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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JUN 28 1989

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sunshine School

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 355 County Road 83

n/a not for publication

city, town Sunshine

vicinity Boulder

state Colorado

code CO

county Boulder

code 013

zip code 80302

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

Metal Mining and Tourist Era Resources of Boulder County

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

Barbara Sudler  
State Historic Preservation Officer, 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.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Alvina Byrne

8/3/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 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)

Neoclassical

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Granite

roof Wood shingles

other Sandstone trim

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Sunshine School is a distinctive one room schoolhouse located in the mountains of western Boulder County. The building is one of the few remaining structures of the once thriving mining town of Sunshine. It is located at the southern end of the mining district, prominently situated on a slope along the main road through the remote residential community. The building is relatively isolated, surrounded by steeply sloped vacant land and dense forests. Its rural setting contrasts with the urban-like styling of the school.

The schoolhouse is a one story, rectangular stone building with Neoclassical elements. Its widely overhanging roof is hipped and has wood shingles. The roof's undecorated cornice is boxed and has a plain frieze. On the front the boxed eaves break at the pavilion which extends to support an equilateral pediment which is a gabled extension of the main roof. The upper part of the pavilion is faced with square cut wood shingles. The date of construction of the building, 1900, and the words "Sunshine School" and "Dist No. 28", are found on the upper pavilion and pediment. A hipped-roof, open belfry sit above the pediment. A small metal plaque is found at the base of the bell tower with the words: "State of Colorado, Standard School, Approved Class."

Unlike the other schools of the county's mining settlements, the Sunshine School is constructed of stone. Its walls are granite rubble laid in irregular courses. Sandstone is used for the window and door lintels and the sills of the windows.

The north and south sides of the building each contain a set of four windows. These windows are large, rectangular, double-hung sash windows. The upper sash is divided into twelve lights. The lower sash contains only two. Two small circular windows flank the building's entrance on the east facade. The entry consists of recessed double leaf doors with a transom divided into multiple lights. Each door contains four panels, including a large glass one, and distinctive hardware.

The Sunshine School illustrates the Vernacular Stone Buildings that were constructed in Boulder County at the turn of the century. The school is architecturally significant because while it is similar in plan to other schools of the period, its materials and workmanship are atypical. The schoolhouse is important because it demonstrates the range of building that occurred as part of the Boulder County vernacular traditions. The unaltered condition of the school and its surroundings supports all aspects of the integrity of this important historic architectural resource.

See continuation sheet

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Exploration/Settlement

Period of Significance

1900-1938

Significant Dates

1900

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Sunshine School meets Criterion A for its association with the history of the mining community of Sunshine, Boulder County, and represents the development of the educational system in the county in the early 20th century. The school meets Criterion C for its architectural significance. Its stone construction, rare in the mountains of the county, embodies the distinctive characteristic of the Vernacular Stone Building type associated with Boulder County's mining communities. The school is also distinctive for its relatively sophisticated Neoclassical design in a rural mountain setting.

The town of Sunshine was named after a telluride lode was discovered by D.C. Patterson in 1874. The community quickly grew to 1500 residents as other mines were established in the area. At its peak, the town contained three hotels and numerous commercial concerns. A newspaper was even published during the period 1875-1878. Early in its development, Sunshine established itself as an upright community for the moral and sober, where the saloons were required to close on Sundays.

An indication of the aspirations for the social development of Sunshine was the early availability of schooling in the town. The first school was private with classes conducted by an unmarried woman. It was held in the loft of a barn in the spring of 1875. The Sunshine School District #28 was organized that fall to serve 103 pupils. The district raised \$568.25 to construct the first permanent schoolhouse. This frame building was replaced with the stone schoolhouse in 1900. The period of significance for the school is arbitrarily ended at 1938, the 50 year period established by the National Register. Although its population dwindled with the decline of mining operations in the county, the school continued to operate until the 1950s.

Today the schoolhouse is the only intact building dating from the early 20th century history of Sunshine. It is architecturally significant because its distinctive stone construction and stylistic detailing is indicative of the prosperity that the town once enjoyed. Unchanged from the time of its original construction, the Sunshine School

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

- Bailey, Delores. God's Country USA: Wallstreet, Colorado. Fort Collins, Colorado: Robinson Press, Inc., 1982.
- McAlester, Virginia & Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984.
- Pettem, Sylvia. Red Rocks to Riches. Boulder, Colorado: Westype Publishing Services, Inc., 1980.
- Smith, Duane. Colorado Mining: A Photographic History. Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1977.
- Weiss, Manuel. Boulder County Historical Site Survey. Denver, Colorado: Colorado Historical Society, 1981.

See continuation sheet

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:

Boulder County Planning Office

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A 

1	3
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4	6	8	9	2	0
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4	4	3	4	4	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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Zone Easting Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lot 149, Sec. 1: T1N, R71W, Boulder County

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the land historically associated with the Sunshine School.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Deborah Edge Abele, Consultant/Revised - Barbara Norgren  
organization N/A date June 1987 (revised) July 1988  
street & number P. O. Box 6367 telephone (303) 635-2065  
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**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

Sunshine School

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is a rare and important example of the Vernacular Stone Building type that is associated with precious metal mining in the mountain regions of the county. The school possesses exploration and settlement significance because the presence of school buildings in mining communities attests to the evolution from male dominated mining camps into established, family oriented communities such as the one at Sunshine.

The Sunshine School is being nominated as part of the Multiple Property nomination, Metal Mining and Tourist Era Resources of Boulder County. The school meets the registration requirements for the Vernacular Stone Building Associated Property type. The history of this building is part of the Multiple Property's associated historic context, Early Settlement and Community Development in the mountain region of Boulder County, 1858-1910.