NPS Form 10-900a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section _____ Page ___

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 13000496 Date Approved: 7/15/2013

Square Butte School — Property Name
Chouteau — County
MT — State

N/A
Multiple Name

This additional documentation is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action: 7/15/13

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Amended Items in Nomination:

Location

The Street Address should read: *Northwest corner of Diederick Street and Broadway.*

Verbal Boundary Description

Verbal Boundary Description is amended to add: *See attached sketch map for specific boundary. Additional Documentation-Maps, Page 30.*

These clarifications were confirmed with the MT SHPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

RECEIVED 2280
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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Square Butte School
Other names/site number: _____
Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: _____
City or town: Square Butte State: MT County: Chouteau
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: ☐

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___national ___statewide x local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

x A ___B x C ___D

Mark F. Baumler / SHPO 5/24/2013

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

MONTANA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action: 7/15/13

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:	x
Public – Local	
Public – State	
Public – Federal	

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	x
District	
Site	
Structure	
Object	

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
		Total

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.)
DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
_LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Simplified Italian Renaissance Revival _

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: __BRICK_

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The historic Square Butte School is located in the town of Square Butte in Central Montana approximately 55 miles east of Great Falls and 45 miles northwest of Lewistown. It sits immediately east of Diedrick Street on the far west edge of town. The Highwood Mountains are visible to the southwest and Arrow Creek, about six miles south of town, flows to the northeast to its confluence with the Missouri River. The dominant geologic feature of the area, and that which lent its name to the settlement, Square Butte, is three miles southwest of town. Completed in July of 1918, the simple brick Neo-Classical Revival style Square Butte School features one main story above a daylight basement. Playground equipment, dating to the 1950s and 1960s, sits immediately south of the building. Square Butte School served the citizens of Square Butte and the surrounding area for 49 years before closing its doors as an educational facility in 1967.

Narrative Description

SQUARE BUTTE SCHOOL (one contributing building)

Exterior

Resting on a concrete wall foundation, the Square Butte School displays a rectangular footprint that measures 58 ft. (north-south) by 29 ft. 6 in. (east-west). A full-height, centered entrance bay measuring 13 ft. (north-south) by 7 ft. (east-west) projects east off the east elevation. The school faces east and aligns north-south paralleling Diedrick Street.

The yellow-brick building displays a running bond pattern, and several of the bricks are embossed with the letters "G.F.", suggesting a Great Falls, Montana origin. A row of soldier-coursed brick at ground level serves as a water table. A belt course consisting of tan rowlock brick bordered by a single horizontal course of brick above and below occurs above the main story windows. The school displays minimal castellation across the tan brick parapet. A gently-sloped roof protects the school and displays a long shallow decrease in pitch of 10 inches east to west.

A two-step poured concrete stoop provides access to the entry bay on the east elevation. A modern steel door with eight-light sidelights allows entry into the building. Above the door and sidelights is a transom consisting of a 12-light fixed window flanked by single four-light fixed windows. Shonkinite from the nearby West Quincy Granite Quarry (NR listed March 3/3/2000, NR#00000163), operating under the auspices of the Rudin Brothers and Johnson Granite Company, surrounds the entry. Immediately above the entry and just below the belt course is a bell chamber. The bell chamber opening faces east and measures 44 inches by 44 inches; the opening is covered by horizontal louvers and highlighted by a tan brick hood mould. Above the belt course and aligned with the bell chamber and entry, a shonkinite plaque displays the building's 1918 construction date. The north and south elevations of the entrance bay each contain one tall 9/9 double-hung window set between the daylight basement and main story levels.

The east façade contains six rectangular windows on the main floor and six square windows in the lower daylight basement divided equally on each side of the entry bay. The main story windows were originally 9/9 double-hung windows. However, only the northern-most window currently displays such a pattern; the other windows have been replaced with fixed single-lights. Fenestration in the daylight basement consists of the original 3/3 double-hung windows. All window openings contain their original wood framing.

The north and south elevations' window pattern originally echoed that of the east elevation with four tall rectangular windows gracing the main story and one square window providing light into the daylight basement. The original openings remain but with the exception of a 9/9 double-hung window in the easternmost-most opening of the south elevation, all other main story windows have been replaced with single-light fixed windows. The two daylight basement window openings remain (one each in the west end of the north and south elevation) but only the north elevation retains the original 3/3 double-hung window; the south elevation daylight basement window presently displays a vinyl casement. The east end of the north elevation contains a 4-light/1-panel wood door fronted by an aluminum screen door and accessed by concrete stairs leading to the daylight basement. A coal chute that measures 40 inches by 57 inches located at the east end of the south elevation is covered over with horizontal tongue-and-groove infill.

Main story windows display decorative tan brick hood moulds. Upper and lower story windows sport tan rowlock brick sills. Adornment of the school occurs through the use of rectangular tan brick accents between the upper and lower windows.

A wood-frame shed addition that measures 56 ft. 9 inches north-south by 23 ft. east-west obscures the entire lower half of the school's west elevation. Constructed between 1973 and 1990, it serves as a garage and storage space. Metal sheeting covers the shed roof, which displays open eaves with exposed rafters, and extends to just above mid-elevation of the school building. A metal furnace pipe extends from the north half of the shed roof. A composite of vertical planking and board-and-batten comprises the walls. The south elevation of the shed addition contains an oversize opening measuring 16 ft. tall by 14 ft. wide to allow the passage of vehicles. The north elevation contains one 1/1 single-hung vinyl window. An exterior stove pipe projects from the interface of the west school wall and the east edge of the shed addition roof.

The frame addition conceals two 9-light/2-panel doors in the west elevation of the school building. The southern door provides ingress to the school's basement level and the northern door leads to the main floor; the northern door is presently sealed shut. A rectangular fixed single-light window in the north half of the elevation is also sealed. A concrete pad covers the ground surface in the northern portion of the addition while the southern portion is unpaved.

Interior

The interior of the Square Butte School was completely remodeled into a single family domestic dwelling between 1973 and 1990. A staircase left (south) of the main entry door provides access to the living room located on the main story. Adjoining the living room to the west, but raised two feet, is the dining area and kitchen. Another living area, bath, storage, and interior balcony are accessed from the staircase right (north) of the main entry. The south half of the daylight basement contains two bedrooms, both of which are accessed from a staircase left (south) of the main entry. The north half of the school contains two bedrooms, a storage room, and a utility room, all accessed by a staircase right (north) of the main entry. A hallway runs east-west through the center of the daylight basement.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT (one contributing structure)

South of the school lies a collection of playground equipment previously enjoyed by students when the building served as a school. The collection of playground equipment is collectively counted as one contributing structure. The equipment, which dates to the 1950s and 1960s, consists of a combination metal swing/metal slide/pull-up bar, a stand-alone metal swing set, and two teeter-totters.

Integrity

The Square Butte School retains a high level of integrity and easily conveys its historical and architectural significance to the community of Square Butte. The simple Neo-Classical Revival style and brick construction stand out in the small community evoking a sense of time, place and significance. As the school continues to sit in its original location in the small rural community, it retains excellent integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. Despite changes to the large main story windows, the addition of the frame garage on the rear of the school (which could be easily removed), and the alterations to the interior, which resulted in complete adaptive reuse of the historic building, the building retains good integrity of materials, design, and workmanship. The school preserves its original form, window openings, and most of its original exterior materials. The quality workmanship is readily visible on the building's exterior brickwork and trim. The presence of historic playground equipment provides an additional humanizing touch to the story of the school.

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.)

[x] 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.

[x] 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.)

[ ] 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
EDUCATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1918-1967

Significant Dates
1918

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
George H. Shanley, Great Falls
Geraldine, Montana contractor John Chaffee

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Square Butte School is eligible for listing in the National Register at a local level of significance under criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, the significance of the building lies with its original intended purpose. Its construction reflected a period of optimism fueled by a growing population, the result of the arrival of the Milwaukee Railroad, the agricultural productivity of the area, and the success of nearby mines necessitating larger and better educational facilities. Incredibly, the present Shanley designed Square Butte School replaced another brand new brick school that had burned only a year earlier, the result of arson. Despite the loss of the recently constructed earlier school, the residents of Square Butte approved the construction of another new brick school to replace the older school to provide their children with a sound education.

Under Criterion C, the school's architecture and prominence within the town is reflective of the importance of education to the community, especially considering the loss of the earlier school. Designed by prominent Great Falls architect, George H. Shanley, the brick school is a good example of restrained Neo-Classical Revival style and at the time of its construction stood as a point of pride for the small community.

The period of significance spans the time from the construction of the school and its first year of operation in 1918 and ends in 1967, when the school was closed and ceased operating as an educational facility.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Regional Historic Context

Prior to Euro-American contact, several American Indian tribes utilized the north-central region of present-day Montana for seasonal hunting and as a thoroughfare for intertribal trade. The Crow[1], the Blackfeet, and to a lesser extent, the Gros Ventre all maintain traditional ties to the area. The homelands of these tribes overlapped in the area between the Missouri and Mussleshell rivers, serving as a cultural meeting ground for regional tribes.

Within the recent pre-contact and historic period and until forced to reservations, the Crow held most of this territory. Crow homeland came to include a large area in north and central Wyoming, and much of eastern and central Montana. Stretching north to south from the Milk River to the North Platte, and west to east from the Three Forks region to the current Montana-North Dakota border, Crow land offered varying resources throughout the year.[2]

The neighboring Blackfeet held most of the territory stretching from the North Saskatchewan River, Canada, to the headwaters of the Missouri, in present-day Montana. The Blackfeet traded with Canadian-based British merchants, in a relationship that lasted more than twenty years, during which time they successfully dominated their regional rivals.[3]

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[1] Raymond J. DeMallie, ed, *Handbook of North American Indians: Volume 13, Plains*. Parts 1 and 2. (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 2001) 694.

[2] DeMallie, "Crow," 696.

[3] Ibid. 406.

The smaller Gros Ventre tribe occupied areas north of Crow homeland, into present-day southeastern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan.[4] In the late 1700s, the tribe became active traders and entered into a commercial relationship with the European Hudson's Bay Company. Competition for trade increased tribal rivalries, and though the tribe was allied with the powerful Blackfeet nation, they began to suffer from attacks from the Cree and Assiniboine. The tribe was also severely weakened by small pox epidemics in 1780-81 and 1801-02.[5]

The various tribal movements through the area made it important for trade, into which the Crow quickly established themselves. The arrival of horses in the mid-eighteenth century had large repercussions for Crow culture as these animals quickly became the basis for wealth and power. They made hunting more efficient and allowed for the transportation of more of the meat following a hunt. In addition, they transformed the Crow into formidable mounted warriors.[6] Crow trade, although centered in what is the Montana/Wyoming area, essentially linked them to both sides of the continent.[7]

The Blackfeet initially opposed the American fur trappers and successfully resisted attempts by Americans to open fur trade outposts in their country. However, in 1832, the American Fur Company opened Fort Piegan on the Missouri River near the mouth of the Marias River. By then, the Blackfeet moderated their dislike for the traders which resulted in a year-long treaty that allowed them to enjoy the goods offered in addition to the afforded resources of the region.[8]

However, Blackfeet relations with the traders declined when the Gros Ventre began to view the Europeans as allies of their enemies. Clashes with traders, in addition to continued conflict with the Cree and Assiniboine resulted in the tribe moving south by the early 1800s. By 1830, the Gros Ventre established a territory that stretched from southern Canada's "Cypress Hills to the Judith River and Bear Paw Mountains down the Missouri and the Musselshell rivers on the east."[9] After moving south, Blackfeet relations with traders improved. Beginning in 1831, the tribe traded peacefully with the American Fur Company outposts on the Missouri River, where the tribe grew rich in horses and goods. Between 1785 and 1805, large numbers of Blackfeet were killed in battles over hunting territory. An 1837 smallpox epidemic killed nearly 6,000 Blackfeet, an estimated two-thirds of the total population.[10]

As the nineteenth century unfolded, the once plentiful bison herds dwindled, forcing tribes to withdraw further into core homelands and away from outlying seasonal hunting grounds and extended trade networks. The mid-to-late nineteenth century discoveries of gold in what is now western and central Montana only worsened the plight of all tribes throughout Montana.

An 1880 agreement resulted in the Crow transferring over 1,500,000 acres to the United States Government and moving in 1883-1884 to the present Crow Agency in southeastern Montana. The Gros Ventre also suffered. In one 1855 treaty with the United States, the Gros Ventre acquiesced the construction of military posts and travel in their country. Americans settled in the upper Missouri country in increasing numbers, especially in and around Fort Benton. A series of Executive Orders reduced Indian lands, and as bison declined, the Gros Ventre traveled more often to Fort Belknap for supplies. In 1890, the tribe was placed on a reduced reservation with some bands of Assiniboine, at today's Fort

[4] Demallie, "Gros Ventre," 677.

[5] Ibid.

[6] DeMaillie, "Crow," 695.

[7] Ibid, 696.

[8] C.B. Worthen, *The History of Central Montana to 1871,* (Unknown publisher, 1915) 7.

[9] Demallie, "Gros Ventre," 678.

[10] Howard L. Harrod *Mission Among the Blackfeet* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1971) 40-41.

Belknap Reservation, located immediately south of the Milk River, and north of the Missouri River in north central Montana.

The Blackfeet maintained their traditional way of life based on hunting bison, until the bison's near extinction. By 1881, the Blackfeet were forced to adapt their ways of life in response to the effects of territory and resource loss. The tribe was restricted to land assigned in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 and the Lame Bull Treaty of 1855, but this attempt to designate Blackfeet hunting territory failed when white settlers began taking the reserved land. In 1870, American soldiers attacked the camp of the peaceful Piegan Blackfeet leader Heavy Runner. Over 200 Blackfeet were killed during what became known as the Massacre on the Marias River. The Blackfeet did not retaliate and in 1888 those Blackfeet residing in what is now Montana were placed on a 3,000 square-mile reservation in northwest Montana, under the terms of the 1888 Sweet Grass Hills Treaty.

Area Geology and Importance to Euro-American Settlement

The history and Euro-American settlement of the community of Square Butte and Chouteau County is related to the geography and geology of the area. Near the beginning of the Wisconsin Ice Age, about 15,000 years ago, Glacial Lake Great Falls formed as a result of a blockage of the Missouri River. The melting ice found an outlet and spilled over the north side of the Highwood Mountains thundering over a tremendous horseshow cataract. The gigantic flow of the Missouri River's new channel carved the half mile wide Shonkin "Big" Sag before joining the Arrow Creek drainage, cutting the plains into picturesque badlands before reaching its present junction with the Missouri River.[11] The resultant landscape laid the foundation for future agriculture in the area.

However, prior to the glacial lake outburst that sculpted the Shonkin Sag, volcanic activity created the Central Montana landscape 50 million years ago. Most of the molten rock magma, in this case shonkinite, erupted onto the ground surface through volcanic vents and formed the Highwood Mountains; some, however, spread laterally into a lenticular body forcing the overlying strata to bulge upward resulting in a laccolith. This unusual event also forced molten magma into vertical cracks in the sedimentary layer of sandstone laid down by an ancient sea and formed dikes. Most dikes were ten feet thick and several miles long and radiated from volcanic centers like spokes of a giant wagon wheel.[12] This area of Central Montana contains a large proportion of all volcanic dikes in North America.

The Highwood Mountains form a distinct unit in the geography of Montana, encompassing 300 square miles. Millions of years of erosion exposed several laccoliths including Square Butte, Round Butte (formerly called Palisade Butte), and the Shonkin Sag Laccolith. Square Butte is the eastern most flat-topped mountain east of the Highwoods, rising 5,630 feet and visible for 100 miles from many locations. Between the main range of the Highwoods and Square Butte rises Round Butte. The Shonkin Sag Laccolith differs from Square Butte and Round Butte, as it does not rise to near their height being only partially exposed. It is located five miles northwest of the town of Square Butte. The south-facing exposed Shonkinite cliffs rise 200 feet above the lower valley floor of the "Big Sag" and stretch for about two miles.[13] These cliffs served as the base of operations for several historic quarrying efforts that

[11] Walter H. Weed and Louis N. Pirsson. Highwood Mountains of Montana, presented at the Meeting of the Geological Society of America in Boston and Cambridge, December 27, 1894. *Bulletin of Geological Society of America*. Volume 6, April 17, 1895 Walter H. Weed and Louis N. Pirsson.

[12] David Alt and Donald W. Hyndman, *Roadside Geology of Montana*, (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 1986; fifth printing 1994), 257-258.

[13] Walter H. Weed and Louis N. Pirsson. Highwood Mountains of Montana, presented at the Meeting of the Geological Society of America in Boston and Cambridge, December 27, 1894. *Bulletin of Geological Society of America*. Volume 6, April 17, 1895.

boosted the economic vitality and provided additional stability beyond the local farms to the community of Square Butte.

Euro-American Settlement of Square Butte

The first Euro-American settlement in the Square Butte area occurred during the open range era, when stockmen were drawn to the vicinity by its reputation as conducive to winter range for cattle grazing. The open range and ranching slowly gave way to homesteading during the early 1900s.

John M. Steele, who raised horses, settled in the area by 1881.[14] Steele arrived prior to any official land survey and occupied some of the land subsequently acquired by David Moore.[15] Moore acquired some of the property as indicated by a Sales Cash Entry recorded on June 23, 1896 for 160 acres less than ½ mile south of the future townsite. Another early settler was Milton Milner who on December 18, 1899 filed a Sales Cash Entry for 360 acres near to and encompassing the majority of the future townsite. Milner subsequently received a Homestead Patent in 1901 for land within one mile of the future townsite. While records show a few early settlers near the future community of Square Butte, and a steady influx from 1900 to 1910, a small increase can be seen during the years 1914 and 1916 in the lands immediately around the town.[16]

One factor that spurred settlement in the area was the arrival of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (Milwaukee Road) in 1913. In 1905, route planning and land survey commenced for the enterprise which stretched from the Midwest to the Pacific. A year later, initial construction began. In Montana, the line ran from the Yellowstone Valley, across central Montana, through the headwaters region of the Missouri River, over the Continental Divide near Butte, then west along the Clark Fork River. In addition to Butte, major communities along the route in Montana included Miles City, Harlowton, and Missoula.[17]

Once completion of the main line occurred, the Milwaukee began building and acquiring branch lines (including the Montana Railroad purchased in 1908) along its route to expand the railroad's market base. The longest branch line was the North Montana Line, which extended into the agricultural lands of central Montana, including through the Shonkin Sag area. Although homesteading in the area had already begun, the planned Northern Montana Branch sparked further development beginning in 1909-1910. By the time of the completion of the line through the area in 1913, agricultural development and settlement of the area was well underway including the development of Square Butte.[18] Square Butte served as a water and coal stop for the locomotives as the water was nearly free of minerals. The importance of Square Butte to the Milwaukee Road was reflected in the construction of a depot, three section houses, coal dock, water tank and a stockyard. The presence of the railroad attracted other businesses. The Square Butte Tribune opened shop and operated from 1916-1922. Other businesses included Cahalan's Drug Store, Equity Co-Op Association Grain Elevator, McCaull-Webster Lumber Company, the Square Butte State Bank, Square Butte Telephone Company, and Square Butte Opera House. The town also soon boasted a café, general store, hotel, post office and a school. The town's population likely reached its zenith during the

[14] *River Press* (Fort Benton), November 4, 1891.

[15] Deed dated December 28, 1885 in possession of Henry Armstrong, Geraldine, MT.

[16] Bureau of Land Management General land Office Records. Found online at: http://www.glorecords.blm.gov/results/default.aspx?searchCriteria=type=patent|st=MT|cty=|twp_nr=20|twp_dir=N|rng_nr=12|rng_dir=E|sp=true|sw=true|sadv=false#resultsTabIndex=0&page=3&sortField=11&sortDir=0. Accessed March 5, 2013.

[17] Henry L. Armstrong and Marcella Knedler. *Geraldine Milwaukee Depot National Register Nomination Form,* Section 8, p.1. Listed March 21, 1997. NR# 97000254.

[18] Ibid.

bountiful agricultural years of 1915-1916, with an estimated 250 people. The U.S. Census for 1920 reported 178. The 1921-23 edition of the Montana State Gazetteer and Business Directory, provided a figure of 150 residents and 20 businesses.[19]

Along with the arrival of the railroad, the small spike in patent activity noted in 1914 and 1916 was also likely tied to a change in 1909 of the original Homestead Act, whereas the amount of land allowed under the law increased from 160 acres to 320 acres. Strong agricultural yields in 1912 and 1913 also surely provided incentive to settle in the area.[20]

Prior to the arrival of the railroad, W.M. Davis and W. Lindgren with the Transcontinental Survey published an article on Square Butte and the Highwood Mountains in the *American Journal of Science* in 1893. A year later, Walter H. Weed and Louis N. Pirsson conducted an extensive survey of the area. The two reported and presented their results to the Geological Society of America on December 27, 1894. In their report, Weed and Prisson discussed deposits of dark igneous rock densely studded with blocky crystals of glossy black augite they dubbed Shonkinite, which extended to a depth of 100 feet.[21]

The reports drew the interest of I.E. Jenkins of West Quincy, Massachusetts who arrived in the area in 1912 to locate the deposits identified near Square Butte.[22] The *Geraldine Review* enthusiastically reported about Jenkins and W.H. Guyor of the Western Monumental Works of Miles City investigating the area and taking samples of the Shonkinite prospects.[23] A later news report stated "The stone is easily worked, as it consists of a ledge standing about 150 feet above the surface. The ledge contains a light gray granite similar to the Quincy, Mass granite, and also a dark gray stone similar to the Vermont granite."[24]

Pleased with their findings, Jenkins and Guyor, and Christopher Wilson of Fort Benton, filed articles of incorporation for a granite mine at the base of the south-facing exposed Shonkinite cliffs of the Shonkin Sag Laccolith five miles northwest of the fledgling community of Square Butte on February 10, 1914.[25] The mine's name, the West Quincy Granite Quarry, was derived from Jenkins' West Quincy, Massachusetts hometown.[26]

Operations commenced during the spring of 1914 with 15 stone cutters employed. Projections of employing up to 60 stonecutters apparently never materialized as records indicate a peak of 27. By June

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[19] *Montana State Gazetteer and Business Directory, 1921-1922*. St. Paul: R.L. Polk and Co., 1921.

[20] Henry L. Armstrong and others. *Spokes, Spurs and Cockleburs*. Geraldine History Committee. River Press Publishing Company, Fort Benton, MT. 1978.

[21] Walter H. Weed and Louis N. Pirsson. Highwood Mountains of Montana, presented at the Meeting of the Geological Society of America in Boston and Cambridge, December 27, 1894. *Bulletin of Geological Society of America*. Volume 6, April 17, 1895; David Alt and Donald W. Hyndman, *Roadside Geology of Montana*. (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 1986), 223-224.

[22] The term "Shonkinite" is derived from "Shonkin", a Native American name for the Highwood Mountains. Though it does exist in other locations around the world, shonkinite is somewhat peculiar to Montana. If not for a greatly enriched potassium content, Shonkinite, a dark igneous rock, would be considered basalt. In the Square Butte, Montana area, the shonkinite magma crystallized below the surface and formed intrusions. It contains blocky crystals of black augite in a fine-grained matrix composed of minute crystals of augite and potassium feldspar. (United States Department of Agriculture, Lewis and Clark National Forest. *Geologic Spotlight, Volcanic Origins.* Found at: http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/lcnf/landmanagement/resourcemanagement/?cid=STELPRDB5298031).

[23] *Geraldine Review.* February 10 and 13, 1914.

[24] *Geraldine Review.* June 5, 1914.

[25] Articles of Incorporation of West Quincy Granite Company, Feb 10, 1914.

[26] Jenkins hailed from West Quincy, Massachusetts, the birthplace of the United States' large scale granite quarrying industry (Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation; Found at: http://www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/metroboston/quincyquarries.htm.). Accessed March 1, 2013.

1914, the quarry employed 25 stone cutters and had a backlog of orders for $35,000 worth of stone forcing the quarry to decline new orders. [27] The West Quincy Granite Quarry, through several iterations, proved to be a strong economic presence in the Square Butte community operating from 1914, with decreasing output until 1963, when the operation closed.[28] Shonkinite from the quarry, operating under the auspices of the Rudin Brothers and Johnson Granite Company, was used for the trim around the front door of the Square Butte School.

Success begets success and by 1915, a new quarry just west of the West Quincy Granite Quarry opened. The Harrington Granite Works, founded by Tom and John Harrington, supplied much of the stone and constructed many of the local buildings; stone from their quarry was shipped via the Milwaukee Railroad as far as Denver, Boise, and Baker City in Oregon.[29] On July 6, 1916, Chouteau County awarded the brothers a contract to supply granite and construct a jail in the nearby town of Square Butte.[30] In addition to the jail, another building in Square Butte built for M.E. Cahalan, the local U.S. Commissioner, post master and druggist, has also been attributed to the Harrington Granite Works. Raw material for the Highwood Bank was derived from the Harrington Granite Works.[31]

Through the years, quarrying provided a huge economic lift to Square Butte, initially as a producer of building stone and increasingly as a supplier of headstone and grave markers in the surrounding area, including Great Falls.[32] The Shonkin Sag Laccolith continues to be one of the most thoroughly studied and best known igneous intrusions of its type in the county.[33]

Hard Times in Square Butte

Widespread drought, beginning in 1917, soon changed the prosperous agricultural and economic winds of homesteaders and farmers in Montana. The year 1919 ushered in very low humidity, grasshopper infestations, and prairie fires in eastern Montana resulting in widespread agricultural devastation. Historian Joseph Kinsey Howard summarized the situation:

> In the spring of 1920, however, it rained…but the rain stopped and the wind came. These winds were the first "dusters" the northern plains farmer had ever seen. Day after day he watched, first incredulous, then despairing, as the gale whipped his fields into the

[27] Henry L. Armstrong and Marcella Knedler. *West Quincy Granite Quarry National Register Nomination Form,* Section 8, p. 1. Listed March 3, 2000. NR# 00000163.

[28] Henry L. Armstrong and Marcella Knedler. *Set In Stone, The Square Butte Granite Quarry*. Self published. 2000.

[29] Henry L. Armstrong and Marcella Knedler. *West Quincy Granite Quarry National Register Nomination Form,* Section 8, p. 1. Listed March 3, 2000. NR# 00000163.

[30] Minutes, Chouteau County Commission, July 6, 1916.

[31] Henry L. Armstrong and Marcella Knedler. *West Quincy Granite Quarry National Register Nomination Form,* Section 8, p. 1. Listed March 3, 2000. NR# 00000163.

[32] West Quincy Granite Quarry National Register Nomination Form, Section 8, p.2. Listed March 3, 2000. NR#00000163.

[33] David Alt and Donald W. Hyndman, *Roadside Geology of Montana*, (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 1986; fifth printing 1994), 257-258; The importance geologically of the Shonkin Sag Laccolith can be seen by the number of visits from academic institutions throughout the years who stayed and registered at the nearby Lonetree Ranch which adjoins the quarries discussed above. Representative academic institutions include: Harvard and Yale, the University of Manchester- England, University of London, University of Rome, University of Saskatchewan, University of Ontario, University of Texas at Austin, Finland Geological Survey, Poland Geological Survey, John Hopkins University at Baltimore, University of San Paulo - Brazil, Brown University, Baylor, University of Shamdues - Spain, University of Washington, Hokkaido University of Japan, Penn State, Leeds - UK, members of the 1989 International Geological Congress, and Germany's Institute of Mineralogy.

> sky…The ruined homesteaders gathered in little groups in the towns to compare notes…the fourth dry year, and now the wind! Nothing like it had happened before…[34]

For Montana as a whole, the 1920s resulted in the loss of over 11,000 farms and left more than 40,000 people penniless in the central and eastern portion of the state.[35] Chouteau County alone witnessed a loss of over 6,000 people from 1910 to 1920 (17,191 to 11,051) and a loss of another 2400 people by 1930 (11,051 to 7,316).[36] The hardships of the national economy following World War I only exacerbated the already poor situation. Some farmers found employment in nearby towns while others moved out of state. Things were slow to improve; between 1929 and 1934, American agricultural commodities dropped an average of 40 percent, while industrial prices fell 15 percent. Federal aid arrived but it was too late for many. Overall, Montana received the second most New Deal support of any state in the nation.[37]

Through these hard times, Square Butte experienced all of the hardships felt around the nation. Most of the New Deal projects lasted through the thirties and up to 1941, with the bombing of Pearl Harbor and America's entrance into World War II. The WPA, the CCC, and other programs, while not officially eliminated, had their funding canceled as the country entered into the war. Following the Second World War, the economy began to rebound and many people obtained better paying jobs.

Despite the hardships of the 1920s and 1930s, Square Butte survived. The community welcomed electricity in the 1930s and continued to support a number of businesses.[38] Square Butte emerged and grew as a result of the railroad, the quarries, and agriculture. The three played an important role in the economy of Square Butte and the nearby area allowing for a number of businesses to operate, the population to grow, and facilitated the rise of other important civic institutions important to communities, such as the construction of schools for education.

Square Butte School

By 1915, the burgeoning population of the community prompted educational considerations for the school age children of the area. A special meeting was held November 13, 1915, for the purpose of organizing a school board, hiring a teacher, and beginning a school term. Trustees elected included Mrs. Hiram Farnum, Harry K. Cohen and W.P. Sullivan. One of their first decisions was selecting a teacher, which resulted in hiring Anna Mae Farnum for a salary of $60 a month. Classes commenced on November 16, 1915 in a small one-room, frame building rented from Mr. Cohen. Seventeen students constituted the inaugural class.[39]

It wasn't long before the school board began to seriously look at improving the education facilities of the community. The earliest discussion regarding the construction of a new school, for an estimated cost of

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[34] Joseph Kinsey Howard, *Montana: High Wide and Handsome*, (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press/Bison Books, 2001), p. 202.

[35] Bureau of Land Management (BLM). *Class III Cultural Resource Inventory of Selected Bureau of Land Management Parcels in Blaine, Fergus, Hill, Chouteau, and Toole Counties, Montana.* Report #02-MT-066-011, 2002. P. 28-29.

[36] U.S. Census Bureau.

[37] BLM, 28-29.

[38] Roberta Carkeek Cheney. *Names on the Face of Montana*. Montana Press Publishing Company, Missoula, 1983 (6th Priting 1996), p. 252.

[39] Henry L. Armstrong and others. *Spokes, Spurs and Cockleburs*. Geraldine History Committee. River Press Publishing Company, Fort Benton, MT. 1978.

$3000, was noted in the January 8, 1916 District #61 School Board meeting minutes.[40] Board members present again included Sullivan, Cohen and Farnum. An official election on a new school building occurred July 20, 1916, with 44 votes submitted, all in favor of building a new school house. The *Square Butte Tribune* was to inform the community of the construction plans.[41] By August, the school board awarded George H. Pen a $6450 contract to build the school. J.T Levesque and Company served as the architects.[42] The 21-page long construction contract was signed August 18, 1916, and delineated every possible aspect of construction.[43]

Less than one month later, on September 6, 1916, the Milwaukee Land Company transferred the piece of land where the Square Butte School presently sits to the Trustees of School District Number Sixty-one of Square Butte for $400.[44] The *Square Butte Tribune* trumpeted the anticipation of the school's construction along with two other buildings around the same time stating

> The school building, which will be a brick structure, and which will cost in the neighborhood of $6000, when completed will be as fine an institution as can be found in any town of Square Butte's size in the state, and will be a credit to the town not only by the fact that it presents an appearance of architectural beauty, but also that it will let the people of other towns know that our citizens are wide awake to the advantages of education.[45]

Building proceeded on schedule as the contractors reportedly finished the school's brickwork on November 3, 1916, and installed the bell February 9, 1917. The school was essentially completed and furnished by July 10, 1917 with classes slated to begin on September 14.[46]

Incredibly, two months after the school's successful and highly anticipated opening, a fire broke out in the building; "In a strange turn of events, a fire in the school on November 12, 1917, left the school destroyed, and the wreckage of the newly built school would have to be torn down."[47]

The *Square Butte Tribune* reported an $8000 loss associated with the burning of the school, above the insured value of $7000. A newly installed piano partially financed by Ladies Aid Society and the School District was also destroyed.[48] A special meeting of the Trustees of School District Number 61 held on November 16, 1917 appointed William P. Sullivan as the lawful agent of the school district in all matters pertaining to the adjustment and settlement of all claims for indemnity for loss by reason of the fire.[49]

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[40] District #61 School Board Meeting Minutes, January 18, 1916. Records in the possession of Pamela Scribner, Great Falls, MT.

[41] District #61 School Board Meeting Minutes, July 20, 1916. Records in the possession of Pamela Scribner, Great Falls, MT.

[42] District #61 School Board Meeting Minutes, August 17, 1916. Records in the possession of Pamela Scribner, Great Falls, MT. Henry L. Armstrong and others. *Spokes, Spurs and Cockleburs*. Geraldine History Committee. River Press Publishing Company, Fort Benton, MT. 1978.

[43] Specifications Of Labor And Materials Required In The Erection And Completion Of A Two Story Brick School House For District No. 61, Chouteau County, Montana According To Plans And Specifications Prepared By J.T. Levesque & Co., Architects, Great Falls, Mont. Document in possession of Henry Armstrong, Geraldine, MT.

[44] Warranty Deed (Document No. 72769). On file at the Choteau County, Courthouse, Fort Benton, Montana.

[45] "New Buildings of Good Quality." *Square Butte Tribune,* October 13, 1916.

[46] District #61 School Board Meeting Minutes, July 10, 1917. Records in the possession of Pamela Scribner, Great Falls, MT; *Square Butte Tribune*, August 24, 1917.

[47] *Square Butte Tribune,* November 16, 1917.

[48] *Geraldine Review,* November 17, 1917.

[49] School Trustees Authorization, November 16, 1917. Attached to school board meeting minutes. Document in possession of Pamela Scribner, Great Falls, MT.

Though no arrest ever occurred for the fire, it was rumored to be the work of an arsonist who rode the train. After the fire, McCollum's Hall temporary hosted school classes.

Not long after the school's razing, plans were in motion to replace the building with another facility. On March 4, 1918, Architect George H. Shanley of Great Falls, Montana, presented plans to the school board for a new school.[50] A request for bids to construct the new school appeared in the *Geraldine Review* on March 22, 1918.[51] Nearby Geraldine area contractor John Chaffee submitted the low bid at $7790 to construct the second new brick school to be built in Square Butte in two years.[52] The new school's design again called for brick construction, and resembled the first in size and massing. The earlier brick school consisted of a daylight basement and two stories. Shanley's design, however, provided for a deeper basement level, and a more restrained interpretation of the Neo-Classical Revival style. Classes opened September 6, 1918.[53] A follow-up article stated 23 students were enrolled, though this estimate was high based on the annual school records.[54] An assessment of $42,000 for the school and the property in 1920 reflected the well-designed plan and durable materials used in the construction of the school; only three other schools in Chouteau County at that time assessed at a higher amount.[55] This assessment undoubtedly filled the town with pride validating their choice of architect and materials. Although the assessed value dropped precipitously by 1925, the Square Butte School still assessed higher than the vast majority of schools in the county.[56] During the early years of operation, the Petty and Fontana schools west of Square Butte Mountain served as satellite schools within the district.

A review of the *Statistical Reports of the School Districts in Chouteau County, Montana* from 1918 to 1959 (the reports from 1960 until the closure of the school in 1967 are missing) provide illuminating information regarding the function and everyday use of the school. The report for the year ending June 30, 1919 reflects the school's first full year of service. During that school year, 18 children attended the school which employed two teachers with a salary of $75 a month. Attendees increased by one the following year while maintaining two teachers, whose pay rose to $95 a month. By the third full year of operation ending in June of 1920, 26 children attended Square Butte School, which continued to employ two teachers who witnessed a salary increase to $115 per month; the records for this year mark the last time teacher salaries were included in the annual reports.[57]

From 1921 to 1959, student enrollment ranged from a high of 35 (1936) to a low of 18 (1959), with an average enrollment of 20 students. Nineteen thirty-six was somewhat of an outlier as it is bracketed by enrollments of 25 students in 1935 and 22 students in 1937. The period that displayed the highest continuous enrollment occurred from 1921 through 1925 when the student population by year totaled 34, 34, 33, missing records (1924), and 30 students, respectively. Other than in 1936 and the 1921-1925 school years, the student population never exceeded 25 again.[58]

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[50] District #61 School Board Meeting Minutes, March 4, 1918. Records in the possession of Pamela Scribner, Great Falls, MT.

[51] "Notice to Contractors". *The Geraldine Review*, March 22, 1918.

[52] *Square Butte Tribune*, April 26, 1918.

[53] "School to Open Sept. 9, 1918 with Jessie Hiatt and Olive Petesch". *Square Butte Tribune*, September 6, 1918. Hiatt and Petesch were the teachers hired.

[54] *Square Butte Tribune,* September 13, 1918; *Statistical Reports of the School Districts in Chouteau County, Montana,* 1918 to 1959. RS109. On file at the Montana Historical Society Research Center, Helena, MT.

[55] *Statistical Reports of the School Districts in Chouteau County, Montana,* 1918 to 1959. RS109. On file at the Montana Historical Society Research Center, Helena, MT.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

The school board made the decision regarding the number of teachers to hire by assessing the expected attendance for the coming year. The school for the most part employed two teachers on staff. Only once, in 1921, did the number of teachers on staff rise to three and eight times (1931, 1935, 1950-1955) drop to one. Reflecting the importance of education to the community and the school district, Square Butte School always ranked near the top of Chouteau County schools in terms of yearly average attendance ranging from a low of 92 percent in 1930 to an almost impossibly high 99.2 percent in 1945. From 1918 through 1950, the Square Butte School had a 95.4 average attendance percentage.[59]

The following list provides the names of teachers or principals serving at the Square Butte School or the two satellite schools from 1915 to 1966. The list is likely incomplete due to missing school employment records. Former students and residents of the area provided many of the following names:

Anna Mae Farnum - 1916, 1917
Pearl Farnum (substitute)
Olive Petesh- 1917, 1918
Jessie Hiatt - 1917, 1918
Winifred J. Koontz-1918-Petty School
M.K. Feltz – 1918
Cora Widdifield-1920-Fontana School
Mrs. Maybelle Haller - 1920, 1921, 1922
Mr. G.B. West - Principal – 1920
Grace Sullivan-1920-Fontana School
Cleo C. Copple - 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926
Alznia H. Kelley - 1924, 1925
William Hilgendorf - Principal – 1923
Margaretha Klienschmidt - 1934, 1935
Alberta Johnson - 1935, 1936, 1937
Isabel Lease (exact years unknown)
May Gustin - 1935, 36, 1937
Madalyn O'Hara - 1938, 1939
Ida Kraft - 1937, 1938
Rachel Copp (exact years unknown)
Agnes James – 1939
William Chance (exact years unknown)
Miss Poitevon (exact years unknown)
Helen (Hortick) Mitzner - 1942, 1943
Mrs. Danech - 1943, 1944
Gertrude Stanfield - 1944, 45
Mrs. Patricia Conn - 1949, 50
Mrs. Wellman - 1946
Marcella Makich - 1947
Leona Rector – 1947, 1948
Mitzie Granger - 1954
Carol Ludtke -1950, 1951, 1952
Ramona (Proper) Warhime - 1949
Patricia (Carr) Dostal - 1942
Mrs. Miller (exact years unknown)
Mae Jamison - 54, 1955, 1956, 1957
Joe Sorkness -1956
Don Olsen (exact years unknown)
Mrs. Loney (exact years unknown)
Mrs. Peterson (exact years unknown)
Mrs. Effinger -1964
Mrs. Viola Murray - 1964, 1965
Mr. Symionow - 1965
Mrs. Symionow - 1965
Mr. Janke (exact years unknown)

Through the years, until consolidation with the Geraldine School District in 1967, classes were split between grades with grades 1-4 meeting in one room and grades 5-8 meeting in another. The basement also served as living quarters for teachers and some students who lived outside of town prohibiting a daily commute.[60]

As would be expected in a small community, former students fondly remember the school and the time they spent there.[61] John Bishop recalled that students would occasionally be selected to ring the large

[59] Ibid; Henry L. Armstrong and others. *Spokes, Spurs and Cockleburs*. Geraldine History Committee. River Press Publishing Company, Fort Benton, MT. 1978.

[60] Ibid; Bonnie Johnson Soulsby, personal communication.

[61] Much of the following remembrances were compiled by Elaina Juedeman, Tenesha Thompson, Taylor Duvall, Brielle McKinlay, and Colie Moline. The collection of the local histories began while the girls were 8th grade students at Geraldine Elementary School in 2008). Some of the above students continued the project as part of a Geraldine

school bell to notify students that recess was over. A favorite trick was to pull on the bell rope and turn the bell completely over, so it wouldn't ring; "Our theory was, if the bell could not be rung, we would have a longer recess. That didn't work."[62]

Marcella Knedler, a former student who attended the school from the 5th through 8th grades and later taught at the school, remembers climbing the fence and walking on top of it at recess. Falling off the fence or hurting yourself elicited little sympathy from the teachers; if seriously injured, they sent you home. As a teacher in the mid-1940s she recalls teachers received $2000 per year plus $10 a month for janitorial work that involved hauling water as no indoor plumbing existed.

One of the earliest school remembrances is from Hilda Moe from Norway, who visited the property in 1989. Ms. Moe attended Square Butte School from 1918 to 1922. She too remembers the basement being used to house students. She also recalled that Mrs. Beckman, the Matron, and she both cried the day her family returned to Norway from a failed homestead on the west side of Square Butte Mountain.

June Petty recounted two events:

> We were let out of school early on two different occasions that I remember, one on Armistice, November 11, 1918, and the other was when Charles Lindberg, who later became famous, landed his plane between Square Butte and nearby Cowboy [Steele] Creek in the spring of 1921, in late April or May. He was doing this barnstorming through Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming and Montana for practice and for the money he made taking passengers for $5 each. There was another man with him either his father or a friend of his who was also a pilot, either of them often went with him. All the school children got to go over and see him and his plane. It was a big event in our lives. No one went for a ride while he was in Square Butte.

Nancy Felton, a school mate of June Petty remembered Armistice Day as well:

> The War's over was their jubilant message. At first we were rather stunned, then happy as we realized what this meant. We had known there was a war on, of course. We had cut our share of gun wipers for Junior Red Cross and saved our tinfoil; but the world was larger then. In Square Butte we found most of the population in the middle of Main Street or so it seemed. One child told us, 'a lady went in the saloon!', which was unheard of then. Another was selling peanuts, and I remember Dad giving each of us a fifty-cent piece for a special treat.[63]

Closure of the Square Butte School

Throughout Montana beginning in the 1920s, the cumulative effect of the loss of tax dollars in smaller rural communities, the improvement of roads, and the production and increase in use of reliable buses resulted in educational consolidation. As summarized by Architectural Historian Andrew Gulliford: "the

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School history class project. Their 8th grade teacher, Ms. Amy Collins, oversaw the project; Henry Armstrong assisted.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Students Nancy and Oliver Felton's father was W.R. Felton. Felton served as a locating engineer for the Milwaukee Railroad main line and later the branch line from Harlowton through Square Butte to Great Falls. After leaving the employ of the railroad he homesteaded three miles south of the town of Square Butte in 1912. An astute student of history and Lewis and Clark in particular, Felton wrote 18 articles for the *Square Butte Tribune*, directed toward the school children in the Square Butte School in 1920. This was followed up by the distribution of the articles to all Chouteau County schools. He later co-authored two well-known companion histories, *The Frontier Years* and *Before Barb Wire,* using 250 photos taken by his father-in-law, noted early day Miles City photographer L. A. Huffman.

rectangular frame schools…gave way to yellow school buses…that transported more and more rural children to town."[64]

The consolidations throughout Montana followed national education trends:

> As early as the mid 1800's, consolidation of schools was thought to provide students a more thorough education by eliminating small schools in favor of large ones. Legislation providing free public transportation was passed by the state of Massachusetts in 1869, paving the way for consolidation of rural schools. The invention of the automobile and paving of roads allowed students to travel longer distances in shorter amounts of time, decreasing the need for the many one-room schools built by early settlers.
>
> The rise of industry in urban areas in the late nineteenth century contributed to the school consolidation movement. The prevailing belief during the industrial revolution was that education could contribute to an optimal social order using organizational techniques adapted from industry. Early school reformers and policy makers felt that an industrialized society required all schools to look alike, and began to advocate more of an urban, centralized model of education. Larger schools were seen as more economical and efficient, which was defined in terms of economy of scale. As a result of this thinking, urban and larger schools were adopted as the "one best model," and from this context rural schools were judged deficient.[65]

Consolidation continued through the 1940s and 1950s in Montana. By the 1950s, discussion regarding the best methods to prepare students for college arose. School size became a focal point of consolidation efforts. James Bryan Conant, author of *American High Schools Today* and product of the Cold War, argued that successful high schools required at least 100 students to provide a better learning atmosphere and offer full curriculums to improve the quality of education allowing American students to compete with the Soviet Union.[66]

Of course, business also pushed for consolidation. Companies such as International Harvester, served as a major promoter of school consolidation in the 1930s by producing a catalog that devoted several pages to promoting newly manufactured International Harvester school buses.[67]

While it fared better than many schools across Montana, consolidation finally caught up to the Square Butte School in the late 1960s. Although situated in a small town with a dwindling tax base, the Square Butte School operated until 1967 when it finally became a casualty of consolidation. On April 1, 1967, a vote taken, ironically at the Square Butte School, declared School District 61 non-existent and annexed the property and assets to Elementary District #44B Geraldine, closing the educational chapter of Square Butte and the school that served it for almost half a century.[68]

In 1971, the Trustees of School District 61 deeded the school building to Roy and Laura Hankins, who in turn deeded the property to Gyme and Carol Scribner on February 26, 1973. The Scribners began the initial efforts to convert the building into a home. Their efforts were detailed in the August 7, 1974

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[64] Andrew Gulliford, *America's Country Schools,* (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1984), p. 195.

[65] Joe Bard, Clark Gardner, and Regi Weiland, "National Rural Education Association Report: Rural School Consolidation: History, Research Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations," *The Rural Educator,* Winter 2006, p. 1.

[66] Bard, Gardner, and Weiland, p. 1.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Letter from Margaretha Thomas, Chouteau County Superintendent of Schools, consolidating District #61 into District #44 Geraldine. Document in possession of Henry Armstrong, Geraldine, MT. .

edition of the *River Press*.[69] The Scribners combined the two main story bathrooms and added a deck and a loft to create different levels instead of dividing the old classrooms with walls. The Scribners subsequently deeded the property to Steve and Pamela Scribner Rose in September of 1990. Pamela Scribner assumed full ownership on October 14, 1999.[70]

Through the history of the Square Butte School, the building served as an anchor to the community, not only serving educational needs, but also being used for larger gatherings and celebrations. The school remains a monument to those who believed in the future of their community and the future of their children. The act of rebuilding a new school almost literally from ashes of the previous school stands as a tribute to the tenacious, resolute, far seeking and hardy people that settled this area.

Architectural Significance

Developed near the end of the Victorian Period and commonly constructed from 1910 to 1930, the Italian Renaissance Revival style looked to Italy for inspiration. Developed in contrast to some of the other competing architectural style of the time, such as Gothic Revival, Queen Anne and Shingle styles, the Italian Renaissance Revival style and the earlier Italianate style were both modeled on the 16th century buildings of the Italian Renaissance, though the Italian Renaissance Revival style is much closer stylistically to the original form than the Italianate style. Hallmarks of the style include an imposing scale and formal design that can take several distinct forms. However, nearly all variations are of masonry construction. Characteristics can include a large rectangular building topped with low pitched or flat roofs, short parapet walls, symmetrical facades, a strong division of floors often delineated by elaborate string courses, round-topped windows, and crowning balustrade. The Square Butte School presents as a simpler, stripped, rendition of the style. The architect-designed building is unique in terms of its location in a community the size of Square Butte. Indeed, it was only one of five schools (out of 96 schools) in all of Chouteau County from 1918 to 1959 constructed from either brick or stone.[71] It stands not only as the singular example of stripped Italian Renaissance Revival architecture in Square Butte, but also the largest and only brick building in the community. Despite its location at the west edge of town, it serves as an architectural focal point of the community.

The style of the building harkens back to when the town of Square Butte exuded enthusiasm and the promise of a bright future. It served to set the community apart from other towns its size and from much larger towns at the time of its construction.

Buildings such as schools, depots, banks and post offices all served to distinguish a town from a crossroads. The intent of the architect, George Shanley, is clear—design and construct a school reflective of Square Butte's anticipated prosperity and optimism in the future. While not considered an overly large building in many venues, the size of the school was imposing in a town the size of Square Butte. Presenting a significantly softened example of the style, the school displays stability and security in a muted version of Italian Renaissance Revival, avoiding the excessive ornamentation. Viewed from a distance, the tall, symmetrical fenestration suggests the appearance of regularly spaced pilasters, reminiscent of a temple. The projecting, full-height, formal entry bay, together with polychrome brick hood moulds, banding, and panels, furthers this illusion. Instead of a stringcourse, tan brick accents differentiate the upper and lower floors. In accord with the dictates of the style, Shanley designed Square

[69] "Preserving a Piece of Square Butte's Past." *River Press,* Fort Benton, February 20, 2013.

[70] Deeds on file at the Chouteau County Courthouse, Fort Benton, Montana.

[71] *Statistical Reports of the School Districts in Chouteau County, Montana,* 1918 to 1959. RS109. On file at the Montana Historical Society Research Center, Helena, MT.

Butte School to function practically yet also be aesthetically pleasing. The symmetry associated with the style is suggested in the school from the balanced facades to the proportions of the building.

George H. Shanley

Architect George Shanley designed many buildings in Great Falls and the surrounding area. Born in Burlington, Vermont August 26, 1875, he received his education at the University of Vermont. He reportedly worked for a time in St. Paul, Minnesota, before travelling to Fargo to help his father, a contractor, with the construction of St. Mary's Cathedral there. Shanley arrived in Kalispell, Montana in 1896, where he partnered with established Montana architect A. J. Gibson in the Gibson and Shanley firm. He then moved to Butte and partnered with John Hackett Kent. He opened an office in Great Falls in 1906, and through the years worked both on his own and with other distinguished Montana architects. In 1918, Governor Sam Stewart appointed him to the State Board of Architecture, where he served as a board member and as President for many years. Very active in state politics, Shanley served as Representative from Cascade County to the Montana Legislature in 1936. [72]

George and his wife, Inez married in Great Falls' St. Ann's Cathedral. They had three sons and later adopted a fourth. He moved to Great Falls in 1906 and remained there until he died November 4, 1960, at age 85. Shanley's stamp appears on many houses, schools, hotels and numerous other buildings throughout the state. Great Falls buildings and structures associated with Shanley include the Civic Center, Country Club Towers, the Park Hotel, the 10th Street Bridge, St. Joseph's Church, the Washington School, the Strain Building, Eddy's Bakery, and the Liberty Theatre, to name a few.[73] Many Shanley designed buildings or structures in Great Falls are listed in the National Register of Historic Places including the Cascade County Court House, the Montana State Fair Grounds, Neihart School, the Tenth Street Bridge, Ursuline Academy, the Margaret Block, and the Roberts building. The Shanley-designed Graves Hotel in Harlowton is also listed in the National Register.

[72] "George Shanley, Falls Architect, Dies at 85." *Great Falls Tribune,* November 5, 1960.

[73] "Architect Left His Mark on Great Falls." *Great Falls Tribune",* November 12, 2006.

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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 # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

__x_ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
_x__ Other
Name of repository: _School records in possession of the author, Henry Armstrong_____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property __less than 1 acre_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 47.5165738934092 Longitude: -110.201440890628
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or

UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

[x] NAD 1927 or [ ] NAD 1983

1. Zone: 12 Easting: 560125 Northing: 5262662
2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The school grounds are described as follows: Legal description is NW¼ of the SW¼ of Section 3, Township 20 North, Range 12 East per Montana Cadastral. Base Map Service Center, Montana State Library, Helena MT.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes the footprint of the Square Butte School and the associated playground equipment used historically.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: ____Henry Armstrong_____
organization: _____
street & number: _6415 Panton Rd_____
city or town:____Geraldine_____ state: ___MT____ zip code:__59446__
e-mail_____
telephone:___(406) 737-4204_____
date:_____March 21, 2013_____

Assisted By:
name/title: ____John Boughton_____
organization: __MTSHPO_____
street & number: _1410 8th Avenue _____
city or town:____Helena_____ state: ___MT____ zip code:__59620__
e-mail____jboughton@mt.gov_____
telephone:___(406) 444-3647_____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

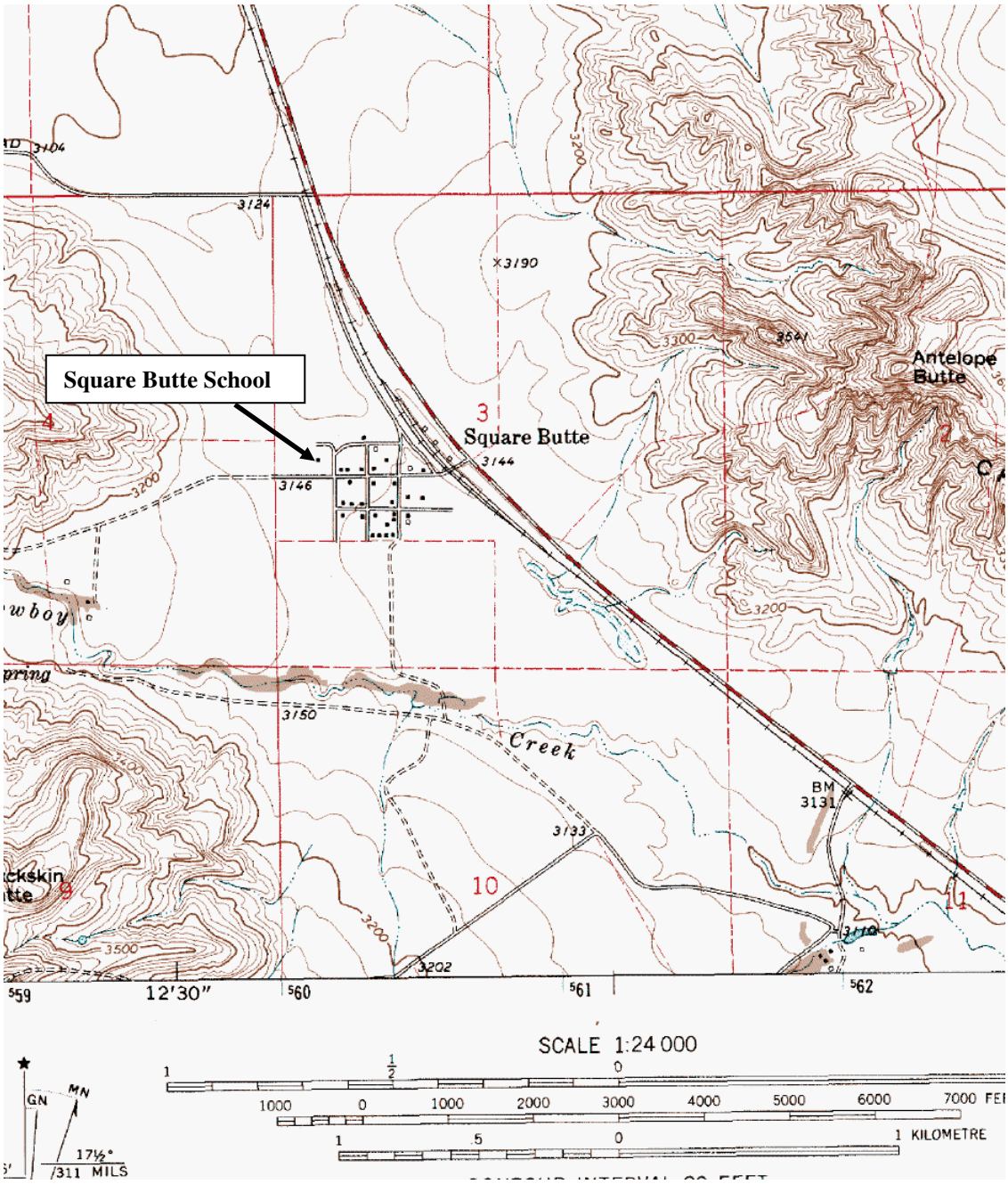
Name of Property: Square Butte School
City or Vicinity: Square Butte
County: Chouteau State: MT
Photographer: Henry Armstrong
Date Photographed: March 2013
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Please see Continuation Sheets

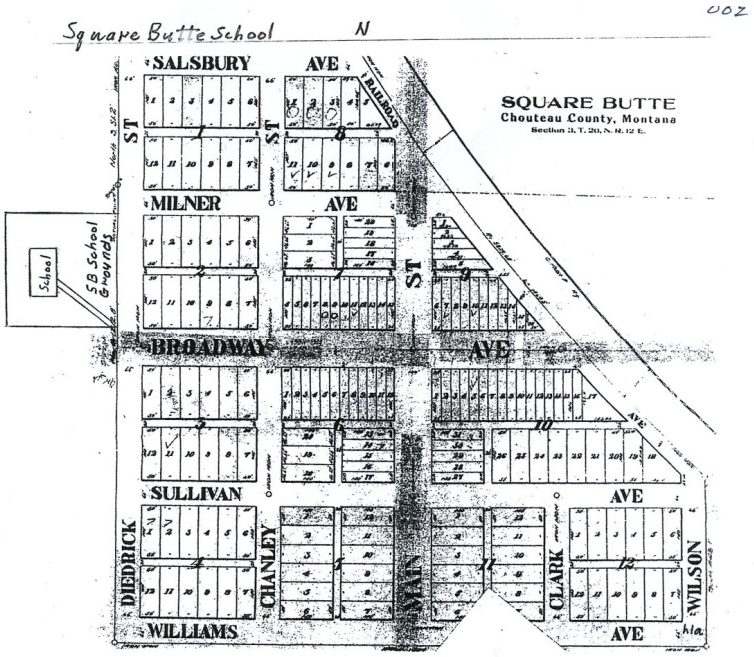
Property Owner:
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Pamela Scribner
street & number 1719½ 5th Avenue North telephone
city or town Great Falls state MT zip code 59401

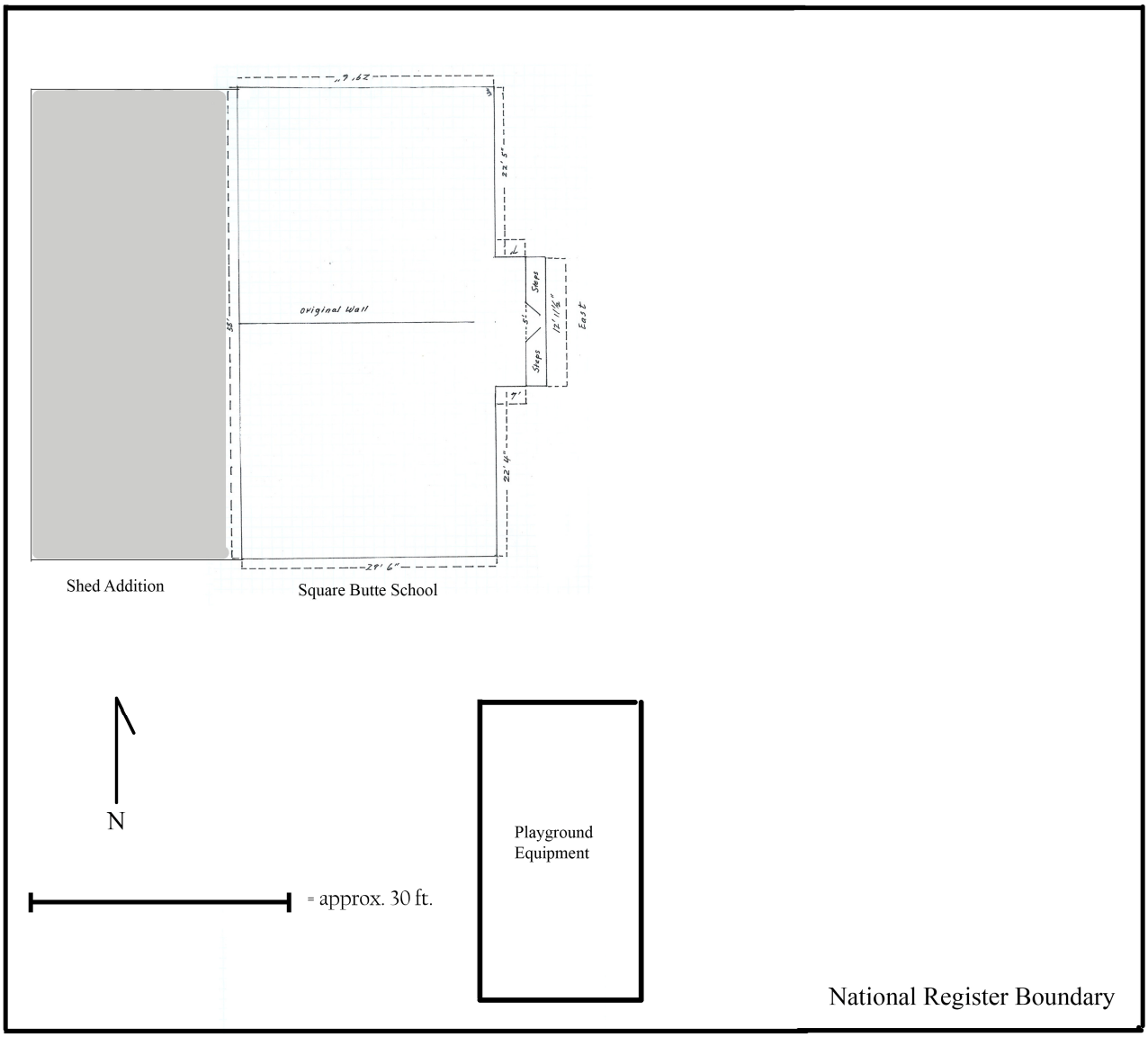
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



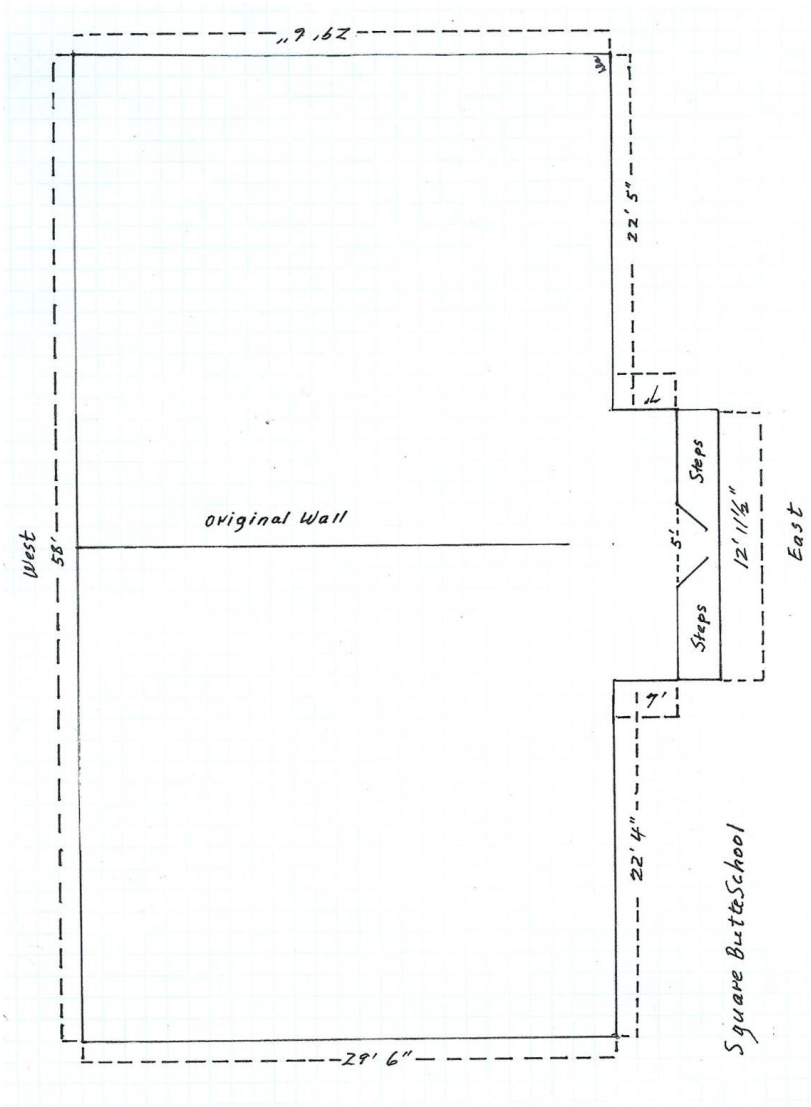
Location of Square Butte School. Found on the Square Butte, Mont. (1972) 7.5' Quadrangle Map



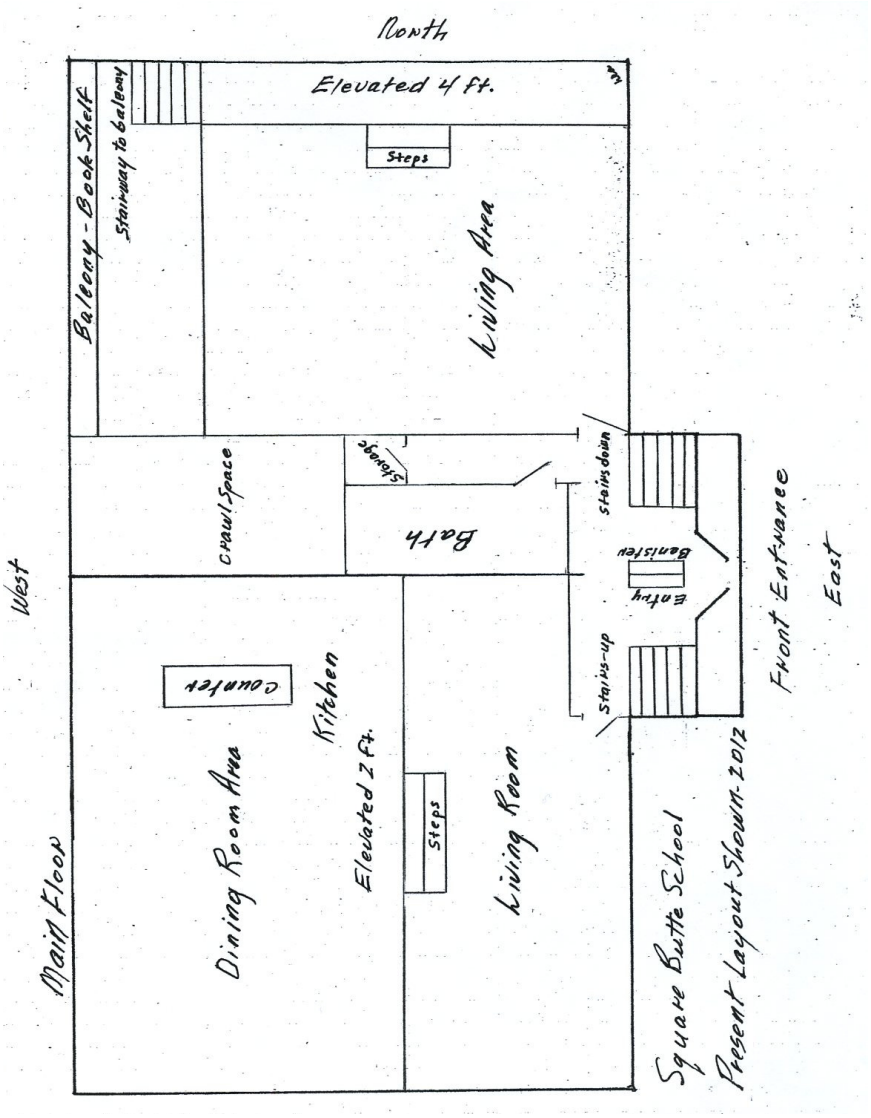
Plat map of Square Butte Townsite with Location of Square Butte School. Plat on file at the Montana State Historical Society, Helena, Montana.



Property Map

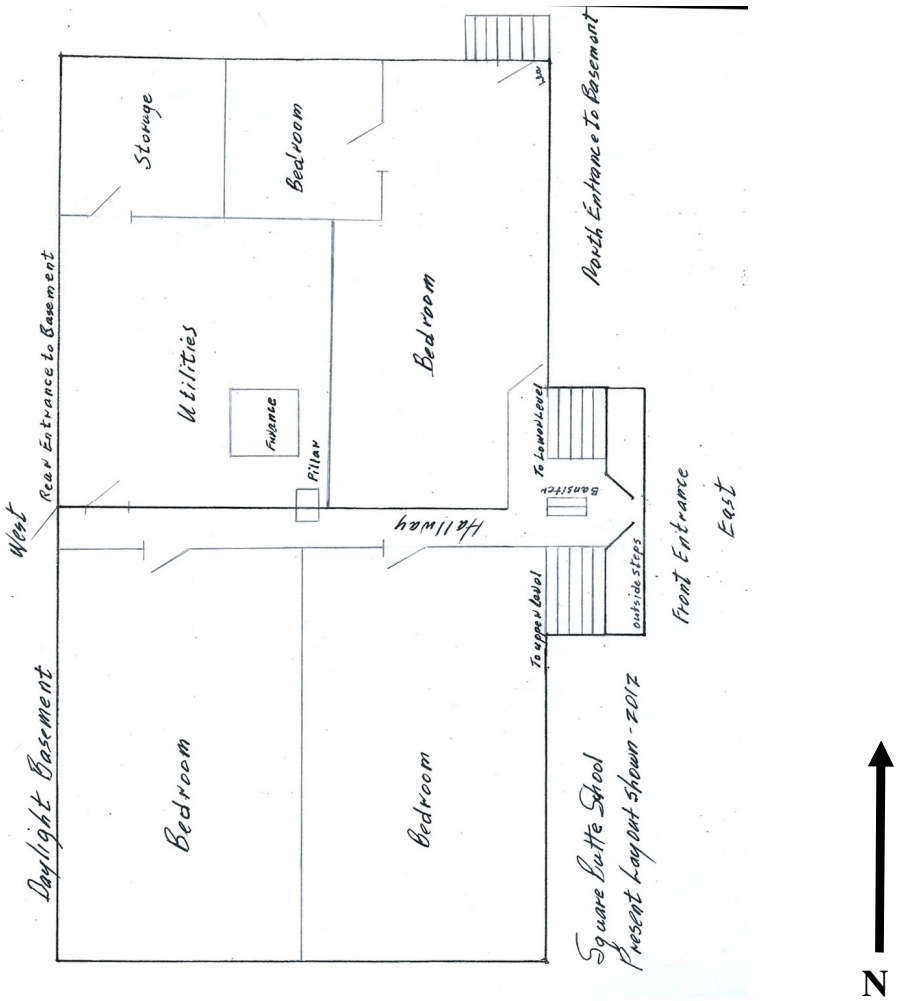


Exterior floorplan of Square Butte School



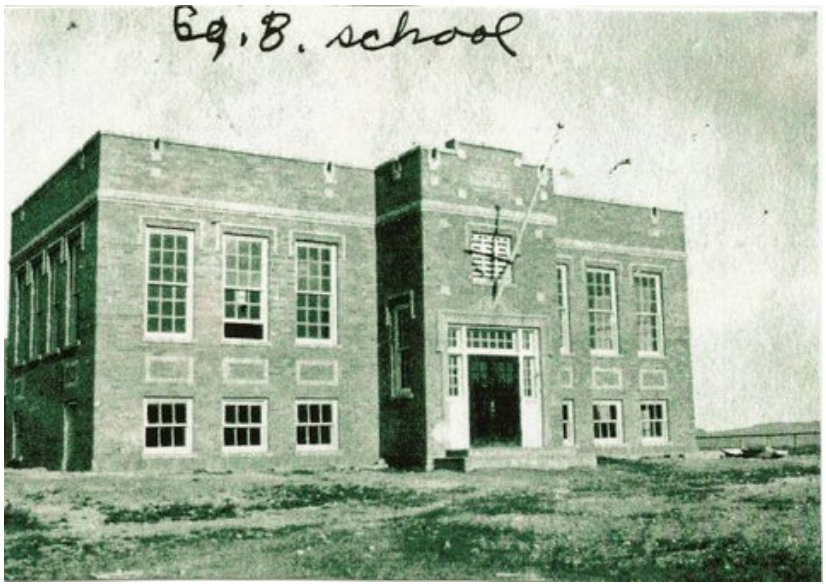
N

Present–day floorplan of main level of Square Butte School



Present-day floorplan of daylight basement of Square Butte School

First brick Square Butte School that burned in 1917, circa 1917. Photographer unknown. From *Beyond Spokes* (2013).



Square Butte School, circa 1918. Photographer unknown.

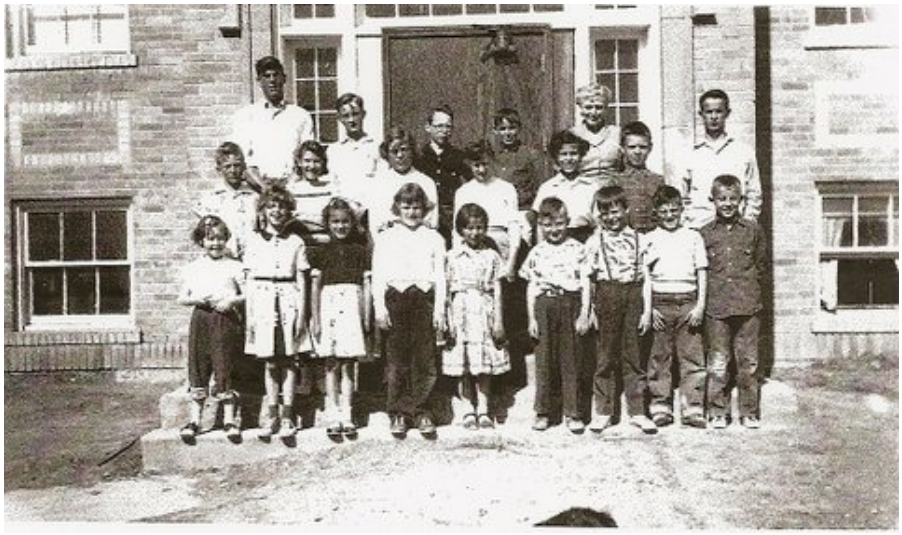
Original Square Butte School, circa 1915. Photographer unknown. From *Spokes, Spurs & Cockleburs* (1976), courtesy of Leon McCardle, Geraldine, MT.

Square Butte School (1947). Photographer unknown. Group of students and parents assembled in front of school assembled to go on a picnic. Teachers include Leota Rector and Marcella Makich. From *Spokes, Spurs & Cockleburs* (1976), courtesy of John Bishop, Square Butte, MT.

Square Butte School (1936) photographer unknown. Group photo of teacher and students. Left to right back row: Teacher May Gustin, John McCollum, Nita Peters, Gordon Bechard, Carol McCollum, Bill Jackson, Marcella Makich, Jack Walden, 2nd Row Howard Odette, Marabeth Zanto, Gordon Odette, William Craig, Doris Tanner, Jim Zanto, Front row: Margaret Klay Jacqueline Peters, Wayne Jackson, Barbara Krejci and Betty Walden. From *Spokes, Spurs & Cockleburs* (1976), courtesy of John Bishop, Square Butte, MT.

Square Butte School (1954), photographer unknown. Group photo of teachers and students. Back row: Teachers Mitzie Granger and Mae Jamison. From *Spokes, Spurs & Cockleburs* (1976), courtesy of John Bishop, Square Butte, MT.

Square Butte School (1955), photographer unknown. Class photo 1st through 4th grade. Back row left to right: Julie Boutilier, Teacher Mae Jamison, Jessie Hankins, Barry Zanto, Steve Johnson. Front row Diane Caufield, Jeanie Russell, Bonnie Johnson, Mark Smith and Mickey Smith. Courtesy of Diane Buck, Geraldine, MT.



Square Butte School (1955), photographer unknown. Group photo of students 1st through 8th grade. Back row left to right: Teacher Don Olson, John Bishop, Leonard Johnson, Ronnie Russell, Teacher - Mrs. Mae Jamison, Roy Russell. Second row John Smith, Faye Klay, Norma Hankins, Sharon Caufield, Jauitia Gardipee, Leland Johnson. Third row: Diane Caufield, Julie Boutilier, Jeanie Russell, Jessie Hankins, Bonnie Johnson, Mark Smith, Steve Johnson, Mickey Smith, Barry Zanto. Courtesy of Diane Buck, Geraldine, MT.

National Register Photographs
All Photographs:
Name of Property: Square Butte School
City or Vicinity: Square Butte
County: Chouteau State: MT
Photographer: Daniel VanVoast,
Date Photographed: 2013

Photo# 0001: East elevation, view to the west.
Photo# 0002: North elevation, view to the south.
Photo# 0003: south elevation, view to the north.
Photo# 0004: south elevation, view to the north.
Photo# 0005: west elevation, view to the east.
Photo #0006: West elevation, detail of doors in west elevation of school building. View to the east.
Photo# 0007: Playground equipment, view to the northwest.
Photo# 0008: Playground equipment, view to the southwest.
Photo# 0009: Playground equipment, view to the northwest.
Photo# 0010: Playground equipment, view to the north-northwest.

Photo# 0001: East elevation, view to the west.

Photo# 0002: North elevation, view to the south.

Photo# 0003: south elevation, view to the north.

Photo# 0004: south elevation, view to the north.

Photo# 0005: west elevation, view to the east.

Photo #0006: West elevation, detail of doors in west elevation of school building. View to the east.

Photo# 0007: Playground equipment, view to the northwest.

Photo# 0008: Playground equipment, view to the southwest.

Photo# 0009: Playground equipment, view to the northwest.

Photo# 0010: Playground equipment, view to the north-northwest.

1918