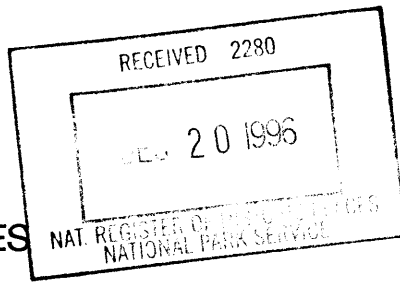


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name: Alberton School

other name/site number: Alberton Elementary School

2. Location

street & number: 216 Railroad

not for publication: n/a
vicinity: n/a

city/town: Alberton

state: Montana

code: MT

county: Mineral

code: 061

zip code: 59820

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 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 X statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

12-16-96

Montana State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency or bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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

 see continuation sheet

 removed from the National Register

 see continuation sheet

 other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Elson A. Beall

1-13-97

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: public-local	Number of Resources within Property	
	Contributing	Noncontributing
Category of Property: building	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> building(s)
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Resources of Alberton, Montana	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> TOTAL

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:	Current Functions:
Education: School	Education: School

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Other: Collegiate
Classical Revival

Materials:

foundation: concrete block
walls: brick
roof: asphalt
other: n/a

Narrative Description

The Alberton School is a 2 1/2-story school building. Built of frame construction with a red brick veneer, the school's rectangular mass is organized into three bays. The building stands on a concrete block foundation with a daylight basement level of poured concrete. There is a large brick chimney in the north end. The school is covered with a flat, built-up roof.

The design for this large building emphasizes the horizontal. The central bay slightly projects and houses a recessed front entrance. Six-over-6, double-hung windows are banded in groups of 2, 3, 4 and 5. The design is capped by a stepped and gabled pediment with metal coping; gables emphasize the bays. The front facade features decorative diamond-pattern concrete blocks in frieze with spandrels and the letters "Alberton School" above the front entry.

At the rear, a gymnasium of concrete block was added in 1957.

Integrity

The historic integrity of this school has been retained due to the survival of the original design and materials, and continuity of use, setting and location. Energy retro-fit measures during recent years has resulted in the replacement, enclosure, and reduction in size of windows on a tremendous number of public school buildings in the state of Montana, which makes the Alberton School outstanding for its retention of complete historic architectural integrity for its period and type of construction. The addition of the gym to the rear, although connected to the original school, reads as a completely separate non-contributing structure. Because of this visual separation, it does not significantly detract from the design integrity of the school building.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Areas of Significance: Education, Architecture

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a

Period(s) of Significance: 1919-1940

Significant Person(s): n/a

Significant Dates: 1919

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder: Ole Bakke, architect

Narrative Statement of Significance

Built in 1919, the Alberton School was the only school in town, serving as both elementary and high school in the community for over 40 years. It is highly significant in the development of educational opportunities and facilities in southern Mineral County from the early to mid-20th century. On a statewide level, it is additionally important as a fine example of the architectural skills of Ole Bakke, a prominent 20th century Montana architect. For these associations it is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places according to Criteria A and C.

When the town of Alberton was founded, the first school was a frame building constructed in 1910. It stood west of the Catholic Church (current Masonic Lodge) until 1916, when it was destroyed by fire. Following the fire, classes were held in various homes in town. Plans were laid for a new school, and for the two years prior to construction of the Alberton School, the Alberton School District #2 had the largest student population in Mineral County. Cost of construction for the new brick building, designed by Ole Bakke, was \$70,000.

The Alberton School was completed in 1919, shortly after the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railway discontinued its division point facilities at Alberton. Although the railroad's decision created financial hardships for the community, the citizens of Alberton realized the necessity of providing a safe and adequate facility for the relatively large number of school children in the town and surrounding area. The construction of the brick and frame school building represents Alberton's transition from a railroad boom town to a more permanent community despite the reality of financial hardship. The construction of this brick school demonstrates the commitment to education and to the town's future. The Alberton School has now served the students of southern Mineral County for over 75 continuous years. From 1919 - 1960 it was the only school for high school students in an approximately 40 square mile area.

Ole Bakke was an architect for a new century, who rose to prominence in Missoula following his arrival there in 1900. Norwegian born, Bakke enlisted as a draftsman and trained with Missoula's preeminent architect, A.J. Gibson. Bakke became the "successor to A.J. Gibson" following Gibson's retirement in 1912-13. In 1920, he took on H.E. Kirkemo as a draftsman, and in the same way, passed on the business to Kirkemo when he returned to Norway in 1921.

During his career, Bakke designed a number of prominent buildings in Missoula, notably the Forestry Building at the University of Montana, the Smead-Simon block downtown. He also designed the Lincoln and Franklin elementary schools. By comparison with the Alberton School, the Lincoln School dates to 1914, and is a smaller, beautifully balanced Arts and Crafts style building of brick and stone. The Franklin School, also built in the 1910s, is an eclectic design reflecting late Victorian stylistic influences.

The design of the Alberton School by Ole Bakke is clearly professional and accomplished. The fine detailing, classical proportions, symmetrical organization and well defined entrance all provide an excellent example of Bakke's skills and achieve an air of permanence and stability within this modest community. The building enjoys considerable prominence in the Alberton landscape as the largest building in the community and the only building to have been constructed of sturdy brick. The rear gymnasium addition, designed by Kalispell architects Fred Brinkman and Percy Lenon, and constructed in 1957, reads as a wholly separate building.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Kinney, Della "Yesteryears in Montana". Unpublished manuscript, 1978.

Mineral County Independent Articles on Alberton School: 26 April 1917, 21 December 1933. Superior, Montana.

See *Historic Resources of Alberton, Montana* MPD.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other -- Specify Repository: ~

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	11	691530	5208550

Legal Location (Township, Range & Section(s)): Located in the NW¼, SW¼, NW¼ of Section 2, T 14N, R23W.

Verbal Boundary Description

The Alberton School is located on Lots 9 - 22, Block 2, West Alberton, Montana.

Boundary Justification

This is the property associated with the Alberton School since its construction in 1919.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: James R. McDonald Architects, P.C.
street & number: P.O. Box 8163 telephone: date: 1986
city or town: Missoula state: MT zip code: 59801

revised by: Mike Koop, SHPO staff, 1986
updated, 1996

Property Owner

name/title: Alberton School District #2
street & number: telephone:
city or town: Alberton state: MT zip code: 59820