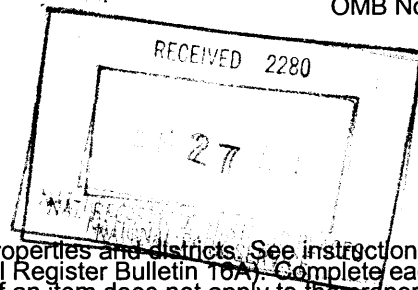


United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction 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 Pleasant Valley School

other names/site number 5LR.792

2. Location

street & number 4032 North County Road 25E [N/A] not for publication

city or town Bellvue [X] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Larimer code 069 zip code 80512

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 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.)

Georgina Cortez State Historic Preservation Officer August 19, 2003 Date
Signature of certifying official/Title

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
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
[] See continuation sheet.

ER Beal Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action
10.11.03

Pleasant Valley School
Name of Property

Larimer County/ Colorado
County/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 count previously listed resources.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

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

Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPS

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/ School

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/ Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/ Rural Schoolhouse

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/ Sandstone

walls STONE/ Sandstone

roof ASPHALT

other _____

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education
Architecture

Periods of Significance
1879-1913

Significant Dates
1879

Significant Person(s)
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:
Colorado Historical Society
City of Fort Collins Advance Planning Office

Pleasant Valley School
Name of Property

Larimer County/ Colorado
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1.	13	484325	4499420
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2.			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
3.			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4.			
	Zone	Easting	Northing

[] See continuation sheet

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 Kelly Barlow, Historic Preservation Intern
organization City of Fort Collins Advance Planning Dept. date May 20, 2003
street & number 281 North College Avenue, P.O. Box 580 telephone (970) 221-6376
city or town Fort Collins state CO zip code 80522

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

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

Additional Items

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

Property Owner

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

name Sherry Graves
street & number 1133 Heatherwood Lane telephone (970) 482-7018
city or town Fort Collins state CO zip code 80525

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

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**Pleasant Valley School
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number 7 Page 1**DESCRIPTION and ALTERATIONS**

Pleasant Valley School is nestled on the Graves Dairy, north of scenic Pleasant Valley, which lies along the Cache la Poudre River northwest of Fort Collins. A narrow, tree-lined dirt road winds from County Road 25E by the school and into the farm. An irrigation ditch with a high embankment flows behind the school and Holsteins graze in pastures to the north, south, and east of the school.

Built in 1879, this one-room schoolhouse is a rectangular-shaped, one-story sandstone building with an asphalt-shingled, front-gabled roof. The roof features wide, overhanging, boxed eaves with white-painted wood fascia, beadboard soffit, no molding, and plain frieze board. A brick chimney protrudes from the center of the roof ridge. Constructed of sandstone from a nearby quarry, the building has a rough-cut, irregular coursed sandstone foundation and walls. The symmetrical façade exhibits the primary entrance to the building with a plain, wood-framed, paneled wood door under a wide white-painted stone lintel. A three-step concrete stoop with no railing leads to the door. Four windows are located on the west elevation and three on the east elevation of the building. They are all single-hung, one-over-one light wood sashes with plain molding and surrounds and stone lintels, some of which are painted white. A door is situated towards the south end of the east side; it is a wood door with a single glass panel towards the top. An area above the door is infilled with wood painted white. A stone lintel surmounts this window that has been converted to a door. The rear (south) elevation has no openings and was painted white at some point, the only elevation to receive this treatment. A concrete walkway begins abruptly northeast of the schoolhouse and splits in two directions; one path leads directly west to the concrete stoop at the main entry while the other heads south and then angles southwestward towards the rear entry door.

The Pleasant Valley School has undergone several significant alterations. The door on the façade (north elevation) of the building is clearly not original, but is fairly recent because a 1987 photograph of the school shows a different door.¹ On the east side of the building, the southern-most window has been removed and changed into a door, eliminating the original symmetry of the elevation. Prior to this alteration, the east and west elevations both displayed four evenly spaced windows; now the east elevation has three windows and a door. Although much of the exterior sandstone and mortar joints are in good to fair condition, in some places, notably under the southern-most window on the east elevation, the property owners have used expanding silicone to repair broken mortar joints.

To accommodate the building's conversion into a residence for farm hands, the property owners modernized the interior in the 1930s and 1940s to include electricity and indoor plumbing; they also separated the one-room schoolhouse into distinct rooms and laid new hardwood flooring over the original. Many years ago, the property owners donated the belfry and bell, historically located at the south end of the roof's peak, to the Church of Christ in Bellvue, its current location.² Despite the alterations to the building, Pleasant Valley School still retains much of its integrity. In its original location, the schoolhouse retains the qualities of design, workmanship, feeling, and association key to the property's historic identity.

Historic photographs reveal that the landscape around Pleasant Valley School has also changed as several large elm trees now surround the school and hide it from view; historically, the stone building

¹ Arlene Ahlbrandt and Kathryn Stieben, eds., *The History of Larimer County, Colorado, Volume II* (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1987), 482.

² Josephine Payson Clements, "Lovely Valley was Setting for One of Oldest School Districts," *Fort Collins Triangle Review*, 13 April 1988, 32.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

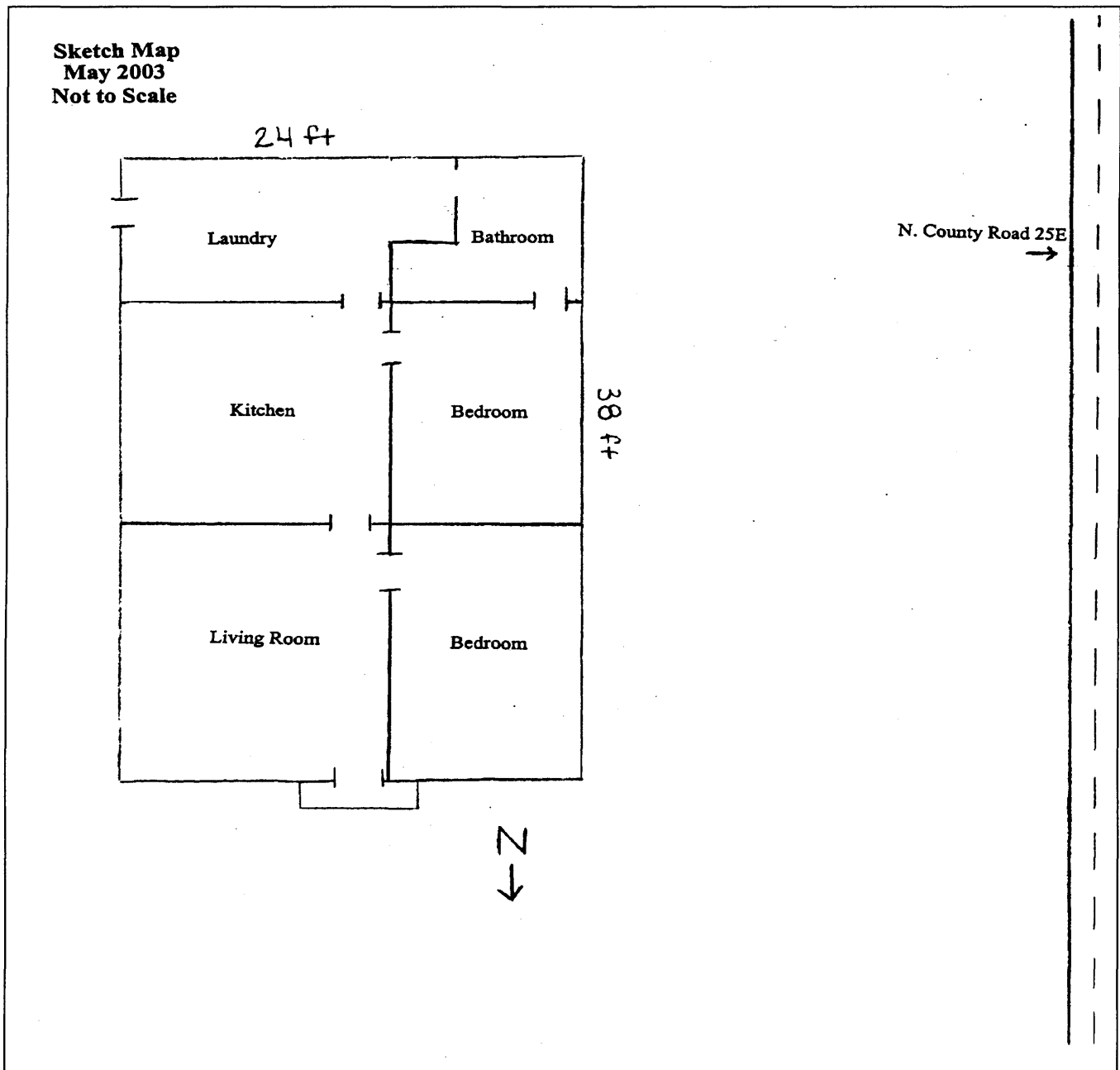
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Pleasant Valley School
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPS

Section number 7 Page 2

was clearly visible.³ Several other buildings exist on the Graves Farm in close proximity to the schoolhouse, including two houses and several agricultural buildings.

Floor Plan



³ Clements, "Lovely Valley."

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**Pleasant Valley School Larimer County/ Colorado
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number 8 Page 3**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Pleasant Valley School meets the registration requirements of the Rural Schoolhouse Property Type as specified in the Multiple Property Documentation Form *Rural School Buildings in Colorado*. It is eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A, for its association with the educational history of Larimer County between the years 1879-1913, being directly influenced by the national and state educational trend of consolidation. It is also eligible under Criterion C for its architectural significance as a rare example of a stone schoolhouse in the county, while exhibiting the distinguishing characteristics of rural one-room schoolhouses.

Historic Background

Throughout United States history, the construction of a schoolhouse represented the establishment of a permanent settlement. Schoolhouses also served as physical evidence of the value of education to American citizens. During Colonial times, Americans recognized the significance of education. As a newly independent nation, the American education system needed to teach its citizens about the new American culture and the principles and ideas that created its foundation. In the early nineteenth century, when many immigrants came to the United States, American education sought to provide a sense of community for a large, diverse, and mobile population. Also during the nineteenth century, education became increasingly standardized, moving from the private to the public realm by the 1830s. Education became a responsibility of the state rather than the family.⁴

As Americans headed west in the 1840s and 1850s to pursue their fortunes in mining, they quickly inhabited the region. Although males initially explored the West, many saw potential for permanent settlement in the region and brought their wives and children to join them. After establishing a settlement and securing provisions, pioneers turned their attention to education. From construction materials readily available in the area, several families would build a small schoolhouse in a central location to serve their educational needs. Because the newly settled areas of the West did not have the educational traditions and community stability of the East Coast, westerners organized their school systems along county lines, much like school systems in the South.⁵

After the discovery of precious metals in Colorado in the late 1850s, pioneers flooded the territory. Within a few years, Colorado had many communities. In northern Colorado the beautiful Pleasant Valley, which is nestled between the Front Range foothills to the west and hogback rock formations on the north and east and features the Cache la Poudre River flowing through the valley, attracted the attention of the first settlers to the region. By 1860, settlers had claimed most of the pasture and farmland in the area. Abner Loomis established a ranch in Pleasant Valley in 1862. In approximately 1867, Loomis decided to build a wood-frame school on his ranch because there were no schools nearby.⁶

⁴ Andrew Gulliford, *America's Country Schools*, 3rd ed. (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1996), 35-39; Lawrence A. Cremin, *Traditions of American Education*, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1977), 43, 87.

⁵ Gulliford, *America's Country Schools*, 38; Jonathan P. Sher, ed., *Education in Rural America: A Reassessment of Conventional Wisdom* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1977), 15.

⁶ Elliott West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado*, (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 98-170; Ansel Watrous, *History of Larimer County Colorado, 1911*, Centennial-Bicentennial Edition, (Fort Collins, CO: Miller Manor Publications, 1972), 188; Arlene Ahlbrandt and Kathryn Stieben, eds., *The History of Larimer County, Colorado, Volume II*, (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corporation, 1987), 481.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

Pleasant Valley School Larimer County/ Colorado
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPS

Section number 8 Page 4

Rapid growth in the Larimer County area fostered the establishment of six school districts by 1868. In 1869, District No. 7, Pleasant Valley, reported to the county superintendent. The pupils in District No. 7 attended school in a small, unpainted wooden building. In 1879 the sandstone school, which still stands today, replaced the original school.⁷

The residents of Bellvue petitioned and voted for the division of District No. 7 in 1886. Jacob Flowers founded the town of Bellvue in 1882. Flowers came to the region ten years earlier in search of a location for a colony; he thought that beautiful Pleasant Valley was the perfect location. After Flowers platted the town and built his residence and a mercantile store, the town grew and prospered. By 1886, the small town was bursting with activity. However, most of the Bellvue children traveled two miles to Pleasant Valley School. The residents of Bellvue felt that it would be more convenient to construct a new sandstone schoolhouse in Bellvue. Consequently, Pleasant Valley School lost some of its students to the new school in Bellvue, the home of District No. 50.⁸

In the early 1900s, the consolidation movement spread throughout the United States. Advocated by President Theodore Roosevelt as a solution to problems in rural education, the supporters of consolidation argued that one large centrally-located school with separate classrooms and grades was more efficient and beneficial to students than several one-room schoolhouses that educated students of varying ages and grade levels. Colorado educational leaders likewise viewed consolidation as a solution to the problems associated with rural schools, including low attendance numbers and insufficient financial support. In 1913, the consolidation of Districts 4, 7, 40, and 50 created the Cache la Poudre District No. 64 with headquarters near Laporte. It was the third school consolidation in the state of Colorado and the first in northern Colorado. Nearly three hundred students from the consolidated schools traveled to the Cache la Poudre School by horse-drawn vans and later rickety buses. The former students of the Pleasant Valley School were among those who traveled to the Cache la Poudre School. The ownership of Pleasant Valley School reverted to the owners of the land upon which it stood; William C. Graves had purchased the land from C. W. Harrington in 1897. The Graves family has owned the land, and thus the school, since that time.⁹

As an architecturally significant building, the Pleasant Valley School shares many distinguishing characteristics of rural schools across the nation. The vast majority of rural schoolhouses were rectangular, usually no larger than 30 by 40 feet. They commonly featured three or four evenly spaced windows on the long sides of the building, an entrance door on one end, and a gabled roof. Many schoolhouses also featured a belfry, usually located on the roof peak above the entrance. Stone schoolhouses also shared many similarities. Commonly built with native stone from nearby quarries, stone schoolhouses rested on a stone foundation and featured stone lintels above the windows and door. The Pleasant Valley School is a perfect example of this architectural building type. Built from

⁷ Josephine Payson Clements, "Lovely Valley was Setting for One of Oldest School Districts," *Fort Collins Triangle Review*, 13 April 1988, 32. Several sources disagree on the date that the sandstone school was built; some sources say that Loomis built the sandstone school in 1867 while others say it was built in 1879. However, Clements asserts and this author believes that the sandstone school built in 1879 replaced the original wooden building, constructed in 1867 in an unknown location.

⁸ Clements, "Lovely Valley"; Ahlbrandt and Stieben, eds., *The History of Larimer County, Colorado, Volume II*, 446.

⁹ Gulliford, *America's Country Schools*, 41; Inez Johnson Lewis, "Process of Education in Colorado," in *Colorado and Its People: A Narrative and Topical History of the Centennial State*, vol. 2, ed. Leroy Hafen (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., Inc.: 1948), 182-184; B.F. Kitchen, *The Superintendency of Schools in Larimer County: A Brief History* (Fort Collins, CO: 1967), 15; Clements, "Lovely Valley."

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**Pleasant Valley School Larimer County/ Colorado
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number 8 Page 5

native sandstone, it has a sandstone foundation, stone lintels, a rectangular form with dimensions of 38 by 24 feet, and a single entrance at one end. Historically, the school also featured a belfry and four evenly spaced windows on the east and west elevations.¹⁰

The Pleasant Valley School is one of the few schools in Larimer County that is in its original location and still exhibits a good deal of physical integrity. From the 1960s to the 1980s, citizens razed many of Larimer County's historic schools, both one-room and larger schoolhouses; demolished schools include Remington, Fossil Creek, and Pleasant View Schools in Fort Collins, Fairview School in Timnath, and Wellington School in Wellington. Pleasant Valley School is the only stone schoolhouse in Larimer County that has survived destruction; it is also the oldest stone school in the county. Other stone schools in Larimer County included the Bellvue School, District 50, built in 1886 and razed in 1955; Blore School, District 37, constructed prior to 1901 and demolished at an unknown date; Highland School, District 27, built in 1883 and now underwater in Horsetooth Reservoir. However, individual and group efforts have saved several area schools, including Stove Prairie School and Plummer School. In 1977, the Fort Collins Victorian Questers saved the Upper Boxelder District No. 33 School from destruction; they moved the school to the Fort Collins Museum Courtyard.¹¹ Another element that makes the Pleasant Valley School unique, however, is that the surrounding rural landscape has been maintained. Development has permanently altered the landscape around schools in the Fort Collins area. Fortunately, the land around Pleasant Valley School still serves as farmland and pasture for livestock, allowing the schoolhouse to tell the story of its rural beginnings.

¹⁰ Gulliford, *America's Country Schools*, 172.

¹¹ Arlene Ahlbrandt, *Legacy of County and Mountain Schools of Larimer County, Colorado* (Fort Collins, CO); Ahlbrandt and Stieben, eds., *The History of Larimer County, Colorado, Volume II*, 442-509.

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**Pleasant Valley School Larimer County/ Colorado
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number 9 Page 6**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**Pleasant Valley School Larimer County/ Colorado
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number 10 Page 7

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundary includes the footprint of the school and 5 feet out in all directions.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nomination includes the land historically associated with the school.

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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

Pleasant Valley School Larimer County/ Colorado
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPS

Section number ___ Page 8

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1-6 except as noted:

Name of Property: Pleasant Valley School
Location: Larimer County, Colorado
Photographer: Kelly Barlow
Date of Photographs: March 24, 2003
Negatives: City of Fort Collins, Advance Planning Office

Photo No. Photographic Information

- 1 North elevation, view to the south.
- 2 West elevation, view to the east.
- 3 West elevation, view to the northeast.
- 4 South elevation, view to the north.
- 5 Southeast elevation, view to the northwest.
- 6 Northeast elevation, view to the southeast.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Pleasant Valley School Larimer County/ Colorado
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPS

Section number ___ Page 9

USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Laporte Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series

UTM: Zone 13 / 484325E / 4499420N
PLSS: 6th PM, T8N, R70W, Sec. 24
NW¹/₄, NW¹/₄, NE¹/₄, SW¹/₄ Elevation: 5174 feet

