

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic One Room School Houses of Gallatin County, Montana *Thematic Resources*  
and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication \_\_\_\_\_  
city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district \_\_\_\_\_  
state Montana code 030 county Gallatin code 031

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
Thematic Group	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Multiple Ownership  
street & number \_\_\_\_\_  
city, town \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Gallatin County Courthouse  
street & number 301 West Main  
city, town Bozeman state Montana

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title \_\_\_\_\_ has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
date \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records \_\_\_\_\_  
city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This thematic nomination encompasses the surviving small rural schoolhouses of Gallatin County that reflect the architectural evolution of this functional resource. In the context of appearance and construction, the evolution of this distinctive vernacular building type is illustrated by the nominated properties.

The very first school buildings in the county were adapted log homestead cabins. These were generally simple rectangular buildings with a gable roof. As sawn lumber became available and student enrollment increased, permanent frame schools were constructed utilizing the same simple form with a central door. An exception to this building evolution is the 1913 Little Bear school which was a gable-ended log structure built as a school. Various environmental and cultural influences led to various door configurations and the addition of an enclosed entry vestibule to the simple form. The influence of the Bungalow style, around 1915, led to various adaptations of the simple form. Some of the more populated districts required larger buildings. This resulted in buildings that used the same form, yet extended it by either going to two stories or by adding an additional classroom to one end. The cohesiveness of this evolution in schoolhouse form was interrupted only by the appearance of the octagonal schoolhouse which had no apparent historic relationship to the simple adapted vernacular form of the other buildings, and remains a unique form statewide.

The nominated schoolhouses shared many common descriptive characteristics. Most of these buildings were one story, detached, rectangular in plan and very utilitarian in design. They utilized simple frame construction with clapboard siding and a gable roof. Many of the schools, especially those built or rehabilitated after 1919, have all of the windows located on one wall.

The rural schoolhouse form employed in Gallatin County was a vernacular form which originated in the East and was adapted over time in response to environmental demands and cultural influences.

### METHODOLOGY

This nomination was compiled by David Minor and Paul Bishop, both architecture students at Montana State University, Bozeman, under the direction of Kingston Heath, architectural historian at Montana State University. Prior to the actual nomination, a survey was conducted, to locate all of the extant school houses within the present day boundaries of Gallatin County, Montana. The County Superintendent of Schools records indicated that at one time there were 77 districts in the county; the location for each school district was indicated on a map. Those locations were then carefully transposed onto a county road map and each location was visited and the school house, if extant, was documented and compiled in an inventory. 1934 was chosen as the cut-off date. From this survey, the significance of each structure was evaluated based upon building condition, architectural typology, and the degree of original integrity retained. The buildings that were not selected for nomination, represent the evolutionary process of adaptive reuse but due to modern alterations no longer possess sufficient historic integrity to warrant inclusion in this nomination.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates**

**Builder/Architect**

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The buildings included in this nomination are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on the basis of their historic association with the settlement of the small mining and agricultural communities in Gallatin County and because they demonstrate the architectural evolution of the one room school house, embodying distinctive characteristics of a specific vernacular building type and method of construction.

Gallatin County was the first extensively settled agricultural area in Montana; homesteaders followed the early miners to the area in the late 1860's. Not long after settlement, organized schools were established. In the early days, classes often would be held in a private home, usually of log construction such as the Horseshoe Basin School on the Briggs Ranch. After Montana attained statehood in 1889, four residents of a community could petition the School Board for financial assistance to establish a school district. The state would help pay the salary of the school teacher and would provide a stipend for room and board. The lack of adequate means of transportation necessitated the construction of many one room schoolhouses, often no more than five miles apart. Generally, if the population of a district grew, a frame school house was constructed. The form of these schools tended to be very utilitarian.

The most popular school house form was the elongated rectangular plan, frame building with a gable roof, a good example being the Lower Bridger school. Other popular styles include the square plan with a hip roof, the bungalow style variation of the standard form as in the Middle Creek school, and the octagonal Malmborg school. An interesting variation to the common style is the Little Bear school which incorporates the same form but uses local log craft techniques, reflecting the folk tradition of taking a popular form and rendering it in the material with which the local craftsman are most familiar.

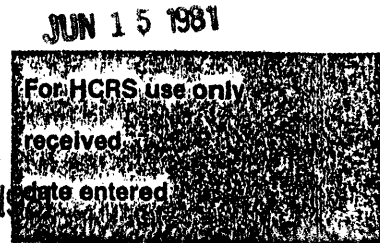
Throughout the construction era of rural schools (prior to 1897 through about 1923) in Gallatin County, little change took place in the form of the structure. The gable ended form--with the entrance through the gable end--is varied only in the material changes from log to frame, in the separation of the entrances according to sex, in the adjustment of the bell cupola from the front to the rear of the ridge, and by the projection or recession of the entrance as a weather lock.

Stylistic influences from the bungalow style in the teens brought about a "craftsman" style, rectilinear porch, which was merely grafted onto the basic gable-ended format. The Baker Creek school of 1912 maintained the elongated form and end entrance, with an applied bungalow style hip roof to the form. However, there are no surviving examples of this type.

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A major departure in the basic form does not take place until 1916 when the earliest example of the four square hip roof form first appears. The Anderson school (1916) and the Rea School (1916) represent this building type and occur in the Bozeman area of Gallatin County. A contractor and builder, G.A. Ensinger, from Bozeman, Montana built five houses in 1916 which were in the bungalow style, found to be "very practical and economical from every standpoint." Given the 1916 date of construction for the Rea and Anderson schools and the popularity of Ensinger's bungalows were enjoying, it is possible that G.A. Ensinger may have built both structures. In any case, this stylistic borrowing--prompted by popular magazines--is the only major incursion into an otherwise undiluted folk form--and the influence is limited to the largest community in the county where the style was prominent, and where the folk convention would be most vulnerable. The resistance of the basic folk form to change is suggested by the coeval existence of the bungalow features of the hip roof and dormer with the long rectangular end entrance represent in the 1923 Middle Creek School.

While one room schools were still being used--some being built or "modernized" during the 1920's--construction decisions largely had been transferred to the State. W.R. Plew, a professor of architectural and civil engineering at the University in Bozeman, published a bulletin on school design for the State Department of Health and Public instruction in 1919. The environmentally and culturally adjusted folk form, from the East, yielded to a variety of modified designs. Blueprints could be ordered from the forms provided at the end of Plew's book. In these designs, heating, lighting and simplicity of plan were stressed. The bungalow style school was highlighted in Plew's text as being a very sensible and desirable design. Plew also presented plans for the standard folk form; this structure has the entrance on the gable end with windows along the one side only. Cross lighting was thought to be harmful to the eyes and distracting to the students. The North wall of the Malmberg School was framed in reflecting the revised attitudes about school room lighting.

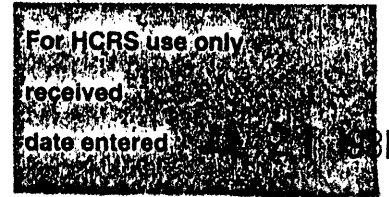
Even with the bungalow schools, domestic references were commonly used in the design decisions, such as the use of a symbolic (non-functional) dormer and generous front porch. These features stressed the idea of "house" in the schoolhouse instead of "institution" which was the common association for the consolidated schools being constructed in the larger cities at that time. In this manner, the transition from a child's home to elementary school was softened by the home-like ambiance. Moral overtones were achieved by the addition of a bell tower cupola as the image of a church was easily conjured. Hence, rural schools in Montana took advantage of the small building program required of these often isolated schools (that generally required a long cold journey by horse or by foot) and attempted to make the environment as inviting and familiar as possible by visually aligning themselves with domestic structures. Horse barns, clothes closets, wood stoves and later kitchens for home economics assisted providing the functional and symbolic requirements that spoke of home.

By the 1920's, the one room school house tradition was beginning to break down. As rural road systems improved, school districts tended to consolidate. Children would be bussed to larger schools in Bozeman, Belgrade, Manhattan, and Three Forks where a wider curriculum could be offered, including "domestic science" and manual training. Modernization of farming techniques and the introduction of the automobile encouraged the movement of small farming families to the urban areas. The subsequent decline in enrollment caused many of the rural schools to be closed or abandoned during the 1940's and 50's.

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At present, 58% of the original 77 schools in Gallatin County have been destroyed, 5% remain to be located, and of the remaining 37%, many have been moved or converted into homes or garages and have lost their original integrity.

Each of the nominated school chronicle the evolution of the school building format as different communities responded to changes in materials, philosophical attitudes, environment, customs, style, population density, and transportation systems in their own way. These properties are easily recognizable reminders of the once numerous, isolated communities of Gallatin County and are significant reflections of the county's local cultural history. Many Gallatin County residents received their education in these modest schoolhouses and look upon them as visual and historic landmarks. Many of the nominated school houses continue to serve their original function or other local community functions-- thus maintaining their original importance as a focal point of the area.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED  
UTM NOT VERIFIED

See individual inventory forms

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

### UMT References

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

See individual inventory forms

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dave Minor, Paul Bishop, and Kingston Heath

organization School of ARchitecture date November 1980

street & number Montana State University telephone (406) 994-3832

city or town Bozeman state Montana 59715

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Marcella Sheffy*

title *Deputy SHPO* date *June 9, 1980*

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*Marcella Sheffy* date

Keeper of the National Register

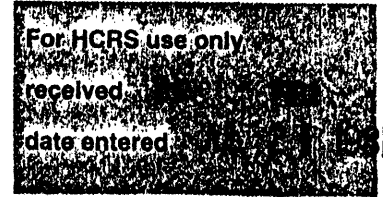
Attest date

Chief of Registration

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

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Bates, Grace, "Goodly Heritage", Gallatin County Historical Society, 1976

Annual Trustees Reports of Gallatin County, 1896-1934.

Oral Interviews;

Margret Brown, Gallatin County Superintendent of Schools, 1979

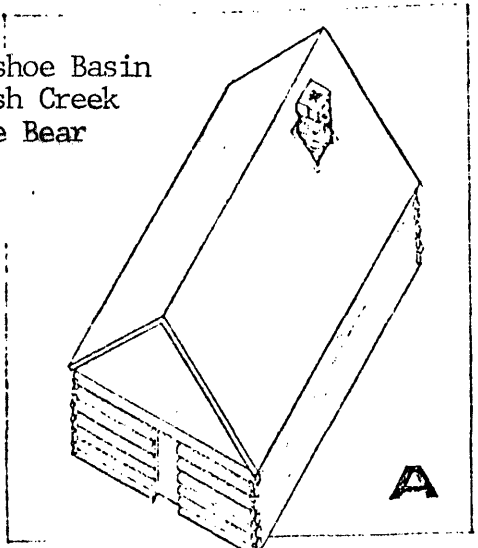
Mrs. Nora Weaver, Belgrade, MT, Bozeman High School Tape #86

Mrs. Flaherty, Bozeman High School Tape #30

Mrs. B. Pearl Connor, Main Library File #1015, Montana State University Small Collections

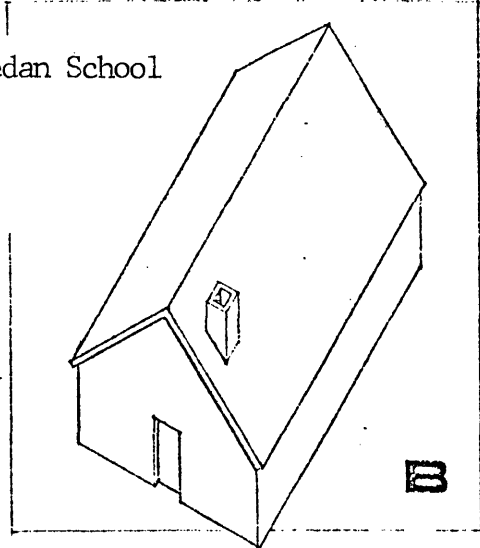
# BUILDING TYPES

✓ Horseshoe Basin  
Spanish Creek  
✓ Little Bear



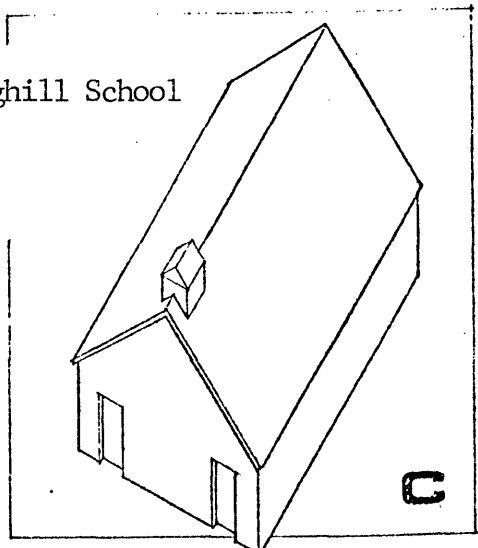
A

Sedan School



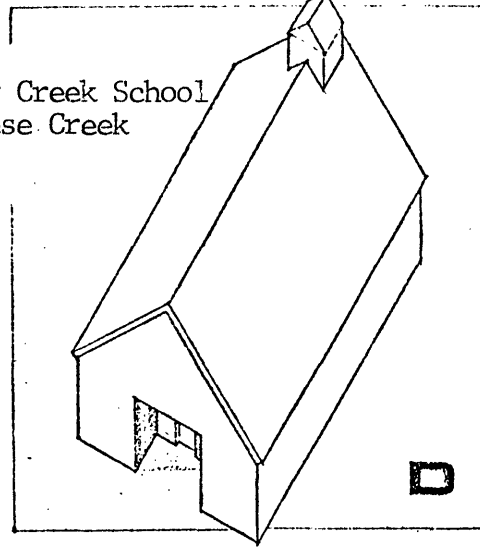
B

Springhill School



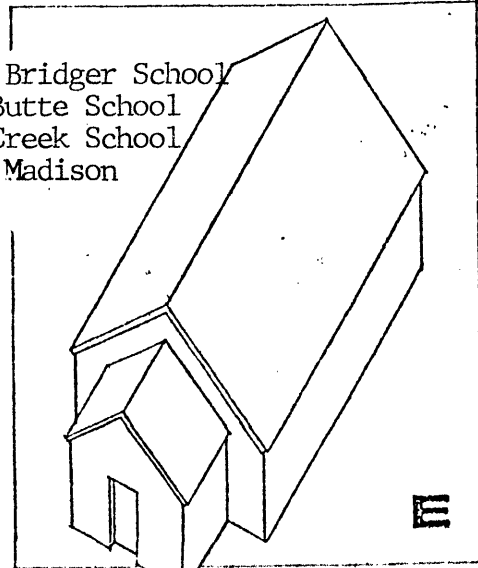
C

Dry Creek School  
Reese Creek



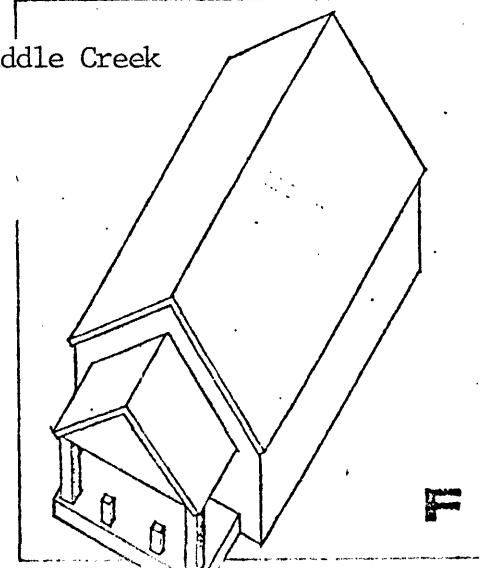
D

✓ Lower Bridger School  
Pine Butte School  
Pass Creek School  
✓ Upper Madison



E

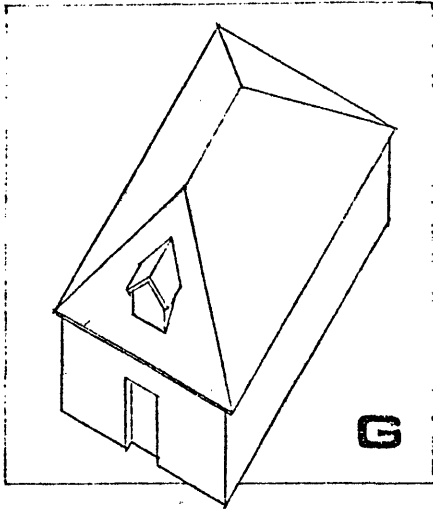
✓ Middle Creek



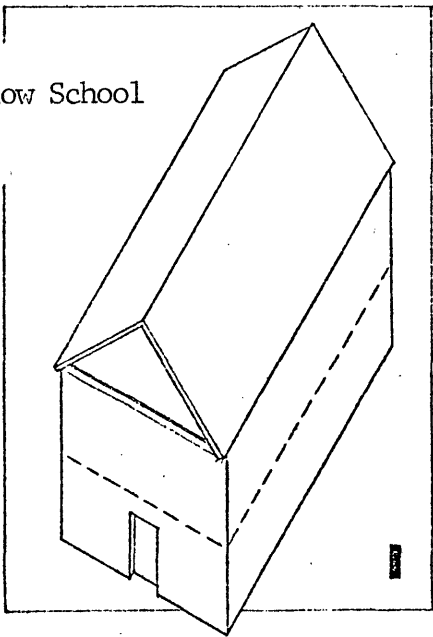
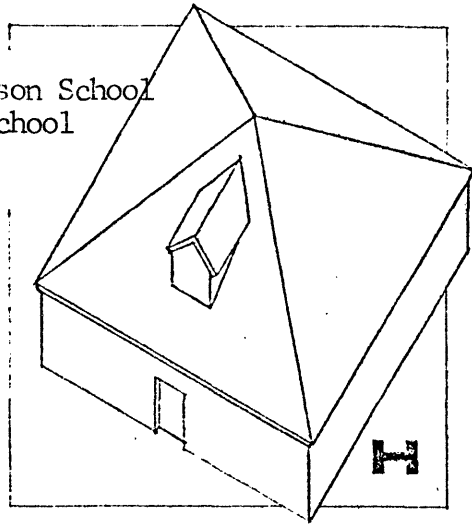
F

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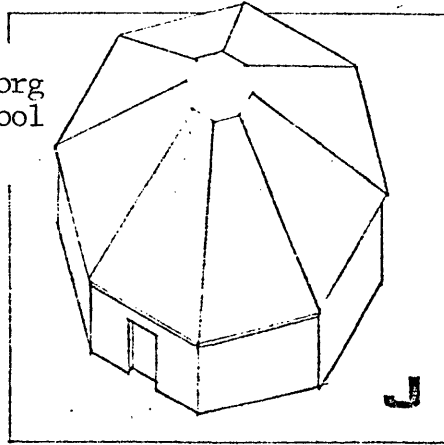




Anderson School  
Rea School

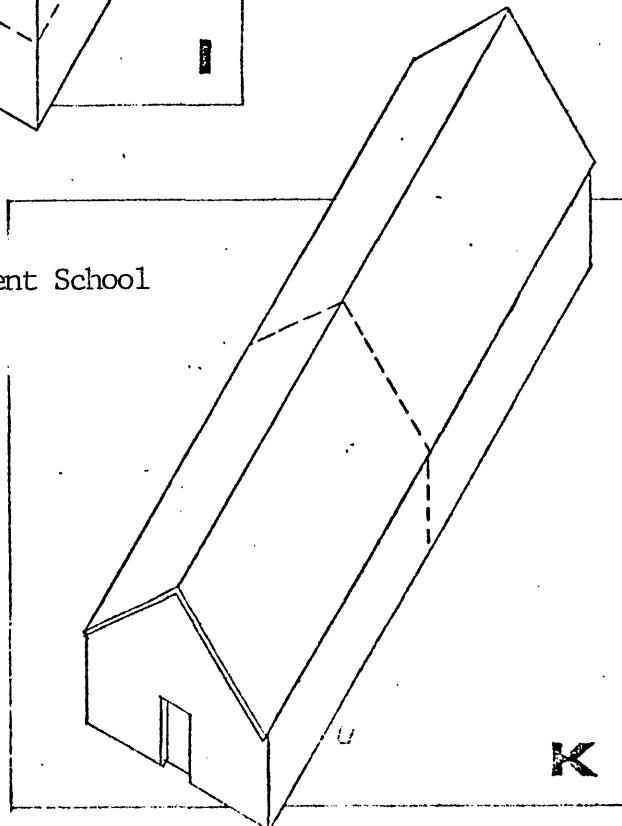


Maudlow School



Malmberg  
School

Trident School



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K

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name One Room Schoolhouses of Gallatin County Thematic Resources  
State MT

Nomination	Type of Review	Decision
1. Pine Bute School	Substantive Review	<i>Accept</i> <u>William A. Brakham</u>
2. Anderson School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
3. Rea School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
4. Cottonwood School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
5. Pass Creek School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
6. Springhill School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
7. Dry Creek School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
8. Reese Creek School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
9. Sedan School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
10. Lower Bridger School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
11. Malmborg School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
12. Spanish Creek School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
13. Trident School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham</u>
14.	-	<u>7/21/81</u>
15. Little Bear School	Substantive Review	<u>William H. Brakham 4.15.82</u>
16. Maudlow School	Substantive Review	<u>Beth Groves 8/23/82</u>
17. Upper Madison School	Substantive Review	<u>Lisa McClelland 1-19-83</u>
18.	-	_____
19.	-	_____
20.	-	_____
21.	-	_____
22.	-	_____
23.	-	_____
24.	-	_____