

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Drew Co. - Jerome
Jerome Elementary School No. 22
N. Louisiana Blvd.
NR 9/28/05

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

I. Name of Property

historic name Jerome Elementary School #22
other names/site number Jerome Community Center/ JE0202

2. Location

street & number North end of North Louisiana Boulevard not for publication
city or town Jerome vicinity
state Arkansas code AR county Drew code 043 zip code 71650

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Catherine Matthews 8/12/05
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Jerome Elementary School #22
Name of Property

Drew County, Arkansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**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)

GOVERNMENT/city hall

SOCIAL/meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Craftsman

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

roof ASBESTOS

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Levels of Significance (local, state, national)

Local

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1930-1950

Significant Dates

1930 - 1950

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Criteria for previous documentation on file.

Primary location of additional data:

- Criteria for primary location of additional data.

Name of repository:

Jerome Elementary School #22
Name of Property

Drew County, Arkansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 642391 3696832
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
4 _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth A. James/ National Register Historian
organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date June 22, 2005
street & number 323 Center Street, 1500 Tower Building telephone (501) 324-9789
city or town Little Rock state AR zip code 72205

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

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

name Jerome Improvement Association
street & number N. Louisiana Blvd. telephone 870-460-6200
city or town Jerome state AR zip code 71650

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 listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

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SUMMARY

The Jerome Elementary School #22 is the northernmost structure in the small hamlet of Jerome, a city once thriving in early logging and agricultural days in the corner of southeast Arkansas. The building is a one story brick schoolhouse built by unknown local contractors and carpenters in 1930. It sits alone in a field as a typical example of an early 20th century school building. It has a concrete block foundation with the original interior hardwood floor still intact. The building is bricked to the ground with crawl vents at the bottom. The building is a side gable-on-hip Craftsman structure with a modified rectangular shape. The east half extends further north than the west half, giving the building an "L" shape.

The building's outer walls are red brick and the roof is asbestos tile. Its architectural style is consistent with many schools built in the early 20th century in the southeastern area of the state with the notable exception that it is one-story.

ELABORATION

The Jerome School has no decorative work and was built to be purely functional. The building retains the majority of its original fabric. It faces south and the southern and northern exposures are well intact. The soil of southern Arkansas has caused the brick on the east and west faces of the structure to crack beneath the windows. The building has two brick chimneys which are in need of structural repair and sealing. The only alteration to the Jerome school is a small brick addition to the back that contains plumbing for restrooms (added shortly after construction). Over the years the Jerome School has remained much as it looked when it was constructed. The impressive retention of original material coupled with the architectural style justify its nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Front/South Façade

The south elevation of the Jerome School is the front of the building and faces Louisiana Street. The south elevation has a side gable roof with exposed rafter tails. This façade also features a central front gabled entry porch. The gable is supported by two large square brick columns with a concrete band serving as a capital to visually separate the gable from the columns. Two plaques reading "Jerome School" and "1930" are incorporated into the brickwork within the gable. Craftsman style wooden brackets sit beneath the eaves in the peak and at both lower corners of gable roofline. The porch itself is approached by a set of three concrete steps or a handicap accessible ramp which has been installed in the center of the original stairs. Two half height brick walls fill in the space between the brick columns and stairs. The walls were originally capped with concrete, however the west wall has deteriorated and is missing its cap. The rectangular plan porch is recessed into the building. There are four doors on the front façade, all accessed from the porch. The two doors facing south are the main entrances to the building, each leading to its own separate classroom. The

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remaining doors enter storage space that can also be accessed from the classrooms. There is a single window opening on the wall space on each side of the porch. The windows are six over six double hung wood windows typical of the late 1920's. The window openings each have concrete sills.

Right/East Façade

The east elevation displays two roof profiles. The south end has a gable profile and the north end is capped with a hip roof. The two different roof lines are indicative of the building's interior. The gable end covers the main classroom area while the hip roof covers the stage and activity space behind the classroom. The gable has four Craftsman brackets supporting the eaves, while the hip side features exposed rafter tails. There is a small rectangular vent opening with a louvered wood screen in the gable peak. Along the wall there are four openings. From left to right there are two large window openings, a door, and then another window opening. The two large openings are large enough to accommodate six windows. Each currently has two existing original windows in place, and corrugated aluminum covering the space where windows are missing. The original windows are a wood frame nine over nine configuration double-hung window. The paneled door appears to be original. There is a transom above the door which is filled with corrugated aluminum. The final window opening is large enough to accommodate one window the size of the others. However, it too is missing the original window and is in-filled with corrugated aluminum. Due to shifting soil this side of the building has visible cracks beneath the windows and is in dire need of repair.

Rear/North Façade

The north elevation of the Jerome School displays the only addition to the building. Along the back wall of the east half of the building is a plumbing addition to provide restrooms for the students. The addition has three openings, presumably a utility opening and a restroom for boys and girls. There are presently no doors in the openings, and the space is badly deteriorated. The addition is not as tall as the building walls, and it has its own metal-clad shed roof. The back wall of the west classroom comprises the remainder of the north side. There is a door opening to the west classroom on this wall, and wood brackets surrounding the upper part of the door suggesting there was once a small roof covering the door. The door itself appears to be original, as does the fixed four-pane transom light above it. A brick chimney located near the middle of this façade, so that it could evenly distribute heat between the east and west classrooms. Exposed rafter tails are visible along the eaves of the roofline on the whole of this elevation.

Left/West Façade

The west elevation is comprised of two planes. The one to the far left being the west side of the stage extension, and the one to the far right being the west wall of the west classroom. The stage extension wall has an original nine-over-nine double-hung wood window to the far left. Just to the right of the window is a wood door with a transom light. The window is missing from the transom and is filled with a plywood sheet.

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A brick chimney rises out of the roof just to the right of the door. The rafter tails are exposed along the roofline. The classroom on the westernmost plane displays some of the restoration efforts of the Jerome Improvement Association. There is one large window opening with six individual nine-over-nine double-hung wood windows and a concrete sill. The windows are not original to the building; however they are the same size and configuration of the originals. A vent with a wood louvered screen occupies the gable peak, and four Craftsman style brackets are attached beneath the eaves.

Integrity

The building is fairly well preserved due to the efforts of the city council. Jerome is a very small community and has a small, tight budget, yet they have managed to raise funds toward slowly improving this landmark of their community. The Jerome Elementary School #22 sits on a 2 ½ acre site. Nearby is an old building once part of the school property that was bought by a local church group and is now known as Jerome Baptist Church, aside from these two structures, Jerome bears little resemblance of its former self. The Jerome Elementary School #22 retains much of its design and original material and reminds its citizens of the more prosperous days gone by. As long as this building stands it will continue to represent a great deal of Jerome's history, thus justifying its nomination the National Register of Historic Places.

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SUMMARY

The Jerome Elementary School #22 is an important reminder of the old Jerome and symbol of the future of Jerome. It served as an educational center for Jerome's younger school children from 1930 to 1950 and was resurrected to provide the local citizenry with a town hall and meeting place in 1970. It was, and is, an important cornerstone in the community. It is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under Criterion A, as a symbol of education in the early-mid 20th century, and under Criterion C, for its Craftsman-style architecture.

ELABORATION

The city of Jerome sits in the southeast corner of Drew County in southeast Arkansas. Born in December 1900 as Blissville by a timber company from Michigan, the community soon had a cotton gin and continued to grow as a lumber and cotton town. The townsite of Jerome soon became the property of the Jerome Lumber Company owned by a German named Moehler who named the company and town after his son, Jerome. Incorporated as Jerome in 1925, the city was growing and soon boasted two hotels, a general store, a drug store, two doctors, a post office, two school buildings, churches and other small businesses. The 1930s were its most prosperous years.

By 1930 the smaller school was overcrowded so the local school officials decided to build a new, larger brick building. The little red brick school building known as Jerome Elementary School #22 was constructed as a result. As there were no official records of early Jerome documented and no courthouse nearby for such documents, little is known about early Jerome. Of the few town records that did exist, most have disappeared and school funding records and contractors names are lost in time.

Jerome was a thriving community in south Arkansas during the 1930s. According to a school survey of the 1934-35 school year there were 317 students enrolled in the Jerome School District. During WWII the community of Denson near Jerome was a relocation site for Japanese in America. Jerome enjoyed a short "boom" as construction workers and military personnel moved in to build the facility. An archivist in Monticello, the seat of Drew County, remembers a year living in a tent in Jerome because of a housing shortage among the construction crews working there. After the war Jerome and America changed forever. The relocation site near Jerome slowly returned to farmland.

The cutting of all the virgin timber in the area coupled with the mechanization of farming spelled the end for smaller lumber companies and the tenant farming system. People began leaving the rural South to find work and the smaller rural towns began to decline. Jerome suffered the fate that befell many other small Delta towns in Arkansas. The populations fell and their decline was inevitable.

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By 1950 many smaller school districts in Arkansas had begun to consolidate for practical reasons. Most small districts in Drew County joined to form Drew Central School District near Monticello. Since Jerome is rather isolated from the rest of the county, it consolidated with the Dermott School District in nearby Chicot County. The older wood school building was moved from Jerome to the Dermott campus where it eventually burned. The newer Jerome Elementary School was abandoned. Over the years it deteriorated and the grounds grew up with weeds.

In 1970 the Dermott School District agreed to sell the Jerome Elementary School and its grounds to the Jerome Improvement Association, a group of citizens who believe in Jerome and want to save the building. For the sum of \$10.00, the building and grounds were sold to the citizen's group in Jerome. The building soon became the town community center, meeting hall, town hall and voting precinct. Once again it serves its people in a vital and useful manner.

Statement of Significance

The Jerome Elementary School #22 is an important reminder of the old Jerome and symbol of the future of Jerome. It served as an educational center for Jerome's younger school children from 1930 to 1950 and was resurrected to provide the local citizenry with a town hall and meeting place in 1970. It was, and is, an important cornerstone in the community. It is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with local significance under **Criterion A**, as a symbol of education in the early-mid 20th century, and under **Criterion C**, for its Craftsman-style architecture.

Jerome Elementary School

Name of Property

Drew County, Arkansas

County and State

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Drew County Archives, Drew County Historical Museum, Monticello, AR. April – May, 2005.

Drew County Deed Books, 170-702.

Drew County Historical Journal, Volume 18, pp, 24-33.

Gibson, C.C. III, Interviewed by Sheilla Lampkin. April, 2005.

South Arkansas News-Press. November 10, 1976.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A part of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 13, Township 15 South, Range 4 West bounded by a line beginning 121 $\frac{1}{2}$ chains South and 5.92 chains East of the Northwest corner of said 40 acre tract of land, thence running south 4.50 chains to the North boundary of the Arkansas-Louisiana Highway right of way, thence running North 87 degrees East 5.18 chains, thence running North 29 degrees East 4.61 chains, thence running West 6.40 chains to the place of beginning; said parcel of land containing approximately 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ acres, and being the lot on which the new school building of said Jerome Special School District is located.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the building and all the property designated in the deed issued to the present owners, the Jerome Improvement District, in 1970.













