

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



MP-1070

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 GAINES DISTRICT #2 COBBLESTONE SCHOOLHOUSE

other names/site number _____

name of related multiple property listing Cobblestone Architecture of New York State

2. Location

street & number 3286 Gaines Basin Rd. [] not for publication

city or town Albion (Town of Gaines) [X] vicinity

state New York code NY county Orleans code 073 zip code 14411

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 as set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally. ([] see continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Michael P. Lynch Deputy SHPO
Signature of certifying official/Title

5 APRIL 2017
Date

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 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

date of action

Michael P. Lynch

6/12/17

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Orleans County, New York

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		buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	0	TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Cobblestone Architecture of New York State

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MID-19TH CENTURY/Greek Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls stone (cobblestone)

roof asphalt shingle

other _____

Narrative Description

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

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

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 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 that 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 boxes that apply.)

- 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

Areas of Significance:

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Architecture

Period of Significance:

1832-1944

Significant Dates:

1832, c. 1885, 1944

Significant Person:

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect/Builder:

Unknown

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 Building 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 repository: _____

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 0.40241 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>725337</u>	<u>4793111</u>	3	<u>17</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>17</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u>17</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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 Erin Anheier [Edited and arranged by Jennifer Walkowski, NYSHPO]

organization _____ date February 25, 2017

street & number 4690 Bennetts Corners Rd. telephone (810) 965-7248

city or town Holley state NY zip code 14470

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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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

name Orleans County Historical Association

street & number PO Box 181 telephone _____

city or town Albion state NY zip code 14411

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, D.C. 205

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 7 Page 1

Summary

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone School House, built in 1832, is an excellent example of a one-room cobblestone schoolhouse. Located in the hamlet of Gaines Basin in the town of Gaines, Orleans County, New York, Schoolhouse #2 is a one-story, front gable, Greek Revival style building with a rectangular plan and an asphalt shingle roof. The building has a central entrance flanked by windows on the primary east elevation, and four bays on the north and south elevations. There are two bays on the rear west elevation. Typical of the Greek Revival style, the building features a broad, but simple, frieze band beneath the eaves and cornice returns on the gable ends. Ashlar variegated Medina sandstone quoins mark the four corners of the building. The entry door is a six-panel design where the upper and lower portions feature an unusual vertical paneling with a beautifully marked variegated Medina sandstone header and sill. It is flanked by windows, each with a concrete sill and brick header, with 6-over-6 replacement wooden double-hung window units. The four bays of the north elevation feature three 1-over-1 replacement window units set in openings with concrete sills and brick headers in the bays towards the west, while the bay to the east is infilled with cobbles and larger stones. This modification was made sometime after the building was constructed but prior to the turn of the twentieth century. The south elevation is similar to the north, with three 1-over-1 replacement windows in the westernmost bays; however the easternmost window opening contains a simple wood door, set into the window opening. The west elevation has two 1-over-1 window units. The interior plan of the building is simple, reflecting the character and nature of the one-room schoolhouse. Entrance is into a small entry space, flanked by a cloak room to the north and a coal and storage area to the south. Based on physical evidence and historic documentation, it appears that these rooms were created within the building sometime in the late nineteenth century, perhaps around 1885. The rest of the building is devoted to a single room, the main classroom space.

Setting

The town of Gaines is located in the center of Orleans County in western New York, encompassing land primarily located north of the Erie Canal. Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse is located in the hamlet of Gaines Basin, which is in the southern portion of the town of Gaines, approximately two miles northwest of the Village of Albion. The school is sited approximately 520 feet north of the Erie Canal on Gaines Basin Road. The schoolhouse property is a small parcel on the west side of Gaines Basin Road. The site is approximately 0.4 acres in size, surrounded to the north, west and east by actively farmed land. There is a nineteenth-century house to the south. The site has two mature maple trees, one close to the southern side of the school house and one near the road, and a metal swing set in front of the building. A dirt driveway is located on the south side of the school house. A recently installed historic roadside marker is at the front of the property.¹

¹ The sign reads "1832; GAINES BASIN SCHOOLHOUSE; DISTRICT #2 USED UNTIL 1944; MADE OF FIELD COBBLESTONES; REPLACED A LOG CABIN WHERE; CAROLINE PHIPPS TAUGHT; ORLEANS COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSN 2015."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

Exterior

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse is a largely intact example of a nineteenth-century one-room rural schoolhouse, constructed in the regionally popular cobblestone building tradition with Greek Revival details. The school is a rectangular building (26' x 36'), one story tall, three bays wide by four bays deep, with a moderately pitched front gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. The building sits on a rubble stone foundation and is built of small, rounded, multicolored stones laid in horizontal courses; on the side walls, the mortar around each stone is carefully outlined with a hexagonal flat V-shaped depression, with the vertical sides longer than the upper and lower sides, creating a distinctive hexagonal outline around each stone. This pattern is a distinctive regional mortar design. All four corners of the building are marked by large variegated medina sandstone quoins. The building features a wide wooden frieze and full entablature with cornice returns.

There is a central entrance door and symmetrical fenestration on the east elevation. The entrance has a striated sandstone lintel and sill. The main entrance, a six-panel wood door, is shorter than the door frame and appears to be a later replacement, although it does not detract from the overall visual character of the building.

Windows have brick lintels and replacement concrete sills. A 1902 photo shows the building with 12-over-12 double-hung wood sash, likely the original 1830s units; however, the current windows are 1-over-1 double-hung wood sash from the twentieth century. Windows on the front (east) façade have been modified to appear to have six-over-six sash, through the use of an applied muntin grid on the interior.²

On the north (side) elevation, one of the four window openings has been in filled with larger fieldstones.³ On the south (side) elevation, one of the four openings features a wood door instead of a window. The door is constructed of vertical tongue and groove wood boards with two metal hinges. While it is unknown exactly when this door was added and whether this opening ever featured an operable window, it does appear in the 1902 historic photo of the building and corresponds to the area behind serving as a coal and storage area for the school.

Interior

The interior plan of the schoolhouse is simple, consisting of a large open classroom located toward the west end of the building and two small utility rooms at the front, eastern end, separated by a small entry hall. Throughout the building, the floor is tongue and groove pine flooring running north-south with a few missing boards. The

² The windows appear to be twentieth century replacements. It's possible that these appear in the ca. 1960 photo of the building, which shows a 6-over-1 window configuration similar to what is present now, although it is unknown exactly when the windows were replaced.

³ Locals refer to this former window as the "superstition window," relaying the local lore that when the building was constructed, some residents refused to send their children there because it had 13 openings – one door and twelve windows. As this legend has it, the window was in filled to satisfy these people. An alternative theory is that it was in filled when a cloak room was added to the interior to allow an uninterrupted wall in the cloak room, which is behind this window.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 7 Page 3

walls and ceilings are of horse hair plaster with areas of missing plaster exposing the split (or accordion) lathe to view.

Entrance to Schoolhouse #2 is through the door on the front (east end) of the building into a short hallway. On the south side of the hall is a doorway into a small room that functioned as a coal bin. The coal was apparently delivered directly into the space through the wooden door on the south side of the building that was originally a window.⁴ The west side of the coal bin has a ceiling mounted enclosure extending to within 63 inches above the floor. This enclosure is accessed from the hallway and appears to have been used for storage. On the opposite side of the hall, another small room was enclosed as a cloakroom, which is accessed from the classroom. It has walls of horizontal tongue and groove wood on the north and south. There are two rows of nails on the north wall for hanging coats. There are also bead board cabinets on the south wall. These apparently served as the school library. At the west end of the hall, there is a door leading into the classroom; this matches the door to the cloakroom, each having four raised panels and thumb latches. It appears that the coal bin, storage area and cloak room were constructed within what had been the front of the one room schoolhouse and were finished around 1885 based upon the style of trim, the presence of early plywood on the interior walls, and the notation of expenditures for building supplies at that time.⁵

The classroom is approximately 22 x 25 feet in size. The east wall, which is shared with the utility rooms, is paneled in plywood. All walls have a 28-inch high plywood wainscot, set over the original plaster wall surface, and topped by a rounded lip. There are three windows on the north and south walls and two on the west wall.

The southern portion of the east wall is covered by a blackboard above the wainscot. Smaller blackboards are mounted between the two windows on each of the north and south walls. The center of the west wall shows evidence of being painted black for use as an early blackboard. It shows areas where the plaster has been repaired. One of these has the hand painted message "C.L. '39." According to his son, these are the initials of the late Cary Lattin, who lived nearby. Lattin had papered the walls of the school in 1939 and apparently also patched some plaster. The building is in fair condition and retains almost all of the original flooring, plaster and wainscot.

Registration Requirements

Schoolhouse #2 meets the following registration requirements established by National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Document [MPDF] titled *Cobblestone Architecture of New York State* in Section F. IV. This document first presents basic evaluation criteria, assessing solely the cobblestone construction method and its integrity. Schoolhouse #2 meets all of these preliminary requirements, retaining substantial integrity to

⁴ The function of this room is indicated by the presence of pieces of coal and coal residue, kindling wood and a coal scuttle bucket.

⁵ A ledger of expenses for the school district, covering the years of 1879-1927, shows the purchase of lumber and nails in 1884-85 and the cost of \$2.25 for the construction of a blackboard. It is presumed this refers to the construction of the utility rooms and resulting new interior east wall of the classroom.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 7 Page 4

the cobbles, the mortar, the corner treatments, and the original door and window openings. In addition, the MPDF lays out a review framework to better understand the significance of the cobblestone building more holistically. While some alteration has occurred, the building substantially meets the following registration requirements:

1. *Are the original doors and windows intact?* All original openings in the cobblestone walls are legible, and doors and windows are of a historic nature, with windows on the north and south elevations probably dating to early twentieth century. Infill and alterations made to the windows at the eastern end of these two elevations were made during the period of significance of the school, and reflect the evolution and development of the schoolhouse. The two 6-over-6 replacement windows on the front elevation are not historic, but do not detract from understanding the form and function of the building.
2. *Is the roof intact in terms of shape, type, pitch, materials and cornice/frieze details?* The form and profile of the roof remains intact, although what was presumably originally cedar shingles have been replaced with asphalt shingles; a common replacement. The wide entablature also remains intact.
3. *Is the immediate setting intact?* The setting is recognizable as a rural schoolhouse lot, being an open area surrounding the building with shade trees and some play equipment. There is a metal swing set near the front of the building. While outhouses and a flagpole previously existed, they are no longer extant.⁶
4. *Is the general neighborhood intact?* The area surrounding the schoolhouse retains its rural agricultural/residential character.
5. *Does the cobblestone retain its original interior appointments, both in terms of spatial configuration and decorative details?* The only modifications to the interior (the coal storage area and the cloak room) are now historic in their own right and relate directly to the building's purpose as a schoolhouse.

In addition, Schoolhouse #2 meets the registration requirements specific to Subtype D: Cobblestone Educational Buildings, as listed in Section F of the MPDF, by possessing integrity of setting and location; integrity of design, materials and craftsmanship of all non-cobblestone elements; and integrity of original school-like features such as the publically oriented entrance. Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse retains a high degree of integrity to its historic schoolhouse interior, making it instantly recognizable as a schoolhouse. These features include the distinctive floorplan and the presence of a rudimentary chalkboard created by black paint over plaster as well as later manufactured chalkboards. The two small rooms constructed later in the eastern end of the building, a cloak room for children to hang their coats, and a coal and storage room to house fuel to heat the small building, all speak to the evolution and function of the building as a one-room rural schoolhouse.

⁶ A local resident recalls the existence of two outhouses on the property. A 1902 photo shows a flagpole located east of, and slightly to the north of, the schoolhouse. A 1960 photo shows an outhouse lying on its side next to the schoolhouse.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 7 Page 5

Schoolhouse #2 also embodies the distinctive characteristics of the cobblestone method of construction (as discussed in length in the MPDF) in the use of cobbles laid in horizontal rows and bonded with limestone mortar, and the use of stone quoins to decorate and stabilize the corners of the building. The cobbles are of the glacier deposit variety and the quoins are of Medina sandstone. There are three distinctive original styles of mortar work present on the building. The front façade has cobblestones laid in a horizontal pattern with the mortar in a raised horizontal “V” shaped joint. The rear has mortar which is flush to the plane of the stone, without decorative effect. The north and south sides exhibit a different and distinctive mortar pattern where the stones appear to be submerged in a hexagonal pattern of mortar.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 1

Statement of Significance:

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse is significant under criterion C as an excellent and highly intact example of an early nineteenth century schoolhouse constructed in the distinctive local vernacular cobblestone building tradition. Cobblestone construction was popular in the region south of Lake Ontario in the period between 1825 and 1860. The school illustrates the tradition of building with small rounded cobblestones that had to be cleared from fields before cultivation could begin. The building also illustrates a distinctive local mortar design on its side walls characterized by the use of a hexagonal outlining of each stone. The school is one of at least six known cobblestone schools built in the town of Gaines; however, of those, it is one of only two that survive and retain integrity.

In addition to its construction material, the school embodies the most typical form for local schoolhouses in New York State in the nineteenth century. The building's one-story rectangular shape, three-bay by four-bay size, and gable roof with front gable, front entrance, and single classroom space were features shared by almost all rural one-room schools constructed in New York State. The Greek Revival details, such as the wide frieze and cornice with returns, were also found on numerous schools of the period, more or less ornamented depending on available funds, the skills of local carpenters, and the sensibilities of local parents. The rendering of this particular building in cobblestone, with the fully developed entablature and the oversize sandstone quoins make it a particularly distinguished example of the type and style.

Built in 1832 in the hamlet of Gaines Basin, Orleans County, New York, Schoolhouse #2 is also significant under criterion A for its association with the development of public education in the town of Gaines, as it reflects the substantial expansion of the school system in response to the population growth that accompanied completion of the Erie Canal. While the first school was a small log shack with loose floorboards, its replacement was four times larger, of substantial construction materials, and highly decorative. This cobblestone school served Gaines Basin for over a century until it could no longer meet the district's needs during the era of centralization. The period of significance for Schoolhouse #2 begins with its initial construction in 1832 and ends in 1944, at which time the school was closed and students were sent to the central school in Albion.

History of Gaines and Gaines Basin

The first settlers came to the area that is now the town of Gaines, NY, following the Indian trail that runs parallel to the shore of Lake Ontario. This trail, now known as Ridge Road (NY Route 104), runs along a ridge that is a former beachfront of the ancient lake. The first land articulated consisted of 132 ½ acres to Elizabeth Gilbert on March 3, 1807. The Gilbert family is believed to taken up residence about that time but had definitely settled by 1809. Population growth in the area was slow initially because the land was densely forested, but it increased after the War of 1812. The Town of Gaines was created in 1816 by splitting it off

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 2

from the Town of Ridgeway, then part of Genesee County. A post office was established in 1816, eliminating the need for residents to retrieve mail from Batavia. The first church in what was to become Orleans County was organized in Gaines in 1820. Initially grain had to be carried over the most rudimentary of roads to either Rochester or Niagara Falls to be ground. It was not until 1822 that the town had a grist mill. Later, three other mills were built. The first local newspaper was published in 1822. By 1824 there were stores, asheries, tanneries, blacksmith shops, a distillery and various other factories and businesses. A village, also called Gaines, formed on the Ridge Road, the main east-west thoroughfare for this part of western New York. This village was the chief center of population and influence in the area. It was also briefly the first county seat for Orleans County, which was established in 1826.⁷

Lansing Bailey and his brother came to Gaines in 1812, took up 260 acres from the Holland Land Company, and began to develop the southern area of the town. This area would later come to be called Gaines Basin. They cut a road south from the Ridge Road with the help of their cousin, Daniel Pratt, and began clearing land and building a cabin. A small settlement formed in this area due to the road that the Baileys and Pratt had cut. Lansing Bailey's family grew to include twelve children, nine of whom reached maturity.

In 1825, the Erie Canal was constructed through this area, spurring an era of more widespread growth and development. The original Erie Canal was only forty-feet wide, too narrow to turn many boats around. This created the need for wider spots, or basins, to allow boats to pull aside to take on loads or turn back in the direction from which they had come. Gaines raised a subscription to create a basin along the canal. Since the road cut by the Baileys and Pratt already existed from the ridge south, it was decided to build the basin near the intersection of this road and the canal, which also happened to be the most northern point on the length of the Erie Canal. This resulted in the area becoming known as Gaines Basin and the road being called Gaines Basin Road. A warehouse and shipping dock were constructed. The small settlement at Gaines Basin grew rapidly in population as it became an important place from which farmers could ship their goods, primarily grain and apples, at a reasonable cost. There were three general stores, a warehouse, a blacksmith shop, a schoolhouse and about a dozen houses.⁸

In 1852 the railroad reached Orleans County and rapidly drew business away from the canal. The village of Gaines and the hamlet of Gaines Basin, neither of which was along the route of the New York Central, slowly lost importance and population, while the nearby village of Albion, located on both the canal and the rail route, grew rapidly.

Today Gaines Basin consists of a one-lane bridge across the canal, a few houses and the vacant cobblestone schoolhouse. While no longer the thriving community of the past, it retains much of its historic integrity.

⁷ Isaac S. Signor, *Landmarks of Orleans County New York* (Syracuse: D. Mason & Co., 1894).

⁸ Delia Robinson, *Historic Gaines 1809-1984* (Gaines, NY: Historic Gaines Jubilee Committee, 1984), 10.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 3

Nineteenth-century homes are surrounded by agricultural fields. The canal is the primary feature of the area and is still traversed by a one-lane bridge.

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

While there is indication that school was taught in Gaines Basin as early as 1814, the first mention of an actual schoolhouse at Gaines Basin is 1823.⁹ This early school was described as a modest log building, measuring 12 x 16 feet, with a slanting roof and a floor of loose boards. It was located on the east side of the road, opposite from the cobblestone schoolhouse and near where the canal crosses. The log school was apparently built on land owned by either Lansing Bailey or Samuel Lewis. Nancy Bullard, daughter of local resident and Revolutionary War veteran David Bullard, was said to have led classes in the log schoolhouse. In 1826, at the age of 14, Caroline Phipps taught there. Ms. Phipps became a prominent local figure in education after she went on to found the Phipps Union Female Seminary in Albion in 1837.

After the opening of the Erie Canal, the population of Gaines Basin began to grow. The 1820 census indicates that there were 17 persons of school age (5-16 years) living in the Gaines Basin area. The 1830 census shows 30 children in this age range, demonstrating the need for a larger schoolhouse to serve the community. To address the need for more classroom space, Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse was built in 1832.¹⁰ The land for the new building was part of the farm of Amos and Mary Clift, who allowed the school to be built on their property and, later, in 1868 deeded the land to School District #2. In footprint, it is over four times the size of the log building it replaced. It is located on the west side of the road, a little farther from the canal than the log building, which may have been kept in use while the cobblestone building was constructed.

The substantial increase in size and sophistication of the second schoolhouse shows the desire of the growing, and increasingly more affluent population to provide a well-built facility for the purpose of educating their children in the manner common to the era. What was described as a log “shanty” was replaced by a sturdy and attractive cobblestone building. This progression of buildings also follows the trend identified by author and researcher Andrew Guiliford that “an important unifying element of design and building of country schools was that they tended to follow a progression within each community of replacement by a sturdier and more pleasing specimen as resources would permit.”¹¹

The choice of cobblestone construction indicated the desire of the residents to have a school physically superior to the previous one and to have it become a more permanent fixture to serve the local community. The choice of stone of any type was a significant decision, as an 1844 study of all New York State schools found only 5.6

⁹ Ibid., 10.

¹⁰ Signor, *Landmarks of Orleans County*, 214.

¹¹ Andrew Guiliford, *America's Country Schoolhouses* (Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1984), 166.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 4

percent of them were constructed of stone.¹² The Town of Gaines, however, showed a strong preference for stone schoolhouses, as six of the eventual twelve were built of cobblestone between the years of 1832 and 1849.¹³ Gaines had a particularly high rate of stone schoolhouses even for Orleans County, as in 1845 only 18 percent of the 132 schoolhouses in Orleans County were of stone.¹⁴

The original heat source would have been a wood burning stove, which was likely located against the west wall, as a 1902 photo shows a chimney at the rear of the building. It is presumed that Schoolhouse #2's heating system was upgraded from firewood to a coal burning stove in 1879, as an expense ledger indicates the purchase of a new stove and three ton of coal that year, but only one dollar's worth of firewood. At the time, coal stoves were seen as more efficient and providing cleaner heat for the students, as well as eliminating the labor required to obtain, split and pile firewood. There is no stove in the building at this time, although a hole for the vent is still present on the upper portion of the interior western wall. As built, the interior of the school was one large open space, as was common for most nineteenth-century schools in New York. About 1885 a minor modification was made to the floorplan when two utility spaces, just inside the door, were divided off from the original classroom. These accommodated storage for coal, for coats, and for the school library and supplies. It is common for one-room school houses to have storage and cloak rooms toward the front entry door, so this alteration reflects a common upgrade made to many buildings.

The building served continuously as the district's school from 1832 to 1944. While most district records are lost, an expense ledger for the school spanning the years 1879 to 1927 does exist.¹⁵ It indicates that some masonry repair work was done by Cyrus Witherel in 1884-85. Witherel was a well-known cobblestone mason in the area. Deciphered from this ledger are the names of some of the teachers and the salaries paid to them. These records indicate that there were both summer and winter sessions and that there was only one teacher at a time.

August 1879: Miss Holt, June school, 11 weeks \$38.40

March 1881: Frank Mannimum, 16 weeks, winter term \$76.00

August 1881: Miss Menniman, 12 weeks, summer term, \$48.00

1882: Sarah Bradley, 17 weeks, \$85.00 and Lillian Bacon, 12 weeks, \$48.00

¹² Henry Barnard, *School Architecture; or Contributions to the Improvement of School-houses of the United States, Second Edition*. (New York: A.S. Barnes, 1848), 17.

¹³ Six districts in the town of Gaines (1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 11) chose to construct cobblestone schoolhouses. The schoolhouses of districts 1 and 11 now exist as private residences. The District 4 school is a meeting hall for a motorcycle club. District 5's is a museum on the complex of the Cobblestone Society. District 7's cobblestone schoolhouse was demolished and replaced by another schoolhouse. Districts 2 & 5 Cobblestone Schoolhouses are the most intact of any of the one-room schoolhouses in the town of Gaines and best demonstrate the character of the relatively uncommon cobblestone one-room schoolhouse. Other districts with extant (non-cobblestone) schoolhouses are Districts 3 & 9 which are now private residences; District 6, currently used for agricultural storage; District 8 currently the Shiloh Baptist Church; and District 10 which is used for farm labor housing.

¹⁴ S. Young, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools* (Albany: Carroll & Cook, 1845), 472.

¹⁵ The Town Clerk's office burnt in 1910 causing the loss of the records stored there. The ledger book was found in a private home.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 5

1886-87: Miss Pitcher, \$90
November, 1888: Lizzie Balcom, \$16.50
1890-91: Miss Lina Lovewell, 20 weeks, \$100
June 5 and 30, 1890: Hattie Mason, \$27.16 and \$49.84
March, 1892: Hattie Mason, \$123.88
July 29, 1892: Hattie Mason, \$80.12

After the School Closing

In 1944, the decision was made to send the students of District # 2 to Albion for instruction. Although Schoolhouse #2 was no longer used as a schoolhouse, the building remained in the possession of the school district and was used as the site of the annual meetings. The main purpose of these meetings was to vote to continue sending students to the central school rather than using the Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse.

After the schoolhouse was closed, the Albion School District looked at selling off the property. However, when Amos and Mary Clift had donated the land to the district in 1868, it had come with the proviso that when the school district was done using the property, it should revert to the Clifts or their heirs or assigns.¹⁶ It was a common local practice to allow a schoolhouse to be built on private property, generally farmland, if that was the most convenient location for district children, and such parcels were often later conveyed to school districts. In 1868, with Amos Clift in his eighties, it appears he wished to protect the school district from potentially losing permission to use the property and deeded it, with the aforementioned provision, to the district.

Unable to sell the property, the school district honored the 1868 deed and transferred it to the heir of Amos Clift, Charles W. Clift. However, the surrounding property was no longer in the possession of the Clift family, having been sold to Isidore and Enrichetta Dilodovico. This made the small piece of property on which the schoolhouse sat of little value to Charles Clift. Charles and his wife, Anna, executed a quit-claim deed transferring the property to the Dilodovicos in 1948.¹⁷ The Dilodovicos used the schoolhouse for agricultural storage. Subsequently, the Dilodovico's land was sold to the Panek family, which continued to occasionally use the building for storage.

Recognizing the historic value of the schoolhouse, the Paneks decided to donate it to the Orleans County Historical Association, finalizing the transaction in 2016. The association has begun repairs and stabilization with the plan of using the building as its headquarters and a museum. At the time of nomination, members have cleaned debris from the building and site, repaired rafters, re-shingled the roof and repaired windows.¹⁸ They

¹⁶ *Liber 67* (Albion, NY: Orleans County Clerk's Office), 385.

¹⁷ *Liber 228* (Albion, NY: Orleans County Clerk's Office), 50.

¹⁸ At the time of the historical association's first involvement, in 2015, all the window openings were boarded up. Some window sash were damaged and much of the glass was broken. Time did not permit repair prior to winter, so storm sash found stored in the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 6

have also installed a roadside historical marker. A volunteer has restored the wooden desk and chair found in the building and believed to be from the last use as a school room.

History of Early Education in Gaines

As the town of Gaines developed in the early nineteenth century, the growing population, including an increasing number of children, spurred the desire for education beyond the home. The settlement was originally a part of Genesee County, but that county was unable to support, or help support, a school on the far away ridge. In 1813, the settlers decided that they must establish their own school. Pioneer settler Daniel Gates volunteered a log building on his property for this purpose. A plea went to all the settlers to loan any school books they had for the use of the school. Those who sent children to school would pay the school master, Orin Gleason. A few nearby neighbors agreed to furnish wood for fuel. The greatest drawback of this first schoolhouse was the distance that some of the children had to walk to school. From Fairhaven (present day Childs) to the schoolhouse would be three miles to walk twice a day.¹⁹ Over time, residents established more schools, in dedicated buildings or elsewhere, locating them convenient to population centers. Formal school districts were not established until 1819.

The earliest Town of Gaines schools are described in the *Historical Album of Orleans County* as follows:

“A log cabin, twelve feet square, which had been built by a settler to secure exemption from the payment of the interest on installments during the first two years of occupancy, in the premises since known as the Ezra Hunter farm (west of Gaines Village on the Ridge Road near Eagle Harbor Road), was the first building used for school purposes in the town of Gaines. In such a building, Orin Gleason taught the first school in the winter of 1813. The first summer school was taught by Miss Rebecca Adams.

The first school in East Gaines was taught in a log house erected for that purpose, south of the Ridge Road, on the west branch of the creek, near the present residence of William Billings, by Hannah Strickland, in 1815. The next term was taught by Ira H. Beach. The first schoolhouse in the adjoining district on the south was located on Albert Randall’s farm.

A log house, built in 1816, was the first schoolhouse in the Bullard District. It was located on the farm of John Hude, north of the Ridge Road. The first teacher was Miss Anna Frisbee. In 1822, a new site for a schoolhouse was chosen on the division line between the farms of William Bullard and Daniel Pratt, and a brick building erected. Afterward, this building was removed, and the present stone schoolhouse erected a little further west.

building were used to cover some of the window openings. These were reconstructed as needed, in kind, and scraped, primed and painted, with any broken glass replaced. Original window sash have been retained for future restoration.

¹⁹ J. Howard Pratt, *Saga of the Ridge* (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1983), 68-9.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 7

A school was opened in Frederick Holensburgh's corn house at Five Corners, by Miss Ruth Haywood, in 1817. The first schoolhouse in the district was erected four years later on the site of the present building. Walter Fairfield taught the first term in it.

In Fair Haven, near the site of the present stone building, a schoolhouse was built in 1817.²⁰ John McOmber was one of the first teachers. About this time a schoolhouse was erected a short distance west of the Burgess residence (between Gaines Corners and Fair Haven) by the citizens of the Gaines and Fair Haven districts, for the use of both districts.

A board schoolhouse, 18 by 22 feet square, on the Ridge, a few rods east of the crossing of Otter Creek, was the first erected in West Gaines. It was rudely finished, and had two windows at each side and a door at one end, while at the other end was a chimney. After Gaines was organized into school districts, in 1819, this house was removed further west, and afterward destroyed by fire, and for a time subsequent to that event school was taught in a log building at Sheldon's Corners, as West Gaines was called at that time.

The first schoolhouse at Gaines Basin [location of the nominated school] was built in 1823. It was a log shanty with a slanting "shed roof", and a floor of loose boards, which was located on the east side of the road, just below where the canal now passes. The first teacher was Miss Nancy Bullard.²¹

The first opportunity for higher education was given by the founding of the Gaines Academy in 1827; the academy was admitted to the Regents of the University of the State of New York in 1830. The academy was successful and prosperous until the founding of other academies in the county drew the students elsewhere.²²

While documentation has not been located for the number of school districts first established in 1819, it appears likely that there were at least six: Gaines Basin, Gaines Village, West Gaines, East Gaines, Fair Haven and Five Corners. Additional school districts were required as the population expanded into new areas of the town in order to accommodate more students as well as to locate schools within walking distance from their homes. By at least 1829, Gaines had nine districts.²³ By 1837, there were 11 districts.²⁴ And by 1875, the final twelve districts had been established.²⁵

Educational Trends as Related to Gaines Basin

Education in the colonial period in New York State consisted of elite and expensive private academies and tutors or, alternatively, was seen as a function of the church. However, by the end of eighteenth century, New

²⁰ Fair Haven was later renamed Childs.

²¹ *Historical Album of Orleans County, NY*. (NY: Sanford & Co., 1879), 183.

²² Signor, *Landmarks of Orleans County*, 188-9.

²³ A. C. Flagg, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools* (Albany: Croswell & Benthuyesen, 1829), 30.

²⁴ John A. Dix, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools* (Albany: State of New York, 1837), 55.

²⁵ *Atlas of Niagara and Orleans County, NY* (Philadelphia: D. G. Beers and Co., 1875), 76.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 8

York State was among the preeminent proponents of public schooling. In 1795 the state required towns to elect school commissioners and set aside financial aid to establish districts across the state. It did not, however, address the issue of cost. In 1805, the legislature established a fund for the support of common schools by allocating from the proceeds of sale of state lands and other assets. In 1812, a landmark law established common school districts and authorized distribution of interest from the Common School Fund to local towns to encourage and support the establishment of schools. Officials were directed to lay out districts from which the voters would elect trustees to oversee the distribution of state funds. This was required by law in 1814, although Gaines did not establish districts until 1819. The 1814 legislation also required that if the cost of instruction exceeded the combination of state funds and local property funds, the difference was to be made up by charging tuition or "rates." These became known as rate bills and were onerous to parents. They also created a controversy that lasted for decades in that the system still did not provide an education available to all, regardless of the means to pay. Many poor children were kept out of school due to the cost. Opposition to this was long standing and widespread. In 1849 the legislature offered a referendum on the provision of tuition-free schools. This was passed by voters in 1849 and 1850. But in 1851, the legislature repealed the free school law, instituting a statewide property tax of \$800,000 on the then 59 counties of the state. This combined with the earlier established fund amounted to an allocation of over \$1,000,000 for the support of schools. The battle for truly free public schools was not won until 1867.²⁶

Statistics from Whitney Cross's book *The Burned Over District* show how western New York, in general, and Orleans County, in particular, developed in the first half of the nineteenth century in comparison to other areas in the state and nation. Western New York consistently sent more children to school than did the eastern half of the state. As early as 1829, western New York counties provided more local support for schools than the median for the state. Cross also notes that the overwhelming majority of girls between the ages of 5 and 16 in western New York attended school for some part of each year. He notes that, in general, this area of New York evidenced greater pleasure time, more extensive educational opportunities and a population sensitive to social injustices. During 1829 in Orleans County, more than 112 children between ages 5 and 16 were taught for each 100 residents; the New York average was 103. Ten years later, Orleans County's average stayed the same, yet the state's average dropped to 97. Statistics also show that from 1829 to 1839 Orleans County spent more on education than the state average. In 1840 less than 0.6 percent of the county's population over 20 years of age was illiterate while the rate for New York State was 1.8 percent.²⁷

While the debate over free access to education continued, the quality of educational facilities was increasingly being criticized. Education researcher William W. Cutler states that "in the United States the schoolhouse has always been expected to play a direct role in the learning process. Since the early nineteenth century both

²⁶ Christopher B. Manaseri, *Keeping School: One-room Schoolhouse Preservation in the Greater Finger Lakes Region of New York State* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertation Services, 2004), 22.

²⁷ Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned Over District* (New York Harper Torchbooks, 1950), Chapter 2.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 9

educators and laymen have believed that the school building should contribute to the moral education of the young.”²⁸

Nineteenth-century inspectors of New York schools found that the majority of buildings were severely lacking and not conducive to a healthy learning environment. In 1844 it was reported that a third of all schools were “to all intents and purposes, unfit for the reception of man or beast.”²⁹ Educational reformers argued that crowded schoolhouses with primitive lighting, heating or even shelter were an impediment to learning. While Schoolhouse #2 was constructed slightly prior to most published critiques of school buildings, the choice to replace the previous log schoolhouse with this one built of sturdy material was likely influenced by these growing concerns. One particular influence may have been the activities of the American Institute of Instruction, which conducted a program called “Introductory Discourse and Lectures” in Boston in August 1831. This program addressed many concerns over the shortcomings of the educational system, including the inadequacies of school buildings. Reforms to rural schools were advocated in the mid to late nineteenth century by the educational reform campaigns of Henry Barnard, Horace Mann and others. These ideas stressed that the design and condition of the school building contributed to or reduced the effectiveness of the instruction conducted within. Concerns included the physical environment, such as geographic location, interior lighting, seating, heating and ventilation, as well as the attitude of the community regarding the importance of the building and its purpose. As for construction, Barnard warned against resorting to the cheapest materials available and stated that as a building, “No public edifice more deserved, or will better repay the skill, labor, and expense, which may be necessary to obtain this objective for here the health, tastes, manner, minds, and morals of each successive generation of children will be, in great measure, determined for time and eternity.”³⁰ Design of the school building was advocated to be large enough to include a library, blackboards, desks and a separate cloak room.

The most common nineteenth-century rural district school house was of one room with children of many ages being educated, usually by a single teacher. In 1844, over 94 percent of New York State schoolhouses were of one room only.³¹ Schoolhouse #2 followed this pattern of a single classroom until it closed, as centralization overtook the district approach around the time of World War II.

While modest, the late nineteenth century construction of utility rooms within the building was in keeping with the educational reforms occurring throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The utility rooms are a storage area and a cloak room that also served as a library. These are separated by an entrance hall leading from the exterior door to the classroom. The storage space was used for coal to heat the school and likely for the

²⁸ William W. Cutler, “Cathedral of Culture: The Schoolhouse in American Educational Thought and Practice Since 1820,” *History of Educational Quarterly* 29 (1989):16.

²⁹ Guiliford, *America’s Country Schoolhouses*, 159.

³⁰ Henry Barnard, *School Architecture*, 4th edition (New York: A.S. Barnes, 1850), 41.

³¹ Henry Barnard, *School Architecture*; 2nd, 17.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 10

summer storage of storm sash. The move from wood heat to coal heat and the use of additional window coverings in the winter demonstrate that the community acknowledged that the schoolhouse needed to be maintained at a comfortable temperature to facilitate the ability of the children to learn. The separate cloak room reduced confusion and distraction. The addition of a library space correlated with the move to make more educational material available for the enlightenment of the children.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, there was a movement to consolidate school districts.³² This grew out of continued concern over the condition of existing school buildings. Centralization facilitated larger buildings with preferred features such as graded classrooms, gymnasiums, lunch rooms, auditoriums and better bathroom facilities. The advent of motorized buses allowed for easier transportation of students, negating the need for schools to be within walking distant of the students' homes. Beginning in the 1920s, the schools in the town of Gaines closed one by one as centralization into the school in the Village of Albion took place. District #2 residents voted to send their students to Albion beginning in 1944. By 1953 the Albion Central School District was completed and made official by vote of the area residents.³³

Architectural Significance of Cobblestone Construction

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone School House embodies the distinctive characteristics of the cobblestone method of construction (as discussed in MPDF *Cobblestone Architecture in New York State*) in the use of cobbles laid in horizontal rows and bonded with limestone mortar, and the use of stone quoins to decorate and stabilize the corners of the building.

Cobblestone construction is one of the less common American vernacular building types. Originating in the area of Rochester, New York, most of New York's cobblestone buildings were built between 1825 and 1860 from the Ice Age residue of glacially rounded stones.³⁴ Robert Rodabush made a remarkably thorough inventory of cobblestone buildings in New York State from 1976 to 1980. Of the 660 buildings he found still in existence at that time, the heaviest concentrations were found in the counties of Wayne, Monroe, Ontario and Orleans, all located south of Lake Ontario. The vast majority of buildings were residential; however, buildings designed for commercial, educational, agricultural, and other uses were also present. Only 45 of the 660 buildings (7 percent) were for educational use.

Rodabush identified 90 cobblestone buildings in Orleans County, with 28 of them being in the town of Gaines. Five of the Gaines buildings were schoolhouses. Today all five are extant; however, only the District #2 and District #5 schools remain configured as schoolhouses. The District #5 schoolhouse is operated as a museum at the Cobblestone Society and Museum and is a contributing building to the Cobblestone Historic District, a National Historic Landmark district in the hamlet of Childs, town of Gaines. The others have been converted to

³² Cutler, "Cathedral of Culture", 8.

³³ Delia Robinson, *Historic Gaines*, 47.

³⁴ Some were made of lake washed cobbles collected at the shore of Lake Ontario.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 11

residential or other use. A sixth cobblestone school house in the town of Gaines was razed prior to Rodabush's study.

It is remarkable that half of the school districts in Gaines constructed schoolhouses of cobblestone. However, this was based on both the local availability of the material as well as the nineteenth-century goal of making schoolhouses places of pride in their community. Cobblestone construction was stylish in this area. It fit with residents' feeling that Gaines was a place of prosperity and advancement. It also made good use of locally available materials, such as field and lake stone, locally quarried Medina Sandstone, and lime for mortar from locally quarried limestone. Cobblestone construction was a preferred building method with a distinctive style in this region of New York State. While most cobblestone buildings are residential, Orleans County once had twenty cobblestone schoolhouses, indicating the local popularity of this construction method for school buildings.³⁵

The exterior of cobblestone buildings display small rounded stones laid in precise horizontal bands, usually carefully outlined with mortar shaped in a decorative manner. While architectural styles were widely disseminated through the use of pattern books, there is very little contemporary literature describing the cobblestone method of construction. In fact, some sources claim that masons attempted to keep their methods secret. However, it became popular in this small area of western New York, perhaps by word of mouth or by observing other buildings. There are many different stylistic treatments used, created by variations of size and orientation of the stones and the profile of mortar seen at the surface. Individual masons developed their own style or copied ones they had seen, perhaps modifying them.

The area of Gaines has a concentration of buildings using one notable mortar design characterized by the use of a hexagonal outlining of each stone. The side walls of the schoolhouse are done in this local style. Schmidt described this style in his book *Cobblestone Masonry* as follows:

The cobblestones are laid in horizontal courses, and each cobblestone is enclosed with a hexagonal flat "V" shaped depression or sinkage, with the vertical sides longer than the upper and lower sides. The resulting wall surface is very flat, without emphasis on the horizontal joints. These are zig-zag lines formed by the hexagonal pattern....The result is a diaper or "all-over" pattern with highlights and shadows on the individual cobblestones as well as on the sloping sides of the hexagonal sinkage which encloses the cobblestone.³⁶

This decorative masonry design on the side elevations of the building identify it as being an early example of Schmidt's classification as a Middle Period example, a time when masons experimented with new methods and patterns for laying the cobblestone walls. This period is generally considered to have existed c. 1835 to c. 1845. The stones of the schoolhouse are water washed, glacial deposit in a variety of sizes and colors, laid

³⁵ *The Journal Register* (Medina, NY), "Rethinking of Old Orleans," June 4, 1987.

³⁶ Carl F. Schmidt, *Cobblestone Masonry*. (Scottsville, NY: self-published, 1966), 5

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 8 Page 12

three and one-half courses per quoin height. The quoins, door lintel and sill are of a striated Medina Sandstone. These stones would have been collected and quarried locally.

In fact, there is a large, elongated pile of glacier deposited stones near the schoolhouse. These would have been gathered as the land was used for agricultural purposes. This particular pile has an unusual assortment of sizes; there are no stones of the size used to build the school house but many larger or smaller. It is possible that this was the source of the stones used in the schoolhouse.

While the overall number of cobblestone school houses is not large, it is a sensible choice for a community along the southern shore of Lake Ontario deciding to build a schoolhouse with the hope of long use. The materials were available locally and may have even been donated by community members, perhaps in lieu of monetary contributions. In the case of the stones utilized in Schoolhouse #2, the stones needed to be removed from the fields for agricultural reasons anyway. The sorting of the stone by size was usually done as a group activity. Members of the community, including children, could come together to do this work while enjoying the social aspect of the gathering. The stone buildings are fireproof, a particular concern at a time when fire was used for heating. They do not need painting, thus reducing the need for annual maintenance. The use of cobblestone provided the school district with a sturdy, attractive building that did not create excessive ongoing maintenance issues.

Integrity

The building maintains a high degree of integrity. The building has clear historic associations with educational history in the town of Gaines. It remains in its original location in a rural/agricultural setting without significant changes to its design. It retains its distinctive original materials and exhibits a high level of craftsmanship, including a distinctive local mortaring technique. The only loss of materials is the original window sash, the most standard element of the building. The building, inside and out maintains the feeling of a nineteenth century rural school house.

The cobbles and mortar are in good condition with some loss of decorative mortar near the ground. The roof was replaced in 2015, replacing an earlier asphalt shingle roof in order to stabilize and protect the building from further damage. The interior of the building shows distress from decades of vacancy and use as an agricultural storage building. There are small areas of missing floor boards. There are several areas where plaster has fallen revealing the spilt (or accordion) lathe. However, it is still clear that the purpose of the large area was for teaching.

Gaines Basin is no longer the thriving community of the past, but it retains much of the feel of that day. Nineteenth-century houses are surrounded by agricultural fields. The canal is the primary feature of the area and is still traversed by a one lane bridge. The schoolhouse plot has mature trees. It is easy to imagine local children walking into the school to learn or enjoying recess in the lawn.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 9 Page 1

Bibliography:

- Barnard, Henry. *School Architecture; or Contributions to the Improvement of School-houses of the United States, Second Edition*. New York: A.S. Barnes, 1848.
- Barnard, Henry. *School Architecture, 4th Edition*. New York: A.S. Barnes, 1850.
- Cross, Whitney R. *The Burned Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850*. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1950.
- Cutler, William W. "Cathedral of Culture: The Schoolhouse in American Educational Thought and Practice Since 1820," *History of Education Quarterly* 29, 1989.
- Gazetteer and Business Directory of Orleans County, NY*. Syracuse, NY: Hamilton Child, 1869.
- Gibson, Irene W. *Orleans County History, Past to Present, Bicentennial Year 1976*. Albion, NY: Orleans County Board of Supervisors, 1976.
- Guiliford, Andrew. *America's Country Schoolhouses*. Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1984.
- Historical Album of Orleans County, NY*. NY: Sanford & Co., 1879.
- Historical Sketches of the Village and Township of Gaines*. Gaines: Centennial Committee, 1909.
- Horner Harlan Hoyt. *Education in New York State 1784-1954*. Albany, NY: The University of New York, The State Education Department, 1954.
- Manaseri, Christopher B. *Keeping School: One-room Schoolhouse Preservation in the Greater Finger Lakes Region of New York State*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Dissertation Services. 2004
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 2002.
- Robinson, Delia. *Cobblestone Buildings of Orleans County, NY*. Sanborn, NY: Sharp Printing, 1996.
- Robinson, Delia. *Historic Gaines 1809-1984*. Gaines, NY: Historic Gaines Jubilee Committee, 1984.
- Roudabush, Robert L. *Cobblestone Buildings in New York State*. unpublished survey on file at the Wenrich Library of The Landmark Society of Western New York, 1976-1980.
- Schmidt, Carl F. *Cobblestone Architecture*. Scottsville, NY: self-published, 1944.
- Schmidt, Carl F. *Cobblestone Masonry*. Scottsville, NY: self-published, 1966.
- Signor, Isaac S. *Landmarks of Orleans County New York*, Syracuse: D. Mason & Co., 1894.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 9 Page 2

The Sesquicentennial of the Town of Gaines, Orleans County, State of New York, 1809 – 1959. Gaines, NY:
Sesquicentennial Committee, 1959.

Warren, Susanne R. *Context Study: The Schools of New York State – Development of the School as a Building Type.* Ithaca, NY: NYS OPRHP, 1990.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 10 Page 1

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is indicated with a heavy line on the attached maps with scale.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries have been drawn to correspond to the current legal parcel boundaries of the school. These boundaries encompass the land historically associated with the Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse, but are the current legal boundaries. Initially, the school had a parcel that was 2 chains by 1 chain (132 feet by 66 feet). It's unknown exactly when the parcel size was altered, but when the property was transferred to the Orleans County Historical Association in 2016 the parcel measured 234 feet by 75 feet. Given the rural location, it's likely that this land around the school was historically in use by the school as a play yard and recreational area. The additional land included in the current parcel will be utilized for the reuse of the school, serving a new septic system that would be installed.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 2

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

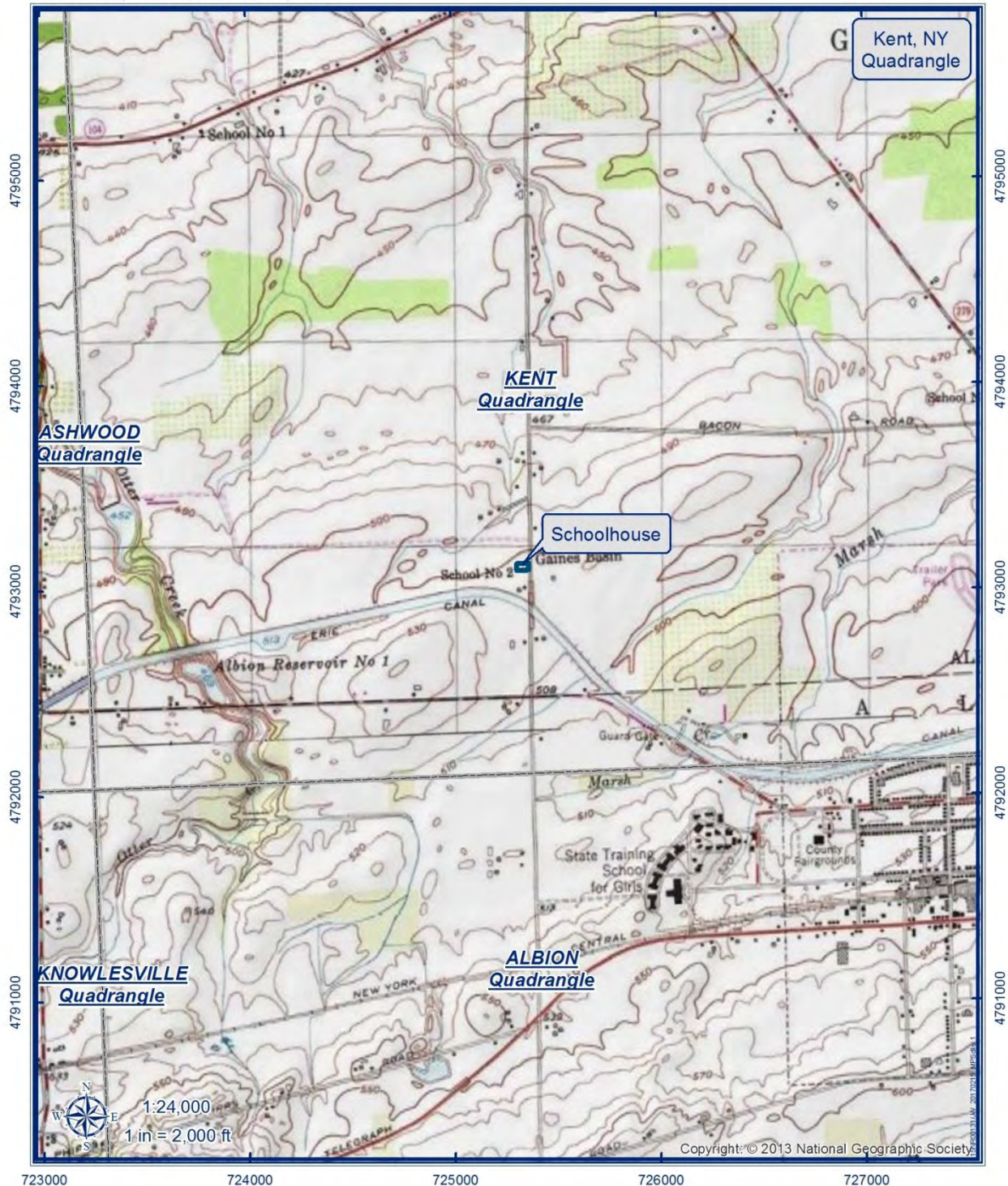
Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse
Gaines, Orleans Co., NY

3286 Gaines Basin Road
Albion, NY 14411



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 3

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

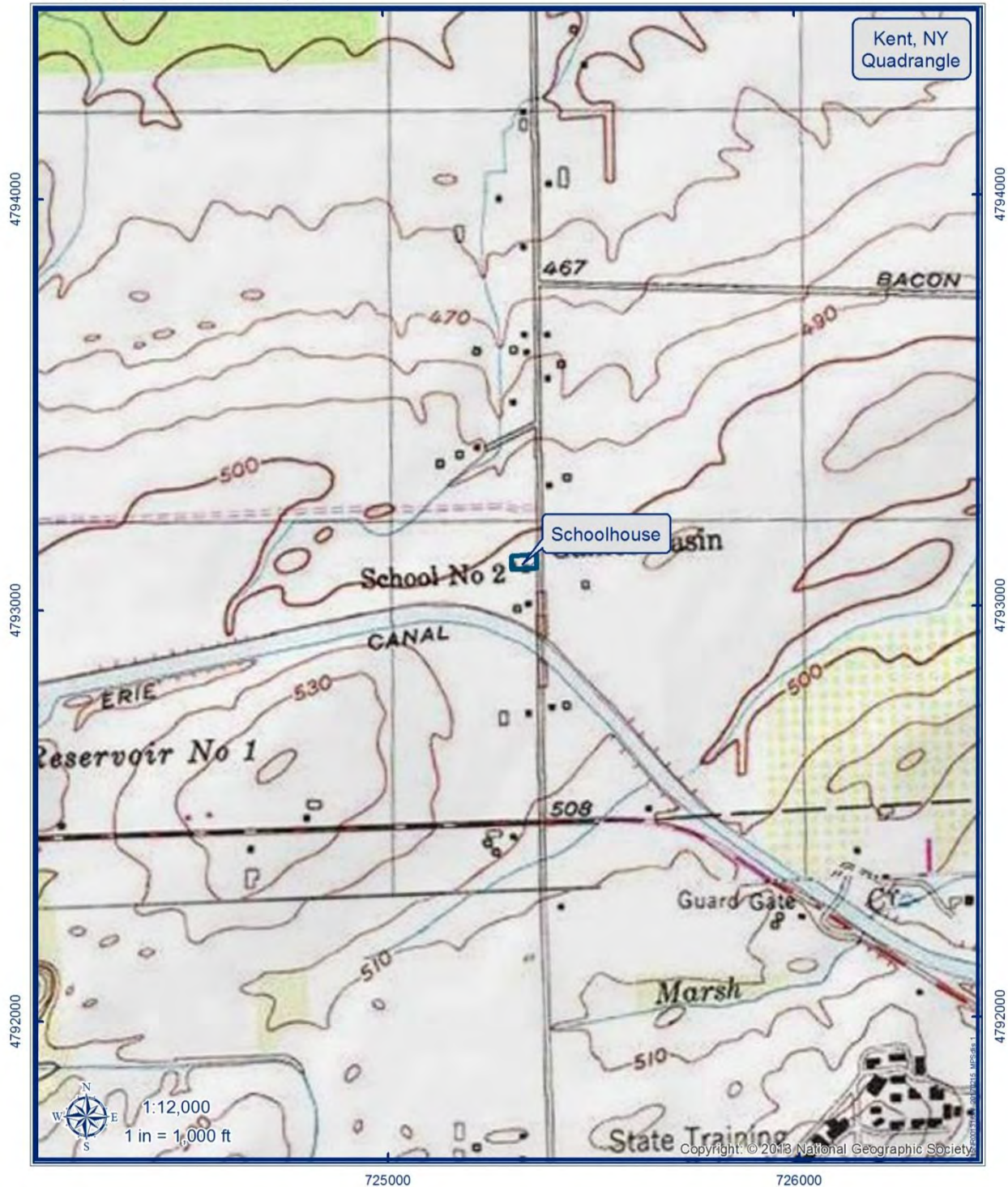
Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse
Gaines, Orleans Co., NY

3286 Gaines Basin Road
Albion, NY 14411



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



Schoolhouse



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 4

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

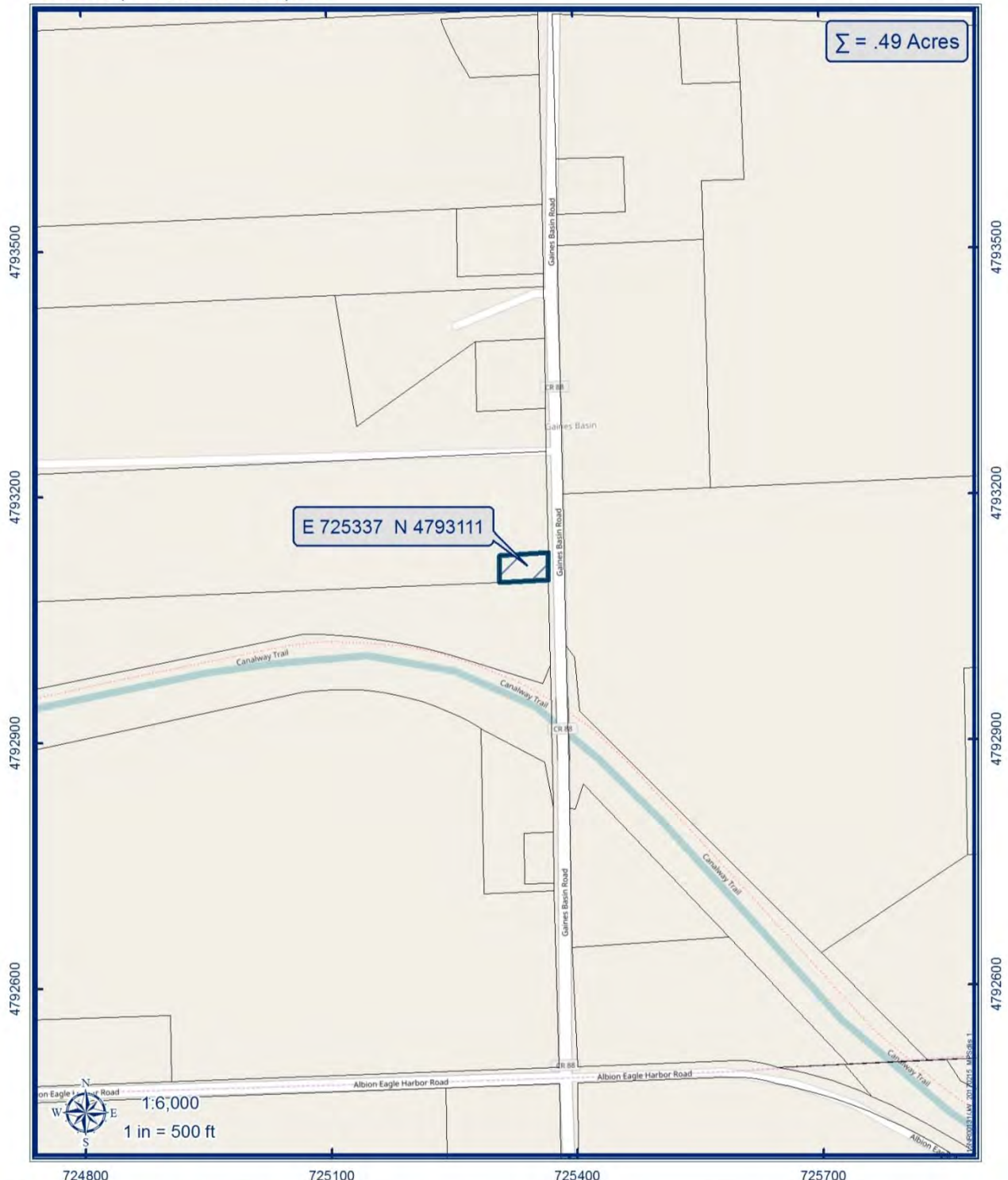
Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse
Gaines, Orleans Co., NY

3286 Gaines Basin Road
Albion, NY 14411



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 145 290 580 Feet



Schoolhouse



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 5

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property
Orleans County, New York
County and State

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse
Gaines, Orleans Co., NY

3286 Gaines Basin Road
Albion, NY 14411



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter

0 145 290 580 Feet



Schoolhouse



NEW YORK STATE OF OPPORTUNITY
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 6

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property
Orleans County, New York
County and State

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse
Gaines, Orleans Co., NY

3286 Gaines Basin Road
Albion, NY 14411



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 17N
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North American 1983
Units: Meter



Schoolhouse



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 11 Page 1

Additional Information

Photo Log

Name of Property: Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse
County: Orleans County
State: New York
Photographer: Erin Anheier
Date Photographed: September 2015 through February 2017
Location of Original Digital Files: Peebles Island Resource Ctr, PO Box 189, Waterford, NY 12188
Number of Photographs: 24

NY_Orleans County_Cobblestone Buildings of NYS_Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse_0001
Looking northwest

NY_Orleans County_Cobblestone Buildings of NYS_Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse_0002
Looking west at primary east elevation

NY_Orleans County_Cobblestone Buildings of NYS_Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse_0003
Looking south at north elevation

NY_Orleans County_Cobblestone Buildings of NYS_Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse_0004
Looking east, showing rear west elevation

NY_Orleans County_Cobblestone Buildings of NYS_Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse_0005
Looking north at south elevation, showing wood door to access coal room

NY_Orleans County_Cobblestone Buildings of NYS_Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse_0006
Detail of north elevation, showing masonry work detail

NY_Orleans County_Cobblestone Buildings of NYS_Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse_0007
Interior, looking into northeast corner of cloak room

NY_Orleans County_Cobblestone Buildings of NYS_Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse_0008
Interior, looking at south wall of cloak room, showing storage

NY_Orleans County_Cobblestone Buildings of NYS_Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse_0009
Interior, looking south into coal bin area

NY_Orleans County_Cobblestone Buildings of NYS_Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse_0010
Interior, main classroom, looking east towards entry door

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 11 Page 2

NY_Orleans County_Cobblestone Buildings of NYS_Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse_0011
Interior, main classroom, looking west, showing "C.L. '39" in plaster work (center)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

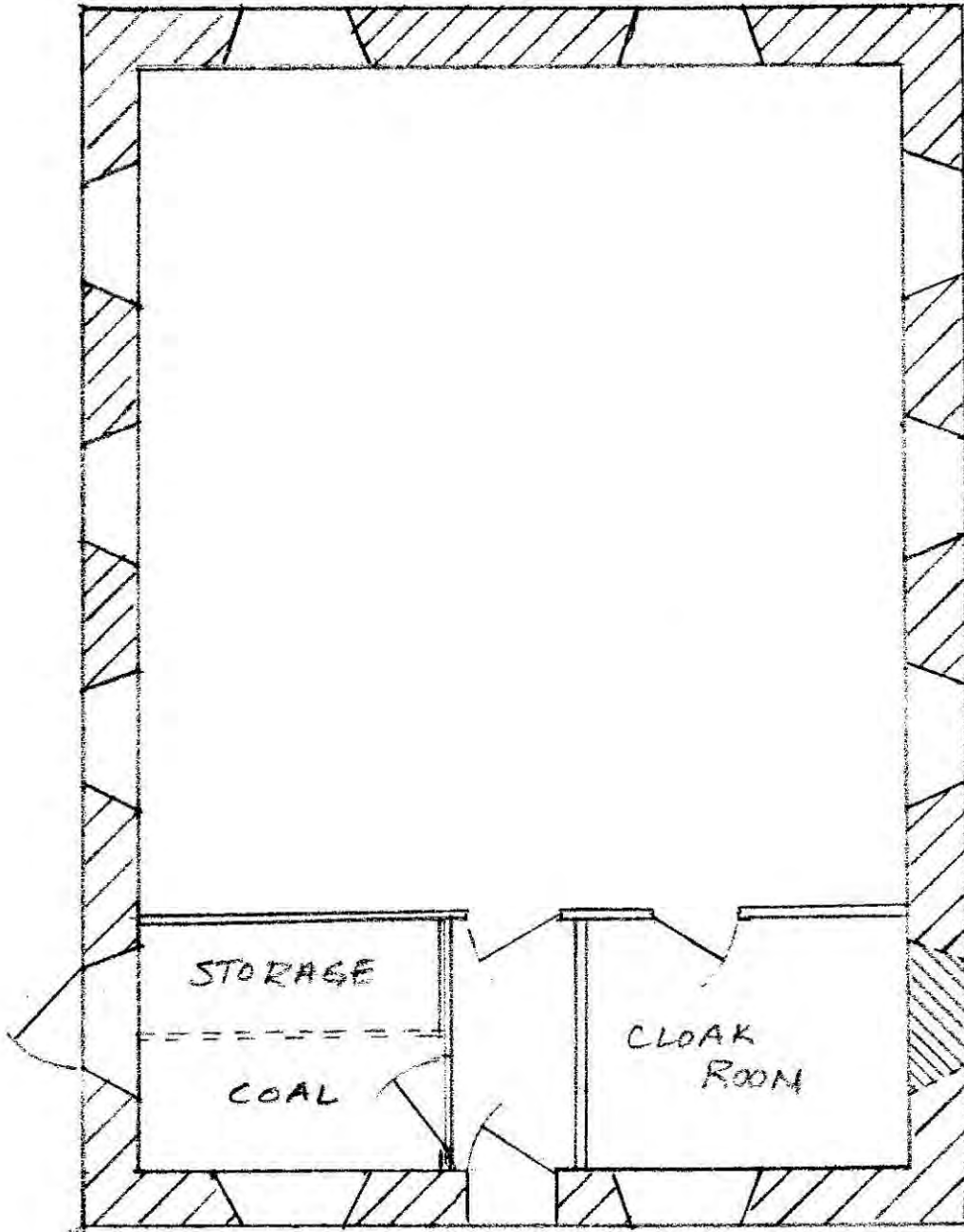
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property
Orleans County, New York
County and State

Section 11 Page 3

Current Floor Plan:



North →

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 11 Page 4

Historic Maps:



Detail, Map of Niagara and Orleans Counties (1860)

Showing the extent of school district number 2 in the town of Gaines.

Note that the schoolhouse is located just north of the Erie Canal in the Gaines Basin community.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Section 11 Page 5

Name of Property
Orleans County, New York
County and State



Detail, Niagara and Orleans County Atlas (1875)

Showing the extent of school district number 2 in the town of Gaines.

Note that the schoolhouse is located just north of the Erie Canal in the Gaines Basin community.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Section 11 Page 6



Detail, Orleans County Atlas (1913)

Showing relative location of schoolhouse number 2 in the Gaines Basin area.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 7

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State

Historic Images:



Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse (1902)
From the files of the Orleans County Historian, Albion, NY

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 11 Page 8

Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Orleans County, New York

County and State



Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse (c. 1960)

From the collection of C.W. Lattin, Albion, NY



ORIG
IECT
1/10





















Q1-39

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Alexis Abernathy Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2236 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

CHAIRMAN
MENTAL HEALTH &
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

COMMITTEE MEMBER
CITIES
CIVIL SERVICE AND PENSIONS
CORPORATIONS, AUTHORITIES
AND COMMISSIONS
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
HIGHER EDUCATION
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
VETERANS, HOMELAND SECURITY
AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



ROBERT G. ORTT
SENATOR, 62ND DISTRICT

ALBANY OFFICE:
ROOM 815
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247
(518) 455-2024
FAX: (518) 426-6987

DISTRICT OFFICE:
175 WALNUT STREET, SUITE #6
LOCKPORT, NEW YORK 14094
(716) 434-0680
FAX: (716) 434-3297

Division for Historic Preservation
Peebles Island, PO Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189

March 22, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to support the Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse as it is considered for nomination to the National and State Registers of Historic Places. The history here in Western New York is absolutely worth acknowledging, honoring, and preserving. I thank you for your consideration of the Cobblestone Schoolhouse, and am glad to support its nomination in front of your Board.

Faithfully Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert G. Ortt".

Robert G. Ortt
State Senator, 62nd District



Orleans County Historical Association
To Educate, Promote and Support the Preservation of the
History of Orleans County, N.Y.

PO Box 181
Albion, N.Y. 14411
585-590-0763

Ruth L. Pierpont
Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Division of Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189



I am writing to support the nomination of the Gaines District #2 Cobblestone Schoolhouse for placement in the National Historic Registry.

I am the current president of the Orleans County Historical Association. Our organization has its roots in the 1859 Pioneer Association of Orleans County, the oldest such group in our area.

Consequently, we have undertaken the acquisition and restoration of perhaps the oldest cobblestone structure in Orleans County, a region noted for its cobblestone buildings. Built in 1832, and replacing an early 12' by 14' slant roof log shanty pioneer era schoolhouse, the cobblestone schoolhouse served as Gaines Basin's school and meeting hall for over 112 years. It was abandoned in 1944 when the Albion School District centralized and students could be easily transported to the centrally located village of Albion school buildings. One by one, the twelve school districts of Gaines closed.

The idleness of the old schoolhouse took its toll with a sagging leaking roof, rotting timbers, crumbling masonry and falling plaster walls and broken and boarded up windows. The fact that it was still standing in 2015 is a testimony to the craftsmanship of the masons and carpenters who constructed it. In an exhaustive search for primary source archives, we were able to locate a trustee ledger book inclusive of the years 1879 to 1927. This almost 50 year span gives a wonderful glimpse into the operation of the one room school house of the 19th and early 20th century.

The growth of Gaines Basin as a thriving canal location, an end-destination for incoming settlers and shipping port for Orleans County is evident in reviewing the land and census records of the era. The earliest settler was Lansing Bailey in November 1811. In early spring of 1812 he and his brother Joel "laid up a hovel house of logs, such that we could raise ourselves, with a protruding roof that we could put things under". In all likelihood, this may be the slant roof shanty historians refer to as the first schoolhouse of Gaines Basin. Comparing the location descriptions, one finds a pin point. Into this dwelling Lansing moved his wife and young son. In the fall of 1812, the Baileys built an improved log cabin, which they sold to Samuel Lewis in 1816. The Lewis Family endured in this location and we find the son, James, mentioned several times in the Cobblestone Schoolhouse ledger decades later.

In late winter of 1812, The Bailey brothers accomplished another formidable feat that helped the Gaines Basin Community. Long before they knew the trajectory of the Eire Canal, they cut the road we now refer to as The Gaines Basin Road, from where the canal is now to The Ridge Road. Thus allowing easier communication between the growing village of Gaines Corners and Gaines Basin. This they accomplished in less than half a day. (Arad Thomas, Pioneer History of Orleans County, p. 82)

Between the years of 1820 and 1830, Census records show Gaines Basin more than doubled the number of families and school age eligible children. Also during those years, Miss Caroline Phipps taught there several terms beginning at the age of 14. Miss Phipps went on to attend the Gaines Academy, and to found the world famous Phipps Union Seminary for Women in Albion, 1830.

The obvious need for a larger schoolhouse presented itself and Gaines residents agreed to constructing one of glacial field cobbles from the piles when the land was cleared for farming. The front facade wall of this building with its raised V mortar shows some of the most colorful use of cobblestones with its pink, purple, red, blue and all shades in between. Restoration work on the masonry has followed the original example of its construction.

It is our hope to be able to utilize the building as a meeting place for OCHA and public access museum. Already, numerous school-related artifacts and furniture have been donated to OCHA for display at the schoolhouse. Numerous volunteer hours of labor have been and will continue to be in the offing.

It is with utmost pride and hope that I submit this request to you, that this true historic gem be placed in the National Registry of Historic Places.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Al Capurso". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Al Capurso, BSW
President Orleans County Historical Association
Gaines Town Historian



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

ROSE HARVEY
Commissioner



24 April 2017

Alexis Abernathy
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240

Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Ms. Abernathy:

I am pleased to submit the following six nominations, all on disc, to be considered for listing by the Keeper of the National Register:

The Virginia, Erie County
St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church Complex, Schenectady County
Marshall D. Bice House, Schoharie County
Gaines District #2 Schoolhouse, Orleans County
East Main Street Historic District, Monroe County
Camp Taiga, Hamilton County

Please feel free to call me at 518.268.2165 if you any questions.

Sincerely:

Kathleen LaFrank
National Register Coordinator
New York State Historic Preservation Office