

state Wisconsin code 55 county Polk code 095

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Social hall

4. Owner of Property

name Lamar Community Club, Inc. (Attn: Mrs. Gerald S. Jensen)

street & number Route 2, Box 43

city, town St. Croix Falls vicinity of _____ state Wisconsin 54024

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Polk County Courthouse

street & number _____

city, town Balsam Lake state Wisconsin 54810

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wis. Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

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 type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Built as a one-room schoolhouse in 1905, the original structure was a single-story, clapboarded square building standing on a concrete foundation and covered by a hipped roof. In the center of the front (west) face of the roof was a pyramidal-roofed, square, open belfry with paired, arcaded, round-arched openings in the three free sides. The lower halves of the openings were ornamented with a heavy latticework. The school's entry was a pair of paneled wood doors located centrally, below the belfry. A hipped porch roof supported by slender, hand-turned columns extended across the entire front of the school, and there were open plank steps at the south end of the porch deck.

A rapid increase in the school population made expansion necessary by 1910, and that year an addition was built to the south, doubling the size of the school. At the same time, the interior was divided into two rooms and a cloakroom was built at the south end, projecting to the front as a small ell. Otherwise the addition harmonized with the original part of the building. The porch was extended across the front, with its roof continued over the cloakroom ell.

The school building remained essentially unchanged from 1910 until 1928, when a basement was built under the two rooms and a furnace installed. At the same time, the original front entry was closed and sided over, the cloakroom was removed, and a new entryway was built at the center of the building, with wooden steps leading from grade to the classroom level and narrower cement steps on either side leading to the basement. A single-story, gable-roofed vestibule was built to enclose the entryways. This created a small T, thus slightly changing the general configuration of the building. It has remained this way to the present day. The original belfry, complete with the old school bell, is still intact and in the same position it occupied when built in 1905. The original wood-shingled roof was at some time covered with asphalt shingles.

The building remained in school use through the end of 1945. After that, the building was used only occasionally for 4-H Club plays and programs, Homemakers Club meetings and social events, and similar affairs. In early 1960, men of the area donated their labor to remove the furnace, erect a stage, and better prepare the building for community usage. An oil-burning heater was installed to provide better heat, and in 1969 the windows on the west and north were boarded over to conserve heat. Except for the roof, which is in serious need of repair, the building is in generally good condition due largely to the help of volunteers in providing labor for painting and maintenance.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1905, 1910, 1945 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The entire significance of the old Lamar School, now the Lamar Community Center, lies in the role it has always played in the lives of the people of the area and the devotion with which former students, both locally situated and far removed from Wisconsin, regard it. This is an instance in which the feeling for a simple, modest school building almost literally serves as the central force tying a community together and providing a place for most of its social activities.

Lamar is an area which had a good start as a developing community with potential growth into a village, beginning in the last third of the 19th century and continuing until it was bypassed by the railroad in 1900. It was a crossroads town with a general store and post office, creamery, church, town hall, school, charcoal kilns, and a brickyard, and was the center of a potato industry in a productive farming area. Failure to get the railroad meant the gradual loss of the various business enterprises over the next two decades, and now only a few of the buildings remain in the immediate Lamar vicinity: the old creamery, old Lamar chapel, two or three older homes, and the Lamar School. The school is the only significant survival of the once promising settlement.

The first school at Lamar was the Brokaw School, built in 1873. It served the rural area until the rapid increase in settlement which began with an influx of Swedish pioneers about 1880 created the need for a new school. The eventual result was the establishment of the Lamar State Graded School, District No. 5, in 1905, and the accompanying construction of a new school building. The school population continued to grow for a number of years thereafter, making necessary the enlargement of the schoolhouse in 1910. It continued in use until the 1940s, when consolidations of district schools were beginning to eliminate the need for many small rural schools. By late 1945 only a few students remained at Lamar; after that year's Christmas vacation, they were transported to two different schools and the Lamar School was closed.

For a time after that, the schoolhouse was used occasionally for meetings of the 4-H Club, the Lamar Homemakers Club, and other groups and social events. The Homemakers Club helped to maintain it until they could no longer bear the burden, even with donations of money and of volunteer help provided by the men of the area. In 1974 the people formed a corporation, the Lamar Community Club, which assumed ownership of the building. Community use had been increasing long before that, however, with the school used as a place for bridal showers, picnics, theatrical productions, miscellaneous social events, and school reunions. The latter have been held every three years for a number of years, and former students have returned not only from the nearby area but also from Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan, and even from California, to attend.

People of the Lamar community feel that they are a unique group who for seventy-five years have regarded the school as their principal landmark. They feel for and take pride in the school, keep it painted, maintain the building and grounds, plant flowers there, and use it as their common ground for activities of all sorts. If any landmark building has real local significance as the unifying social force in a given community, none could be a better exemplar than the Lamar School.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Jensen, Mrs. Gerald S., SHSW questionnaire & personal communications, 1980
 McKenney, Lucille Dombrock, History of the Lamar Community, n.p., n.d. (1967), 20-30
 Weir, Mrs. Elsa, personal recollections

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property 0.94
 UTM NOT VERIFIED
 Quadrangle name St. Croix Dalles, Wis.-Minn. Quadrangle scale 1:62500
 UMT References St. Croix Dalles NE, Wis. (Orthophotoquad) 1:24000

A	<u>1</u> <u>5</u>	<u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>3</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>2</u> <u>9</u> <u>9</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification Bounded on the west by a north-south town road extending N from U.S. Hwy 8, on the east by a line 200' E of and parallel to said town road, on the N by an E-W line 100' N of the center of the school building, and on the S by an E-W line 100' S of the center of the building. Located in the NWNW, Sec. 23, T-34-N, R-18-W (Civil Town of St. Croix Falls, Polk County, Wisconsin).

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 Donald N. Anderson, Historian & Registrar, Historic Preservation Division
 organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 30 September 1980
 street & number 816 State Street telephone 608/262-0746
 city or town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Richard Kenney

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 10/29/80

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<i>for</i> <i>Richard Byers</i>	Entered in the National Register date <u>3/1/82</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	