

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8/86)
NPS/CHS Word Processor Format
(Approved 03/88)

OMB No. 1024-0018

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. Use letter quality printers in 12 pitch. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Westcliff School

other names/site number: Old Westcliffe School House 5CR.29

2. Location

street & number: 304 4th Street

(NA) not for publication

city, town: Westcliffe

(NA) vicinity

state: Colorado

code: CO

county: Custer

code: 027 zip code: 81252

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
() private	(x) building(s)	contributing	noncontributing
(x) public-local	() district	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
() public-State	() site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
() public-Federal	() structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	() object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

No. 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 (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.
() See continuation sheet.

Barbara Sudler

6-15-89

Signature of certifying official

Date

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:) _____

Alouise Byers

7/27/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION / School

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE / Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Vernacular Masonry,
Front Gabled

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

foundations Stone

walls Stone; wood

roof Wood Shingle

other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The historic Westcliff Schoolhouse is the only building in Westcliffe of the design which is locally known as the Cottage style, a variety of front gabled vernacular masonry. The schoolhouse faces east on 4th Street, and is situated next to the city park. The landscape is informal with mature trees growing close to the building on the south side. Two outhouses are in the back and a wooden fence encloses the front yard. Three flag poles are in the front of the school where on special occasions, the American flag, Colorado State flag and the Centennial flag are flown. Westcliffe is located in the Wet Mountain Valley, west of Pueblo. Originally founded in the late 1800s as a mining community, it has become a ranching community and is distinctly rural in character.

The structure is one story however the roof is constructed so that a second floor could be added inside. The building plan is rectangular with a symmetrical facade. The school is constructed of field stone and dark stone quoins accent all four corners of the school. Above the wood frame vestibule, in front, are the name of the school and date of construction. On the roof there is a wooden bell tower with a gabled roof set back from the main facade. The original bell in the tower is rung from inside the school. The main entrance in the vestibule has double doors and plain molding.

The shake shingle roof is a decked gable (flat-topped gable) which known as a "Cottage Roof."¹ The gable ends are faced with fishscale shingles.

¹ Cyril M. Harris, Dictionary of Architecture and Construction, McGraw Hill Book Company, New York, 1975, p. 132.

(x) See continuation sheet

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2

Westcliff School

Wrought iron cresting once accented the deck, but it was removed during the 2nd World War for the scrap iron. The double hung windows have segmental arches with brick voussoirs. The panes were originally four over four but over the years, some windows have been broken out and replaced with fixed panes. The window surrounds are plain with wooden sills. The rear entrance was once enclosed by a vestibule; the coat room has been removed and the plain back door is exposed.

The school has 1200 square feet of main floor. The floors are wide board hardwood, and the walls have narrow painted board wainscot. The walls above the wainscot and on the ceiling are plastered and painted. In the front part of the building, historical exhibits from Custer County were put up in the Centennial year 1987 and have remained up to be added to as material becomes available. Part of the exhibit is a one room school containing desks and old books, student papers, etc.. from the years when the school house was in existence. In the back part of the building to the west, there is a Teen and Community Center which is sponsored by the Valley Park, Recreation and Youth Center Inc. A pool table, benches, kitchen and restrooms have been added. The schoolhouse still retains much of its original integrity of design, materials, setting, feeling and association.

Behind the school are two identical wood frame outhouses which are contributing. The exact date of construction is not known, but they are believed to have been constructed prior to 1939 as evidenced by their design and materials. They are rectangular in plan with gabled roofs faced in wood shingles. The rafter ends are exposed which is characteristic of the teens and 1920s construction. Also typical of that period is the rabbeted style of the wood siding which covers the exteriors of both outhouses. In the center of the front is a plain board door with two small rectangular openings at the top. These are contributing buildings.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: () nationally () statewide (x) locally

Applicable National Register Criteria () A () B (x) C () D
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) () A () B () C () D () E () F () G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture

1891

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

N/A

Schere, Archie - Builder

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

The Westcliff Schoolhouse meets National Register Criterion C because it is significant for its design as a 19th century building type and for its materials and method of construction. Not only is the school the only example of Cottage style in Westcliffe but the material is unusual for a school house. The building, built of local fieldstone, is a testimony to the expertise of its stone mason, Archie Scherer. Mr. Scherer worked on several other buildings in Westcliffe, including the City Jail.¹

The schoolhouse is an important part of the community's history many of the town people still living in the area attended this school. The building was built for the town of Westcliffe as part of the one room school system of Custer County, and was used as such until the school system of Custer County began consolidation in 1948. The school was used for grades 1-3 until December 1953 when the consolidation was completed. Several of the retired teachers are still in the area.

The Westcliff School, built in 1891, stands as a memory of the past and a tribute to the one room schoolhouse. The school name, spelled Westcliff, as opposed to town of Westcliffe, and date of construction appear above the front door.

¹This information was verified by Marie Erps, a niece of Archie Scherer who is now living in the town of Silver Cliff, Colorado.

(x) See continuation sheet

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Westcliff School

Westcliffe, the county seat of Custer County, is situated in the western part of the county. Most of the retail business is on Main Street in Westcliffe. The county has no population center. It is two-thirds the size of Rhode Island, its population is over 2,000. Many of the people live on ranches that play an important role of the economy, as does recreation and summer residence.

The settling of the Wet Mountain Valley came when a colony of Germans came from Chicago to begin a new life of farming. The search for minerals in the Rosita, Querida, and Silver Cliff areas brought several thousands of prospectors. The founding of Westcliffe occurred around 1885, after Dr. William A. Bell brought the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad from Canon City in 1881. This railroad line, also known as the Silver Cliff branch or the Grape Creek extension, was built to ship silver ore from the mines in the valley, but it terminated one mile west of the booming mining town of Silver Cliff. It is probable that the line stopped short of the mining town in order to raise the property values and establish a new town on the ranch land owned by Bell. Westcliffe, originally known as Clifton, was renamed by Bell after his English birthplace, Westcliffe-on-the-sea. By 1938 the railroad was no longer in operation, but the land that William Bell had sold around the station had become a town on July 25, 1887.

Even though mining had declined, ranching and agriculture had progressed. Westcliffe became the trading center and center of education for Custer County. Today, modern highways, resorts and a ski area bring tourists to the valley which offers some of the most beautiful mountain scenery in Colorado. The Sangre de Cristo Mountain Range presents unending beauty to those who seek new vistas.

The building has architectural significance because it is the only known school building in Custer County constructed of local field stone. In addition the construction and design by stonemason, Archie Scherer, is notable in several respects. His attention to detail, as demonstrated in the quoins and the randomly placed dark field stones which pepper the schools walls, and his artistic use of local materials make it significant for its method of construction.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Pearl, Michael. "National Register Nomination Form for National Hotel" May 27, 1987.
Oral Interview with Marie Erps, Archie Scherer's niece.

() See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested | <input type="checkbox"/> State Historic Preservation Office |
| <input type="checkbox"/> previously listed in the National Register | <input type="checkbox"/> Other State agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> previously determined eligible by the National Register | <input type="checkbox"/> Federal agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> designated a National Historic Landmark | <input type="checkbox"/> Local government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> University |
| <input type="checkbox"/> recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Specify Repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property: Less than one acre

UTM References

A	<u>1 3</u>	<u>4 5 9 1 8 0 </u>	<u>4 2 2 0 4 2 0 </u>	B	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	D	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

() See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Block 14, Lots 6-15, Town of Westcliffe 2nd filing.

() See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the property historically associated with the school.

() See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: <u>Irene M. Francis</u>	Date: <u>March, 1989</u>
Organization: <u>Valley Park Recreation & Youth Center</u>	Telephone: <u>(719) 783-9453</u>
Street & Number: <u>2301 CR 323</u>	State: <u>CO</u> Zip Code: <u>81252</u>
City or Town: <u>Westcliffe</u>	

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number _____

Page 1

Photo Log

Westcliff School

Photo Log

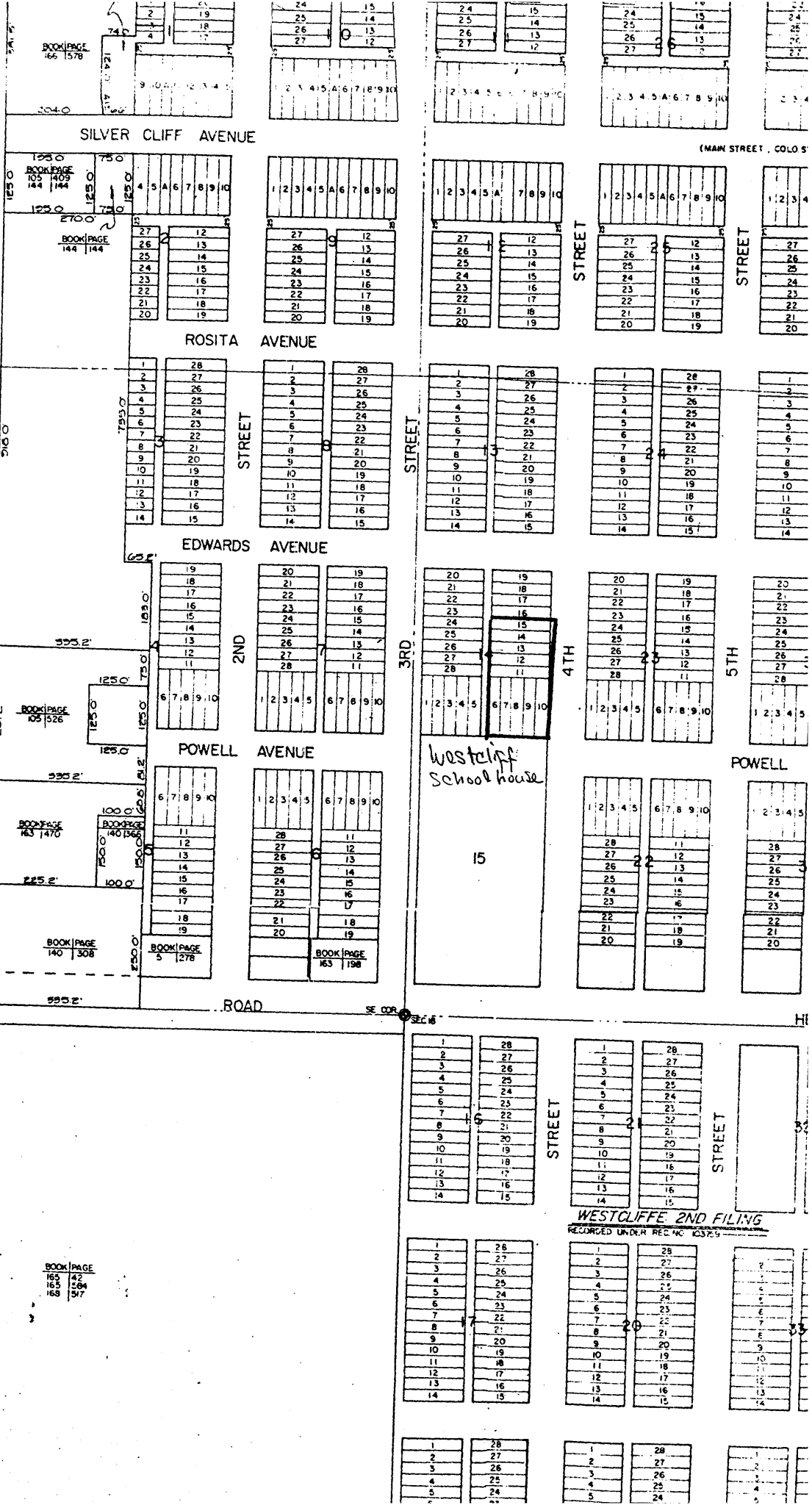
Westcliff Schoolhouse
304 4th Street
Westcliffe, Colorado
Photos: Irene Francis, Westcliffe
Date: February, 1989
Negatives: Irene Francis

Photo #

1. E front, view W
2. S side, view N
3. W rear, view E
4. Classroom interior
5. One of two outhouses, E front, view W

Tax Assessor Map

Westcliffe, Colorado



BOOK/PAGE
166 | 140

NW COR
SE 1/4 SE 1/4
SEC. 18

BOOK/PAGE
86 | 140

BOOK/PAGE
120 | 25

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Westcliff
School house

WESTCLIFF 2ND FILING
RECORDED UNDER REC. NO. 103729

(MAIN STREET, COLO S

HI

