United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number SLR Page 1

Big Woods School
Name of Property
DuPage County, IL
County and State
N.A.
Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 16000197

Property Name: Big Woods School

County: DuPage County State: IL

Multiple Name: N.A.

==========

This property was 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.

Barbara Wyatt 4-22-16
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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Amended Item in Nomination

This SLR is issued to document the following:

The location of components of the nominated property by the submission of a site plan.
The appearance of the contributing garage and shed by submission of photo images.

The State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

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Distribution

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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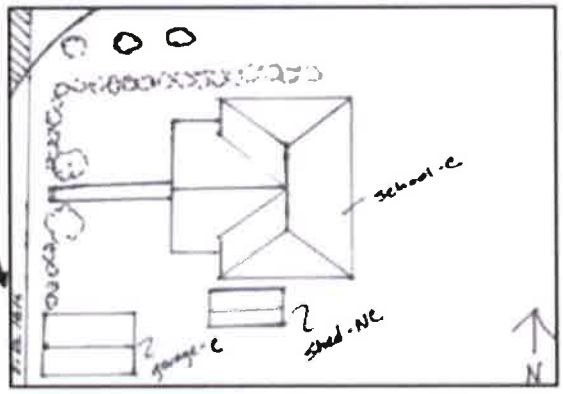
Site plan of Big Woods School. Google Earth Images above (facing southeast) showing school, non-contributing shed, and contributing garage and below (facing northeast).



NPS Form 10-900
1024-0018

OMB No.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

197

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.

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

Historic name:
Big Woods 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: 3033 N. Eola Road
City or town: Aurora State: IL County: DuPage
Not For Publication: ☐ 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:

___**A** ___**B** _x_**C** ___**D**

DSHPO 3/4/16

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

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Big Woods School
Name of Property

DuPage, Illinois
County and State

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:

X 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:) _____

by Barbara Wyatt 4-21-16

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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	
2	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2	3	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
Domestic – Secondary Structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Vacant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
_Bungalow/Craftsman_____
_____
_____

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: _Concrete, Brick, Terra Cotta Tile _____

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 Big Woods School is a red brick, one-room school house with a red tile roof, located at the corner of State Route #56, (Butterfield Road) and Eola Road, in the city of Aurora, County of DuPage, State of Illinois. It was built in 1917-1918 in the Craftsman style by the construction company of the Schiffler Brothers of Naperville, Illinois. The school is on the current Eola Road near the intersection with Butterfield Road (IL Route 56) in what is now the City of Aurora, Illinois. The nomination consists of two contributing buildings – the school and the garage – and one non-contributing property – the shed. The school property retains its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Narrative Description

Big Woods School is located on the north end of Eola Road in northeast Aurora, Illinois. There is the open range of Fermi Lab to the north, the marsh and old growth forest of historic Big Woods Forest Preserve across Eola Road to the west with its nineteenth century, stone, farm house residence. Adjacent to the school to the south there is Big Woods Cemetery with burials from the 1800s to the present, and south of that there is a still active nineteenth-century frame

church. The school, which faces west, is located toward the front of the lot and is set back from the street about 55 feet. A concrete sidewalk leads to the front stoop and a side entrance. A one-car brick garage with a gable roof is located in the southwest corner of the lot. The wood braces on the gable ends and rafter tails under the eaves are similar to those of the school, indicating that the building was probably constructed at the same time. The wood-paneled garage door appears original and is still intact. The side entrance and window on the north elevation are boarded up. There is no longer street access to the garage. A small wood shed with a gable roof lies directly to the south of the school. The shed does not contribute to the property's significance.

The one-and-a-half story brick school has a terra cotta tile roof and with a cement foundation. The building has a rectangular plan and is approximately thirty-five by thirty-seven feet, with the front steps extending out into the front yard. The front-facing gable projects thirteen feet from a simple hipped unit. A brick chimney is located on the ridge line of the gable front, which is slightly below that of the hipped roof. The low-pitched roof has broad eaves, exposed rafter tails, and decorative brackets and braces on the front elevation. A majority of the windows are two-over-four, double-hung with wood-frames and wood sashes. All have stone sills. (The basement windows have a continuous sill.) The raised foundation is demarcated by a water table of soldier bricks.

The front entrance on the west elevation is centrally located and accessed by nine concrete steps with brick knee walls and stone caps. The wood paneled door has one light and is adorned by a stone pediment with the inscription, "Big Woods School." There are three windows on this elevation; a small paired window with two-over-two lights beneath the eaves and one on either side of the entrance. The windows have brick lintels with stone keystones. The front entrance is centrally located and adorned by a stone pediment with the inscription, "Big Woods School."

The north elevation has three paired windows on the first floor; one in the gabled unit and two in the hipped portion. The six basement windows are located directly beneath these and extend to the water table.

The rear, or east elevation, has three paired windows on the first floor and six basement windows located directly beneath these. A slab door, accessed by a steel platform staircase with stair guards and open risers, is located on the northeast corner of the first floor. Another door is located on the ground level beneath the northeast windows. It is sheltered by a small gabled shed with corrugated fiberglass walls, measuring about ten feet by six feet, that abuts the building.

The south elevation has one paired window on the first floor of the gabled unit. A bay is located directly beneath, with a six cross paneled door on the west side and paired windows on the south.

The interior of the school has plaster walls, wood trim and wood floors on the first floor. A chair rail runs the perimeter of the rooms. The entrance opens onto a small foyer with the original library to the north and the stairs leading to the basement on the south wall. There are two entry doors to the classroom. Both have single lights with two vertical panels and are topped with

transoms. The classroom has windows on the north and east walls, which were set high enough to facilitate the teacher's desks that were beneath them. The original blackboards, located on the west wall between the entry doors and the entire length of the south wall, are still intact. On either side of the entry doors on the west wall are openings for the girls' and boys' coatrooms; both contain a small bathroom.

The wood staircase to the basement has two-quarter landing; the railing has square balusters and newel posts with flat caps. The basement is three-quarters above ground. There is large open room with fairly large windows on all three sides. Beneath the entry and library are two fairly large rooms, the furnace room and a coal room. The floor is poured concrete.

Big Woods School has sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The original red brick exterior remains unchanged while the red tile roof was recently repaired after almost one-hundred years. While some of the room uses may have changed, the floor plan has not been altered; even the original blackboards remain. A small entry with matching brick was added to the south of the building. This addition was likely built shortly after the school was constructed, since its five-paneled wood door was commonly used during the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century. Also the doors on the east wall and steps leading to the main floor were added sometime in the past, presumably to comply with fire codes.

The windows, asbestos, and bathroom fixtures were removed by the previous owner in anticipation of the structure being destroyed. The original windows have been replaced with exact copies of those originally in the building. One old photograph shows double-doors to the front entrance; it is not known when the existing door was installed. The alterations are minimal and have not impacted the integrity 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.)

- [ ] 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.)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1918

Significant Dates
1918

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

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Schiffler Brothers, Naperville, Illinois

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.)

Big Woods School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for Architecture, as a good example of a "modern" one-room schoolhouse. Big Woods School was designed according to standards set by the state of Illinois to ensure schools had adequate light, ventilation, heat, and met safety and sanitary requirements. The period of significance is 1918, the year it was built. It has sufficient integrity for listing in the National Register.

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

The Beginning of Public Education in Illinois

The first legislation to address public education in Illinois occurred with the passing of the bill, "An Act Providing for the Establishment of Free Schools" in 1825. The law required townships of fifteen families or more to provide free schools for at least three months and allowed for property taxes to be collected to pay for public schools. The concept was groundbreaking at the time, but using tax dollars for free education proved to be controversial, and that portion was stricken from the law the following year.[1]

Despite this setback, support of public schools continued throughout the Midwest. There was a growing sentiment that free education was necessary in a democratic society:

> Quite a number of property owners and business men were incensed that any man's property should be taxed to educate another man's children….Yet in spite of all these objections, more and more men were won over to the philosophy that democracy for all men necessitated education for all. The changing attitudes were a result to a large extent of organized groups, able leaders, and influential newspapers and periodicals." [2]

The Illinois legislature responded by passing the Educational Law of 1841, "… which created township trustees to oversee all property in the township including Section 16; allowed associations of inhabitants to acquire land, build schools, and appoint three of their own trustees to run the schools; and appoint County School Commissioners to sell school lands and apply their sale and township funds for the support of schools."[3] The Educational Law of 1845 added financial support for public education by letting Illinoisans tax themselves – if two-thirds of the

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[1] Robert G. Bone, pp. 124 - 125.
[2] Bone, p. 128.
[3] National Register of Historic Places: Butler School, Oak Brook, DuPage County, Illinois. Reference number 03000355, p.8.

school district's legal voters approved -- and gave the Secretary of State the ability to administer schools.[4]

Nearly thirty years after the Free School Law was gutted, Illinois established a public education system with the passage of the Education Act of 1855. In 1870, under a new state constitution, the Illinois General Assembly became responsible for ensuring children with a proper education. The constitution also established local school boards. In 1883, the Compulsory Schools Attendance Law passed, which required children aged 8 through 14 to attend school for a minimum of 12 weeks per year. Although the law passed, it was not adhered to until after World War II.[5]

One-Room Schoolhouses in Illinois

The most common type of school in the 1800s was the one-room schoolhouse. Having one room allowed the teacher to instruct students in different levels while keeping an eye on the others. Some believed there were also educational benefits to having a single classroom:

> One student reported that one-room schools provided "the almost unlimited opportunity for the gifted pupil to advance." By having the chance to hear older students recite (after their own assignment was competed), it was not uncommon for children in the fifth or sixth grade (and sometimes even younger) to have mastered everything presented to the seventh and eighth grades. At a much more sophisticated level, this is one of the advantages expressed by exponents of the open-plan school of the 1960s. [6]

While Americans tend to sentimentalize one-room schoolhouses of the nineteenth century, the reality was less appealing, for"…back in their heyday, they were often dirty, noisy, and ill-suited to the process of education."[7] Illinois children were entitled to a free education, but there were no laws governing the condition of their schools. Francis G. Blair, who served as the State Superintendent of Public Instruction from 1906 into the 1930s, sought to change that.[8] In 1908, Blair wrote a letter to district school directors, in which he criticized those who allowed the schools to be in such a deplorable state:

> Your homes are furnished with modem conveniences, your farms supplied with modem machines and appliances. Are you still asking the teacher to cultivate the ground of your children's minds with a pedagogical diamond plow and harvests their intellectual crops with a reaping hook? Or, is your school supplied with modem apparatus, with the best books and with the suitable seats and desk? Is it

[4] Butler School, p. 8.
[5] Illinois Education Timeline.
[6] Ben E. Graves, School Ways: The Planning and Design of America's Schools. (New York: McGraw - Hill, Inc., 1993), p. 22.
[7] Graves, p. 22.
[8] National Register of Historic Places: East Waterford School, Lewistown, Fulton County, Illinois. Reference number 09000897, p. 13.

> properly heated, lighted and ventilated? Are its walls decorated and hung with good pictures? Has it a library? In short, is it a decent, wholesome, comfortable place for your children to live and work in for five days of each week for more than six months of each year? If it is, may the blessings of all the gods of childhood and education rest upon you. But, if the building, fence and out-houses are old, disreputable and unsightly; if they are a menace to the health, the decency and the morals of your children; if the shades are torn or missing, the desks antiquated, broken, carved, and unfit; if the heating is bad and the ventilation, worse; if the whole thing is a cheerless, repulsive, old shell, upon you and you alone must rest the blame. And there is nothing side of high heaven that can deliver you in that day of judgment when you must stand and give account of your stewardship and show why, knowingly or ignorantly, you deprived the children of their legal and just rights (Pruitt 1908: 1).

Blair created a series of requirements for what a "Standard School" would need. The standards, which were enacted in the Sanitation Law of 1915, gave Blair, as the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the responsibility to "…prepare with the advice of the State Board of Health, the State Architect and the State Fire Marshall, for school directors and boards of education specifications for the minimum requirements for the heating, ventilation, lighting, seating, water supply, toilets, and safety against fire which will conserve the health and safety of the children attending the public schools."[9]

Schools built after the law was passed had to meet the minimum standards. School districts had until the school year commenced in 1917 to bring existing schools into compliance; those who did not would not receive their state disbursements until the schools were brought to code. [10] In most cases the school districts were able to meet the requirements of the law by updating the existing school buildings; new schools were constructed to take the place of schools that were outdated or in serious disrepair.[11] The State Superintendent of Public Instruction's Office's circular, *One Room and Consolidated Country Schools of Illinois,* was one of several sources that offered plans and specifications of modern one-room schools. In addition to the school room, which was to measure 32' x 23' 6", the plan called for a vestibule, separate coatrooms for girls' and boys,' a library and study, and a fuel room. Schools with basements were to have poured concrete floors and big open areas for children to play in. The plans were drawn up by an architect with the help of educators familiar with rural schools. Careful attention was paid to every detail -- the floorplan, the desk placement, the color of paint, etc. – to create an environment most conducive to educating and disciplining children:

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[9] Francis G. Blair, The One-Room and Consolidated Country Schools of Illinois, Circular No. 100, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Springfield, 1916, p. 4.
[10] Blair, p. 57.
[11] East Waterford School, p. 13.

> The lighting, cloak rooms, fuel room, porch and entry, heating, ventilation, and seating should be strictly followed. Some have made the mistake of changing the lighting, putting windows in front of the seated children. This is highly detrimental to the eyesight of the children and does no good whatsoever. Some have thought to improve the plan by placing doors from the entry to the cloakrooms. This makes proper conduct on the part of the children much more difficult and gives the teacher much more trouble.[12]

To ensure that the conditions of the 1915 law were met, school districts with a population of less than 100,000 whether building new or remodeling existing schools, were required to send plans and specifications for heating, ventilation, to the County Superintendent of Schools for approval.[13]

Big Woods School

The original Big Woods School was built sometime after 1850. This wooden school building was used as a school until 1917 when the land it was on was donated to the newly created School Board in order to erect a new school. An old photograph of the original schoolhouse indicates that it may have been too dilapidated to repair. (Figure 1)

The contractors for the new schoolhouse were Schiffler Brothers of Naperville, Illinois. The school board at the time placed a cement plaque against the chimney in the attic to commemorate the occasion with the date (Nov.10, 1917) and their names: John Warne, Pres. (son of the original settler, John Warne), W. W. Daw, Clerk, Sam Swenson, Chas. Schiffler and G.H. Beidelman. The School was completed and placed into service in 1918.

At the time Big Woods School was constructed, there were few consolidated schools in Illinois. As there were no laws requiring Illinoisans to pay to transport children to public schools, the one-room schoolhouse was the most common educational institution in rural Illinois. In 1916, there were 10, 632 one-room schools and 23 consolidated schools.[14] Of those only twenty-five percent met the Standard School requirements. Of the 65 one-room schoolhouses in DuPage County, there was only one Standard School. Big Woods School probably was among the earliest schools in the county to be built as a Standard School.

The design of the new Big Woods School clearly followed the requirements for a Standard School outlined in the 1916 circular *One Room and Consolidated Country Schools of Illinois*. In addition to listing the new requirements for schools and offering plans and specifications, the circular included detailed suggestions:

> *THE YARD (p. 9)*

[12] Blair, p. 21.
[13] Blair, p. 59.
[14] Ibid, p. 4, p. 36.

1. *The playground should not be less than one-half acre. It should consist principally of an open level space. The trees and shrubbery should be around the border of the lot….*
2. *There should be a concrete walk from the school house door to the gate and to the well….*

PLAN FOR A GOOD ONE-ROOM SCHOOL HOUSE (p. 21)
The vestibule is intended for entrance only….Double-doors should be placed both inside and out and the upper half of both sets should be of glass, that the teacher may see what is going on in the vestibule.

THE COAT ROOMS (p. 22)
Separate coat rooms for boys and girls are essential…. Above the door there should be a transom which should be open at all times and the door should not reach the floor within four inches. This will insure heating and ventilation of the coat rooms. No entrance should be placed between the vestibule and the coat rooms. The only entrance to the coat rooms should be in view of the teacher. This arrangement greatly lessens the difficulty in discipline.

INDOOR TOILETS FOR ONE-ROOM SCHOOLS (p. 77)
There are many objections to toilets separate from the school building, even when the best provisions are made for decency and health. The antiseptic or chemical tank which provides for drainage, makes it possible to remove all these objections.

When a new house is built, room for toilets may be provided connecting with the cloak rooms….The cost will not be materially more than it is for building two outhouses and concrete walks to them.

WHEN FACING THE HOUSE IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION (p. 23)
It may face south, east or west, but preferably not north.

THE FUEL ROOM (p. 23)
It is a great hardship for women teachers to have to carry coal from a distant part of the yard. When building a new house the cost of this room is much less than a separate coal house and the convenience of it is worth much.

THE SCHOOL ROOM (p. 23)
The school room is 23 by 31 feet and the ceiling is 13 feet high. It will seat comfortably forty-five pupils. The floor plan shows thirty desks and five backs, seating thirty pupils. Two more rows may be placed in the rear and one in front, making forty-five desks. Every door is within plain view of the teacher, as is the play ground [sic] at the rear of the building.

TINTING THE WALLS (p. 23)
The walls of a school room should be tinted so as to afford the children the best light and in such colors as are the most restful to the eyes. To tint all the surfaces, ceiling and walls

the same color is always bad, especially if the color is dark. It makes the room look like a cave. Paper should not be placed on new walls. It will not stay on and is insanitary… The proper colors can easily be obtained. Two schemes are recommended, one in green and one in tan. The wainscoting should be a chocolate brown, the walls up to the border should be a light green, no darker than a robin's egg. The border and ceiling should be a cream color.

THE LIGHTING (pp. 25 – 27)
When possible the light should come from the north or east….All windows (except north windows) should be provided with heavy white or light yellow tint shades. Light should never be admitted in front of the children. Even one window is very injurious.

REQUIREMENTS FOR LIGHTING (p. 71)
No. 17. – There shall be no windows in the wall which the seated school children face. The walls shall be a soft light tint, gray, tan, or green. The ceiling shall be in a very light tint.
No. 18. - In New Buildings – In school buildings hereafter erected the windows shall be at the left of the seated pupils.

The setting of the school, as per the requirements, was on a lot that allowed ample room for a playground. The school faces west, and the concrete sidewalk leading up to the entrance is still intact as are the shrubs and trees along the west and north boundary of the school lot.

The layout of the school allowed for the teacher to have a clear view of the rooms outside of the classroom; historic photographs show that the front entrance originally had double-glazed exterior doors leading to the vestibule. Single doors with windows on the upper half were installed on in the walls between the vestibule and the classroom. Access to the library was also visible from the classroom.

The floorplan is practically identical to the recommended plans in the circular. While the standards in the *One Room and Consolidated Country Schools of Illinois* recommended indoor plumbing, it does not provide sample floorplans with bathrooms. The boys' and girls' bathrooms at Big Woods School are accessed from the boys' and girls' coatrooms and are on opposite sides of the classroom. The library was in the corner. The Big Woods School classroom was slightly larger, at 24 by 35 feet, than recommended but the desks were arranged according to the plan in the circular as seen in the historic photograph (Figure 5). The seating arrangement shows that the children were facing the south wall, which has no windows. The larger windows on the east wall, are to the left of the children. The photograph shows the variations of color with the area below the chair rail being much darker than the walls, and a lighter color for the ceiling and border.

The arrangement of the basement plan identical to that in the circular, with the stairwell, furnace and coal room on one side leaving a large open space for play.

The students who attended Big Woods School came from founding farm families that migrated from the east to settle in DuPage County. After completing school, many of the students at Big

Woods School remained in the area and worked their family farms. For some of these students, Big Woods remained a "modern" school well after it was constructed. At a recent school reunion, one former student commented that she came from a small town south of Big Woods named Eola. There at Eola she and her family lived in a railroad car, in a box car community, as Eola was a railroad hub. She attended the school in the 1940s and was amazed at the indoor plumbing.

One-room schoolhouses continued to be common in Illinois through much of the first half of the twentieth century. By 1942, Illinois had 12,000 school districts – the largest number in the country. But the number of students was declining. The average classroom in Illinois' one-room schools was twelve students – one-third the size it was in 1900.[15] Educators tended to favor consolidated schools over the traditional one-room school. In 1915, Professor Newell D. Gilbert of Northern Illinois State Normal School, advocated the benefits of school consolidation in his dedication speech for the Kishwaukee consolidated school in DeKalb:

> Personally, I regard the consolidated school as second to no other advance step in the evolution of American education; also I regard it as nearer of effective realization than any other movement of equal importance. I do not believe you farmers are holding a place of political and social influence, nearly commensurate with your numbers, your wealth, your intelligence, or your force of character. So far as this may be true, it comes, I believe, from living rather isolated, being educated in isolated one-room schools, so that the farmer has thought too much in individual, rather than social terms.[16]

While educators touted the benefits of consolidation, there was no public funding available to pay for children's transportation to school. Poor roads in many areas were also a concern.[17] Finally, beginning in the mid-to-late1940s, Illinois enacted laws to reduce the number of school districts which sped up school consolidation:

> Consolidation had been a topic of discussion for several decades, but it wasn't until 1945 and 1947 that legislation was passed allowing the consolidation of these schools into larger districts. The next fifteen years were marked by rapid consolidation, particularly during the 1950s. By 1963, the number of school districts had been reduced to 1,430.[18]

The one-room schools once prevalent in DuPage County began to disappear. In 1870 there were eighty-five such schools in use.[19] In 1923, there were 47 one-room schoolhouses in DuPage County, by 1929 the number was reduced to 39. During the 1930s there was little change presumably due to the Depression, but by 1941 there were no one-room schoolhouses left in

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[15] Illinois Education Timeline. http://www.isbe.net/news/2004/Illinois_education_timeline.pdf
[16] Blair, p.53.
[17] Ibid, p. 55.
[18] East Waterford School, p. 14.
[19] The DuPage County Historical Society Portfolio,1958 Number 3,p. 1.

York Township or District 78 (Naperville). In 1947, the number was 24, with Addison Township reporting no more one-room schools. In 1948, the total was 21 and by 1952 there were 12 left. By 1956 only three schools -- Waubonsie, McAuley, and Big Woods -- remained open.[20] In 1963, Big Woods School closed after it consolidated with Eola and Waubonsie schools. The students were transferred to a new school, Indian Plains, a few miles south of Big Woods. In 1966 the school board put the school up for auction, with a minimum bid of $10,000.[21] Land records show, however, that the school was purchased from the DuPage County Board for $10.00 on April 13, 1967 and on Nov. 13, 1967, the property was placed in Radkiewicz Trust for Land. Radkiewicz, who owned Berco Floral, rented the space to a furniture refinisher who used it for storage for a number of years. When Berco Floral sold the property to a developer in 2007, Big Woods School was threatened with demolition. Efforts to save the school were successful, and the developer gave the property to the Big Woods Congregational Church, who sold it in 2014 to the newly formed Big Woods School Foundation, created to preserve and maintain the school.

There are two other rural, one-room schoolhouses in DuPage County listed in the National Register of Historic Places: Churchville School (ca. 1846) in Addison Township (near Bensenville) and McAuley School (1913), also in Winfield Township (near West Chicago). Churchville School is a good example of the schoolhouses commonly found in the Midwest during the mid to late 1800s. The wood-frame gable-front school has characteristics of the Greek Revival style. Later alterations – such as the windows -- show that the school was modified to comply with the Standard School design regulations.

McAuley School is also wood-frame gable-front building but resembles a bungalow – a property type common during the time of its construction. While built before the school was built before the 1915 Sanitation Law, the school closely resembles "A Less Expensive School House," a model provided in the 1906, 1909, and 1916 circulars published by the Illinois Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. As such, the school district did not need to modify the building to meet the requirements of the new law. [22] McAuley School, the last functioning one-room schoolhouse in the state, closed in 1992.

Big Woods School was a high-quality version of the "modern" one-room schoolhouse. The brick schoolhouse with stone accents and a tile roof was built to last. The modern convenience and durable materials used in the school's construction demonstrated the community's commitment to providing children with a quality education. The community's dedication to the school was proven once again, when in 2007, it was threatened with demolition by commercial development. Concerned citizens organized and in 2014 created a non-for-profit foundation which purchased the school with the intent of preserving and maintaining it.

[20] Illinois State Board of Education: Annual Reports from County School Superintendents, October 1, 1860 - June 30, 1961, Illinois State Archives. Annual Reports from years 1920 - 1956.
[21] ''Old School to be Sold.'' *Aurora Beacon*, October 29, 1966.
[22] McAuley School District #27. National Register of Historic Places, West Chicago, DuPage County, Illinois. Reference Number 82004890.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Blair, Francis G. *The One-Room and Consolidated Country Schools of Illinois*. Circular No. 100, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Springfield, 1916

Bone, Robert G. "Education in Illinois Before 1857." *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society*, Volume L, No. 2, Summer 1957.

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FermiLab History and Archives Project. http://history.fnal.gov/School/School_index.html

Graves, Ben E. *School Ways: The Planning and Design of America's Schools*. (New York: McGraw – Hill, Inc., 1993.

Hoffman, U. J. *The rural one-teacher schools of Illinois; buildings and equipment, standardization, daily program, demonstration schools*. Springfield, Ill., Schnepp & Barnes, printers, 1929.

Illinois Education Timeline. http://www.isbe.net/news/2004/Illinois_education_timeline.pdf

Illinois State Board of Education: Annual Reports from County School Superintendents, October 1, 1860 – June 30, 1961. Illinois State Archives.

National Register of Historic Places: Butler School, Oak Brook, DuPage County, Illinois. Reference number 03000355.

National Register of Historic Places: East Waterford School, Lewistown, Fulton County, Illinois. Reference number 09000897.

National Register of Historic Places: McAuley School District #27. West Chicago, DuPage County, Illinois. Reference number 82004890.

"Old School to be Sold." *Aurora Beacon*, October 29, 1966.

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: __Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library; Illinois State Archives_____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _Less than 1_____

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude 41.818695 Longitude: -88.230980

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

LOT 3 IN PARK BUTTERFIELD, BEING A SUBDIVISION IN SECTION 32, TOWNSHIP 38 NORTH, RANGE 9, EAST OF THE THIRD PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN IN DU PAGE COUNTY, ILLINOIS.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nomination includes the school, garage and shed, and the land currently associated with it.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title:
Sonya\Cunningham, Secretary/Treasurer
organization: Big Woods School Foundation
street & number: 3033 N Eola Road
city or town: Aurora state Illinois zipcode: 60510
e-mail csonya82@gmail.com
telephone: 630-879-8481
date: December 29, 2015

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: Big Woods School

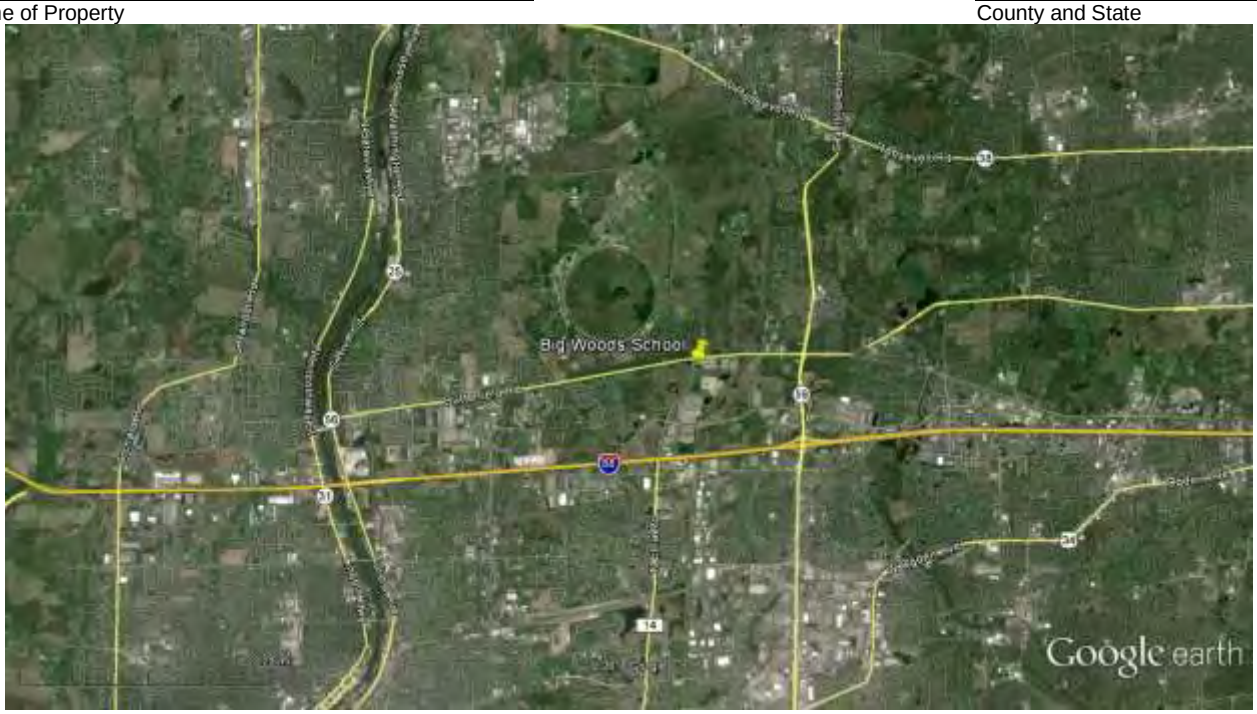
City or Vicinity: Aurora

County: DuPage State: Illinois

Photographer: Sonya Cunningham

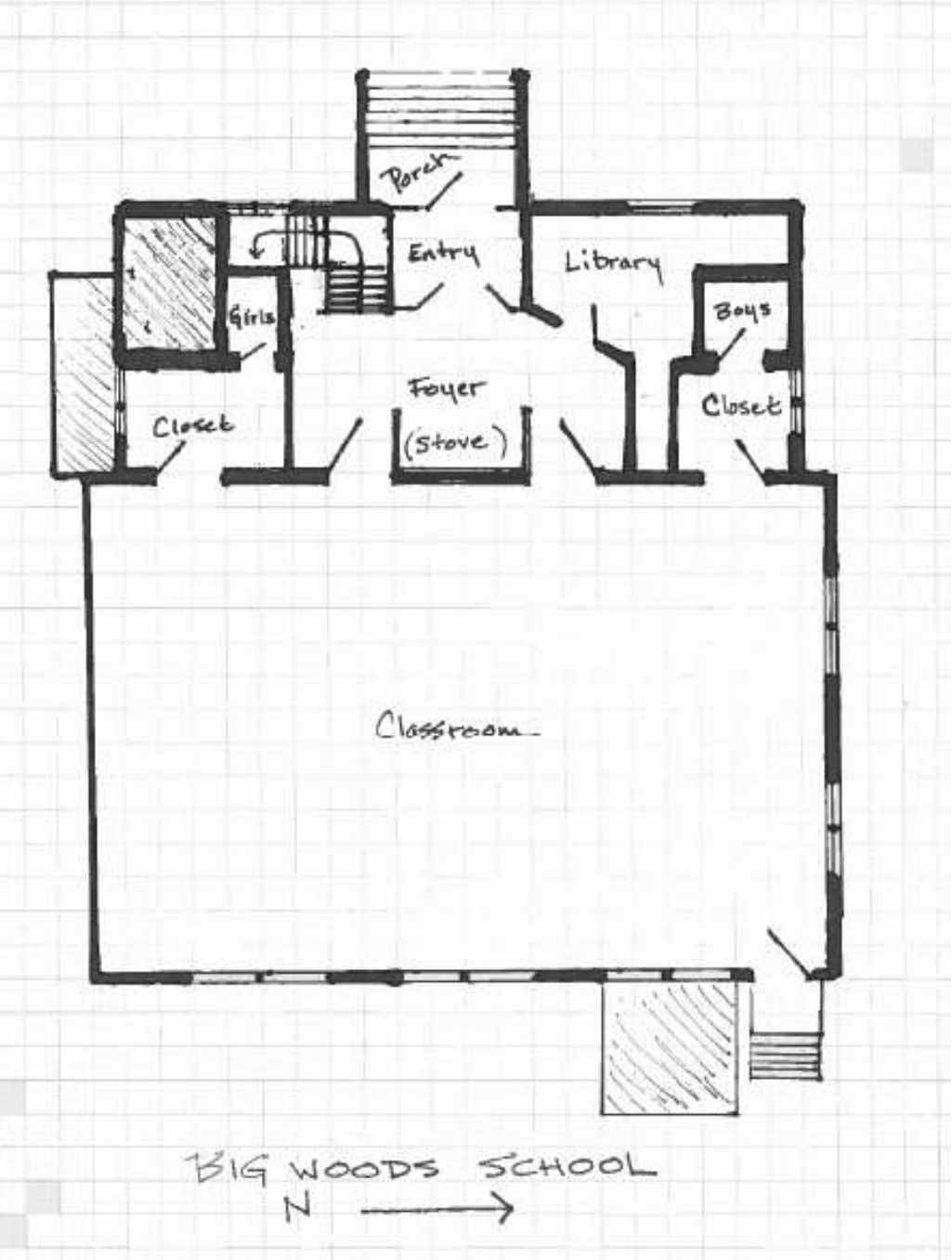
Date Photographed: Various

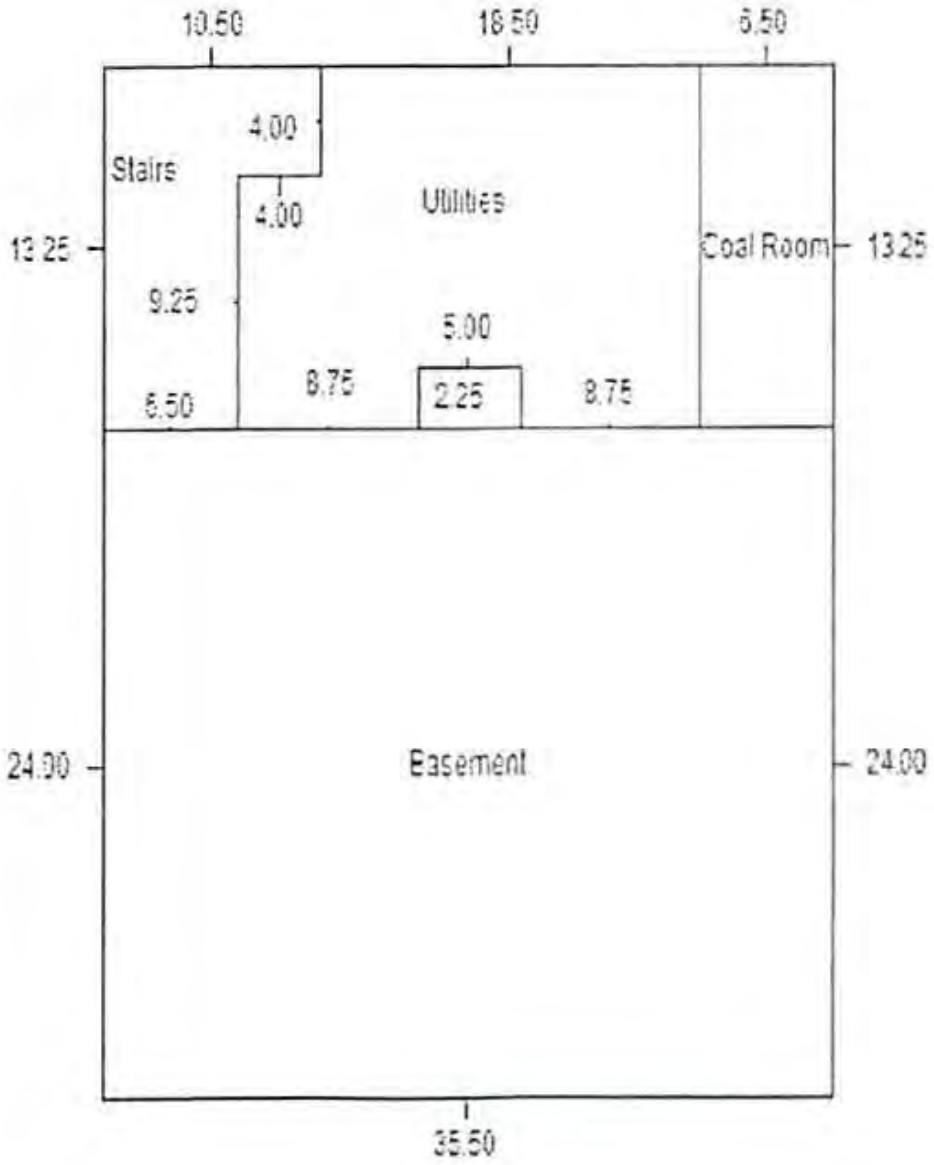
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:
1 of _13
0001) Lentil over front door of School, 3/21/2009
0002) Front of School building from the west, camera facing east, 03/21/2009
0003) View of the School building from the northwest, camera facing southeast, 3/21/2009
0004) North and East elevations, camera facing southwest, 7/19/2012
0005) South and East elevations, camera facing northwest, 07/19/2012
0006) Southern entrance into basement, camera facing northwest, 10/17/2012
0007) View of interior vestibule and foyer, camera facing west, 1/06/2016
0008) Looking into foyer and classroom from library, camera facing east, 1/06/2016
0009) Southeast corner of classroom camera facing southeast, 1/06/2016
0010) View of classroom, camera facing west, 1/06/2016
0011) View into boys' coatroom and bathroom, camera facing west, 1/06/2016
0012) View into girls' coatroom, camera facing southwest, 1/06/2016
0013) Bottom of steps into basement, camera facing west, 10/17/2012



Big Woods School
3033 N. Eola Drive, Aurora, DuPage County, Illinois
Latitude 41.818695; Longitude: -88.230980

Floorplan of the Big Woods School, first floor





Floorplan of the Big Woods School, basement level

List of Figures

1. The original Big Woods School. FermiLab History and Archives Project. N.D. http://history.fnal.gov/School/School_index.html
2. Photograph of a typical one-room schoolhouse prior to the 1915 Sanitation Law vs. a modern Schoolhouse. From *The rural one-teacher schools of Illinois; buildings and equipment, standardization, daily program, demonstration schools,* P. 69
3. Big Woods School FermiLab History and Archives Project. N.D. http://history.fnal.gov/School/School_index.html
4. Hoffman, p. 68.
5. Interior, Big Woods School. Source Unknown. N. D.
6. Blair, pp. 27, 29.
7. One-Room School Houses in DuPage County, 1870 - 1956

Figure 1: The original Big Woods School

Figure 2: Photograph showing the typical schoolhouse – before the 1915 Law was passed -- on the right.

Twenty years ago most of the one-teacher school houses were of the type shown at the right. In the wealthier counties most of them were in better repair but of the same type. Now most of these in the wealthier counties have been replaced by the type shown at the left. There are still too many of the old type in even some of the wealthier counties.

Figure 3: Big Woods School. Note double-doors.

Figure 4: The state supervisor of rural schools was not above embarrassing communities into repairing/replacing dilapidated schools.

One of the remodeled houses in one of the least wealthy counties in the state in which **every** house has been remodeled or a new one erected. The secret—**leadership.**

This is a house in one of the wealthiest counties in which, however, only one in ten one-teacher schools has been remodeled or replaced, yet these districts have ten times the property value of the other county.

Figure 5. Interior, Big Woods School. Note students are facing south, the wall without windows.

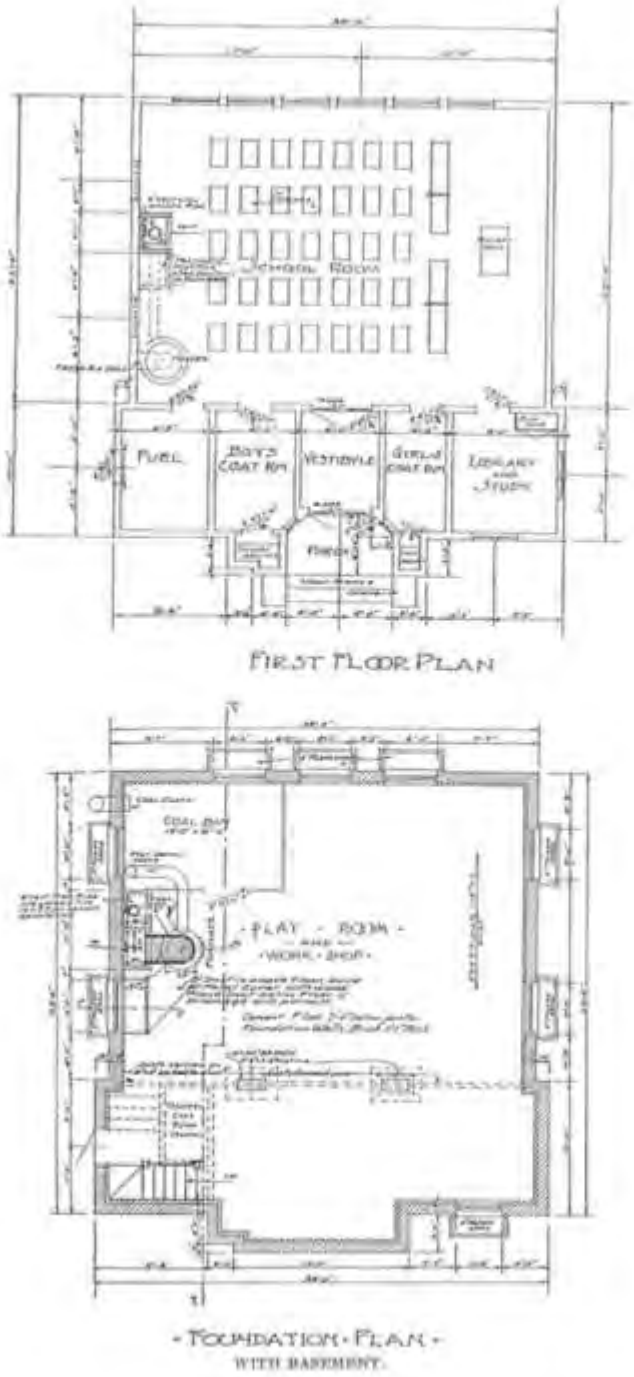


Figure 6: Plan for a Good One-Room School House

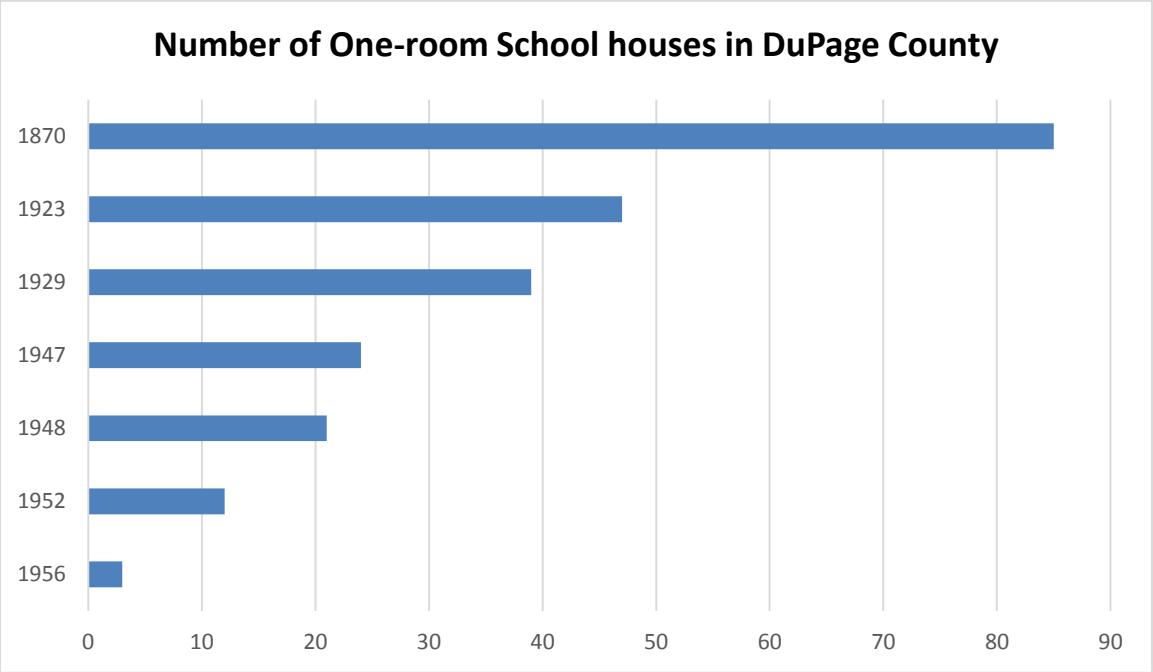


Figure 7: One-Room School Houses in DuPage County, 1870 - 1956

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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.

BIG WOODS SCHOOL

WOODS SCHOOL

BIG WODS SCHOOL

IG WOODS

JOSH
JORGENSEN
849

Open House Sun
Open House and BBQ
this summer
BEV

Janice
+
Tim