

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Big Four School
other names/site number Resource #WH0581

2. Location

street & number County Road 383 not for publication N/A
city, town Providence vicinity
state Arkansas code AR county White code 145 zip code 72081

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources of White County, Arkansas
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Cathryn A. Byrnes 5-7-90
Signature of certifying official 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.
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:)
Marg M. Kay 7/10/92
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function of Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education/ School

Vacant/ Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Other: Vernacular/ Plain Traditional
Other: WPA School Design

foundation stone
walls novelty siding
roof shingle
other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

19 33-1940

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Works Projects Administration

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

See continuation sheet

See "Historic and Architectural Resources of White County, Arkansas," Section H.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data *map 19*

Address of property _____

UTM References

A

Zone	Easting	Northing
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C

Zone	Easting	Northing
------	---------	----------

B

Zone	Easting	Northing
------	---------	----------

D

Zone	Easting	Northing
------	---------	----------

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joe De Rose, Survey Coordinator

organization Arkansas Historic Preservation Program date 4 April, 1990

street & number 225 E Markham, Suite 300 telephone 501-371-2763

city or town Little Rock state Arkansas zip code 72201

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Description

Situated in a grassy, tree-covered field in a remote area, the abandoned Big Four School building was constructed in 1915, but remodeled so extensively in the 1930's by the Works Progress Administration that it is actually more representative of this time period. The school stands neglected and is rapidly deteriorating, but it has not been altered and its architectural details remain intact.

Covered in novelty siding, the rectangular, one-story floorplan is of a vernacular design with a few exterior details labeling it as a WPA building. For example, even though most of the panes have been removed from the double-hung windows, the sash still shows nine-over-nine muntins. The one-bay, central front porch has a gable roof and is supported by columns on piers, and there is a three-pane transom over each of the two front doors. Interior details are even more characteristic of federally funded, Depression-era school buildings. A recessed stage on the north elevation faces a large blackboard on the south elevation, with a swing-out partition dividing the two areas. The ceilings and walls are covered with horizontal boards. Even a few of the original WPA school desks remain inside; crudely constructed, each consists of a wooden desktop attached to the rear of a bench-style seat.

The school has an interior chimney along the west elevation, centered between two rows of the nine-over-nine double-hung windows. The two transom-topped doors off of the front porch allow access to the interior, while two more doors on the front elevation lead from an interior horizontal hallway into the main portion of the building. The gable roof is covered with shingles and the continuous foundation is made of stone.

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Significance

The Big Four School building is locally significant because it is one of only a handful of novelty-sided non-residential structures in the county, and one of only three such structures constructed with the aid of federal programs. Its characteristically WPA design, which consists of a rectangular floorplan and a gable-roofed porch supported by columns on piers, also makes it architecturally significant under National Register Criterion C because it embodies a particular form, method of construction and style of the 1930's. [See the associated property type for Depression era Religious and Institutional buildings]. Its setting in an extremely rural area of White County also adds to its significance, as it was the only school in this vicinity and the only federally funded structure.

The fact that such a small, rural community would even have a school building makes this structure historically significant under Criterion A. Originally built in 1915, it served the community as both school and church for several years, which was a common practice at that time [see Historic Context 2: Development Era; and Historic Context 3: Railroad Era]. In the mid-1930's, the building underwent a major renovation by Works Progress Administration workers and its appearance was altered to resemble other WPA schools from the period. Instead of closing its doors when severe flooding, a drought and plummeting cotton prices sent the farm economy collapsing in the early 1930's, the Big Four School was given a second chance with the aid of the Works Progress Administration. This program's assistance, along with funding from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), allowed small schools like this one to continue operating.

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Acres of property: Less than one

UTM References

A 15/623340/3912000

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at the point formed by the intersection of the western edge of County Road 383 with a line running parallel to the northern elevation of the building and located 50 feet to the north thereof; proceed westerly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel to the western elevation of the building; thence proceed southerly for a distance of approximately 200 feet along said line to a point formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel to the southern elevation of the building; thence proceed easterly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to a point formed by its intersection with a line running along the western edge of County Road 383; thence proceed northerly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification:

The original schoolyard associated with this building has become quite overgrown due to the abandonment of the property and has thus become difficult to distinguish; therefore, this boundary includes all the property historically associated with this resource that retains its integrity.





