

COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES NOMINATION FORM

SECTION I

Name of Property

Historic Name Coaldale School

Other Names Coaldale Community Building

Address of Property

[N/A] address not for publication

Street Address 13607 County Road 6

City Coaldale County Fremont Zip 81222

Present Owner of Property

(for multiple ownership, list the names and addresses of each owner on one or more continuation sheets)

Name Coaldale Community Building Association (Donna A. Nicholas-Griesel, President)

Address P.O. Box 15 Phone (none)

City Coaldale State Colorado Zip 81222

Owner Consent for Nomination

(attach signed consent from each owner of property - see attached form)

Preparer of Nomination

Name Janice Yalch (additional material by OAHP staff) Date April 28, 2004

Organization Western Fremont Historical Society

Address P. O. Box 95 Phone 719-942-3089

City Howard State Colorado Zip 81233

FOR OFFICIAL USE:		Site Number <u>5FN.1988</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Nomination Received	Senate # <u>2</u>	House # <u>60</u>
<u>8/13/2004</u> Review Board Recommendation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Denial	<u>9/8/2004</u> CHS Board State Register Listing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied	
Certification of Listing: President, Colorado Historical Society		Date _____

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Property Name Coaldale School

SECTION II

Local Historic Designation

Has the property received local historic designation?

no

yes --- individually designated designated as part of a historic district

Date designated _____

Designated by _____ (Name of municipality or county)

Use of Property

Historic Education/ school and Social/meeting hall

Current Social/ meeting hall, clubhouse

Original Owner School District No. 17

Source of Information Canon City Daily Record 25 July 1923; and Salida Mail 7 August 1923

Year of Construction 1923

Source of Information Canon City Daily Record 25 July 1923; and Salida Mail 7 August 1923

Architect, Builder, Engineer, Artist or Designer unknown

Source of Information _____

Locational Status

Original location of structure(s)

Structure(s) moved to current location

Date of move _____

SECTION III

Description and Alterations

(describe the current and original appearance of the property and any alterations on one or more continuation sheets)

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Property Name Coaldale School

SECTION IV

Significance of Property

Nomination Criteria

- A** - property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to history
- B** - property is connected with persons significant in history
- C** - property has distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or artisan
- D** - property is of geographic importance
- E** - property contains the possibility of important discoveries related to prehistory or history

Areas of Significance

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Economics | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology – prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeology – historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/ Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic Heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> Military |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Exploration/ Settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing Arts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Geography/ Community Identity | <input type="checkbox"/> Politics/ Government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Planning and Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Medicine | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social History |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |

Significance Statement

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

Bibliography

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

SECTION V

Locational Information

Lot(s) N/A Block _____ Addition _____

USGS Topographic Quad Map Coaldale

Verbal Boundary Description of Nominated Property

(describe the boundaries of the nominated property on a continuation sheet)

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Property Name Coaldale School

SECTION VI

Photograph Log for Black and White Photographs

(prepare a photograph log on one or more continuation sheets)

SECTION VII

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS TO ACCOMPANY NOMINATION

Owner Consent Form

Black and White Photographs

Color Slides

Sketch Map(s)

Photocopy of USGS Map Section

Optional Materials

For Office Use Only

Property Type: building(s) district site structure object area

Architectural Style/Engineering Type: Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals (Mediterranean-Mission)

Period of Significance: 1923 - 1956

Level of Significance: Local State National

Acreage less than one

P.M. NM Township 48N Range 11E Section Unsectioned Quarter Sections

UTM Reference: Zone 13 Easting 433841 Northing 4246483

Site Elevation: 6570 feet

Property Name Coaldale School

DESCRIPTION and ALTERATIONS

Coaldale is a small hamlet located approximately 40 miles west of Canon City in an area known as Pleasant Valley. The Coaldale School is located north of the juncture of County Road 6, known as Hayden Creek Road, and County Road 45, which used to be the old road to Canon City. The school is one of five buildings occupying a one-acre parcel that lies adjacent a large dirt parking lot. (Only the school building and its immediate grounds are included in this nomination.) A concrete sidewalk runs from the parking lot to the school's entrance, bisecting the expanse of grass and dirt that served as the schoolyard. Some playground equipment occupies a portion of the yard. A series of large, mature deciduous trees form a visual boundary as they separate the school grounds from County Road 6 and the parking lot. Other landscape features include an evergreen tree and a small bush flanking the entry and a hedge running along the entire length of the back wall.

The Coaldale School is a one-story brick building with a rectangular plan (62-1/2 by 32 feet) and a metal roof. The elongated building has a poured concrete foundation and red brick walls laid in a common bond [seven rows of stretchers to one course of headers]. Two slightly projecting stretcher courses serve as a belt course that encircles the building just below the windows. The red metal (Powerpanel) roof has wide, overhanging eaves with exposed rafters and is comprised of three sections. The main portion over the two classrooms is a moderately pitched, hipped roof. A smaller, lower pitched, half-hipped section runs the full width of the façade over the hallway. The central projecting entrance bay has a gabled roof behind a curved parapet wall. A short, square, hipped roof bell tower straddles the ridgeline of the projecting gabled roof. Although the once open tower was enclosed with metal paneling, the bell still hangs in the tower and can be rung by pulling the rope that hangs just inside the door. Behind the tower, piercing the slope of the larger hipped roof section, is a brick chimney with a metal cap. Adjacent the chimney, three metal stovepipes (two short and one tall) pierce the same roof slope.

The building faces southwest towards County Road 45. A centered projecting entrance bay breaks the symmetrical façade. Square brick pillars frame the double leaf entrance and rise up to frame the curved parapet wall before ending with a concrete cap. A metal plaque is imbedded in the brick parapet wall above the entry with the words "State of Colorado Approved Standard School." A series of three large windows flank each side of the entrance bay. A smaller horizontally positioned window punctuates the expanse of wall near each corner. All the windows are rectangular, straight-headed, metal framed, multi-lights with rowlock brick lugsills.

The southeast and northwest ends of the building are devoid of any windows and are nearly identical except for the 5' by 18" wooden sign high on the southeast wall with the words "Coaldale Community Building" in gold lettering. Eight large, rectangular, straight-headed, metal-framed windows punctuate the rear wall of the school (northeast side). Each window opening contains 20 lights (4 rows of 5 lights) with the centered 2 rows of three lights hinged at the top operating as an awning window. The majority of the glass is original, maintaining the wavy characteristic of old glass.

Property Name Coaldale School

Constructed in 1923 when both the Mediterranean and Mission Revival styles were popular in Colorado, Coaldale School exhibits elements of these two similar styles. The school's smooth wall surfaces, devoid of any ornamentation except the plain stringcourse encircling the building, is a characteristic shared by both styles, as is the low-pitched roof behind a parapet, brick wall construction, and very limited ornamentation. The simple rounded parapet wall marking the projecting entrance bay is a nod to the more elaborate curvilinear parapets found on Mission style buildings. However, the school lacks the tile roof and round-arched windows and entries that are characteristic of both styles. Its lack of a definitive style notwithstanding, the building retains a great deal of integrity, having undergone only a few minor alterations since its construction.

The double leaf entrance (two solid wooden doors each with a tall, narrow piece of glazing) leads to a vestibule and the long narrow hallway that runs the full width of the building. Restrooms are positioned at each end of the hallway. (At the time of construction, a spring-fed cistern supplied water for the building, both for drinking and the restrooms.) There is a door into each of the two classrooms. The southern classroom contains a raised stage along the southeast wall. The original roll-up canvas curtain is still in use, complete with advertising from then-operating local businesses. The other classroom contains an elongated galley kitchen along the northwest wall. Between the two classrooms is the original wooden partition that folds back to make one large room, allowing for a larger audience for stage productions. The yellow pine divider consists of three doors and one narrow panel on each side, which meet in the center when pulled together. The divider is positioned between the two original teacher's closets on one side and the two stoves on the other.

The well-preserved building has seen only two exterior alterations. In 1996, the original "silver" corrugated-like metal roof was replaced with red "Powerpanel" and the bell tower was enclosed with metal panels to keep out the bats. There have been a few changes to the interior. Originally a drinking fountain was in a small alcove across from the front door; it was removed at some point and replaced with a table. The kitchen area was created in 1959 and the serving bar in front of the cupboards was installed in 1978. Electricity was installed in 1948. One of the wood-burning stoves was replaced with a propane stove about 1950.

By 1927, a cabin had been moved from Barn City to serve as a teacherage. This one-story, hipped roof, wood frame building lies west of the school. In approximately 1990, a gabled roof addition enlarged the cabin, which was converted to a medical clinic. Other recent alterations include the installation of siding and a red metal roof. The nomination boundaries were drawn to exclude this building due to its extensive alterations.

**COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Page 3
Section III**

Property Name Coaldale School

Floor plan

Property Name Coaldale School

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

The Coaldale School is eligible for the Colorado State Register under criterion A in the areas of education and social history. Constructed in 1923, the building met the educational demands of the community serving as the only school until consolidation forced its closure in 1956. In most rural communities, the school also served an important social function. Often the only public building, rural schools became community centers hosting a wide variety of activities. The Coaldale School was no exception as the social life of Coaldale centered around this building that contained a folding partition between the two classrooms which when opened created one large space with a raised stage at one end.

Historical Background

The *Salida Mail* ran an article on October 21, 1927 captioned "Pleasant Valley Resources Attract Earliest Settlers" that discussed the development of the valley and its two flourishing mountain villages, Coaldale and Howard. Located near the mouth of Hayden Creek, Coaldale received its name from the charcoal kilns located there in "early days." The population of Coaldale and vicinity was noted as "between two or three hundred which supports a post office, one general store and a school."

The earliest recorded information on Coaldale refers to the water rights of the Roger's Ditch at Vallie, on the west end of what would become the Coaldale area, in 1872-73. A post office was established in 1878 that underwent several name changes—Hayden Creek (1878-1880), Palmer (1880-1887), and Hendricks (1878-1891). February 16th, 1891, the post office name was changed to Coaldale.

Coaldale began as a farming and ranching community, but during the 1870s and 1880s, freighting stations also offered some employment for the early settlers. These stations provided horses for the stagecoaches and freight operations that ran from Canon City to Leadville. The wooded foothills also prompted the construction of numerous saw mills that made ties for the railroads and timbers and props for the coal mines while giving additional employment to the numerous settlers attracted to the valley. Settlers were also interested in livestock development, and large herds of cattle fed on native grass before being shipped to Denver and Kansas City markets. Around 1910, a dairy industry began. The abundance of waters in numerous creeks attracted farmers who raised alfalfa, wheat, oats, and other grains. The Portland Cement Company owned a quarry near Coaldale that shipped gypsum for use in cement manufacturing. Begun around the turn of the last century, this gypsum quarry employed local residents until just a few years ago.

The Coaldale School District No. 17 was formed in 1879, but did not operate as a "body corporate" until 1880. The first school was a one-room wood frame building that washed away in a flood in 1922. A larger school was built as a replacement. Constructed of brick from Salida, the new building was located further south and on higher ground. The *Canon City Daily Record* on July 25, 1923, reported the following:

Property Name Coaldale School

An attractive, modernly appointed school house to cost between \$6000 and \$7000 is being erected at Coaldale in the western part of the county. The work is being done by a Salida contractor and is expected to be completed in time for the opening of school year in September. The building will be of frame construction and will contain sanitary sewerage with bubbling fountains, etc. Water will be piped to the building from a nearby spring.

The following month the *Salida Mail* (7 August 1923) reported on the new brick school being constructed at Coaldale at cost of \$6000 that "will have two rooms and will be strictly modern." The article noted the contractor was A. W. Klarenbach and that the building would be completed by the fall term of school.

The two-room school instructed grades one through eight. A 1927 *Salida Mail* newspaper article mentioned Coaldale's modern two room brick school building and its "two well paid teachers and excellent equipment with an enrollment of fifty pupils" along with its four-room teacherage. Bill Parks, who attended the school, remembers that there were 60 students in 1936. The older students occupied the "east side" [southern classroom], while the younger ones were in the "west side" [northern classroom].

The 1927 *Salida Mail* article also noted the importance of the building to the community. "The social life of Coaldale centers largely about the school. The school building is used as a community hall where community gatherings including Sunday school and preaching services are held." The building hosted other non-school related activities, including the annual Christmas party, dances, political caucus meetings, voting precinct, and grange meetings.

The Grange, Coaldale-Cotopaxi #397, had a long association with the building. Residents of the Cotopaxi community organized a Grange in 1926 with 50 members. People in the Coaldale area were accepted into the Cotopaxi Grange in April 1931. Several years later the name of the Grange was changed to Coaldale-Cotopaxi. The Grange alternated its meetings between the schoolhouses in both communities until 1939 when a fire destroyed the school in Cotopaxi. The Coaldale School then became the permanent Grange meeting site.

Despite Coaldale's large student enrollment over the years, the reality was that the school population in the rural districts of Fremont County was dropping. It was becoming apparent that the cost of operating the rural schools was increasingly out of proportion to the operation of schools in general. In 1950, there were 28 districts in the county still in operation, even though not all had teachers. Some of the smaller districts began transporting pupils by bus and paying tuition to larger schools. The time was ripe for a move to consolidate districts.

The first consolidation occurred in three districts east of Canon City. The next consolidation was in the western part of the county when a petition for consolidation was initiated in District #17 [Coaldale] and District #41 [Cotopaxi]. The newly created district became West Fremont County Consolidated #51. The movement grew with District #13 [Stout Creek] voting 15 to 3 to unite with the new district. Shortly after, District #26 [Hillside] voted unanimously to dissolve, join the new district, and sell their building to the Tenderfoot Saddle Club. With the acceptance

Property Name Coaldale School

of District #26, the West Fremont Consolidated District #51 was complete. The formation of this new district made it the largest school district in the county with an area approximately one-third the size of the state of Rhode Island (Green et al. 1986:158). District No. 51 transferred ownership of the one-acre parcel on which the school stood to the Coaldale Community Building Association with a deed filed September 18, 1956.

The building continued its role as a community center on a full time basis after consolidation forced the school to close. However, an educational component continues with adult education classes and volunteer fireman training being conducted in the building. In a community without a church, the school also serves as a wedding hall. Other social activities include the annual community Thanksgiving potluck. The building serves as the meeting hall for several local clubs, including the Coaldale Ladies Club and the Western Fremont Historical Society. The building also hosts a weekly quilting get together, exercise enthusiasts, and a morning coffee group. The school is the focal point of all these activities that continue to bind this close knit community.

Property Name Coaldale School

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Benson, Maxine. *1001 Colorado Place Names*. Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1994.

Canon City Daily Record. 25 July 1923.

Canon City, Colorado. Fremont County Clerk and Recorder Records.

Colorado State Grange (compiler, editor). *Colorado State Grange History*. Colorado State Grange, 1975.

Green, Marie; Sanders, Margaret; Seal, Carol; and Allen, Sylvia, compilers. *Fremont County School Days*. The Fremont County Extension Homemakers, 1986.

Pearce, Sarah J. et al. *A Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering*. 2nd ed. Denver: State Historical Society of Colorado, 2003.

Salida Mail. 7 August 1923; 21 October 1927.

Property Name Coaldale School

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Indicated on the sketch map, the boundary is a small portion of land within a one-acre parcel described from the warranty deed below.

A tract of land in the SW quarter, Section 33, Township 48 North, Range 11 East of the New Mexico Principal Meridian, described by metes and bounds as follows: Beginning at Corner Number One of the Southwest Corner of the present West Fremont School District No. 51 (formerly School District No. 17) plot in Coaldale, Colorado, as fenced whence the southeast corner of Section 33 bears South 67° 16' East 3860 feet and running thence North 64° 26' East 336 feet to Corner Number Two; thence North 25° 34' West 132 feet to Corner Number Three; thence South 64° 26' West 336 to Corner Number Four; thence South 25° 34' East 132 feet to the place of beginning.

The boundaries were drawn to include only the school and its immediate grounds and to exclude the teacherage (since converted to a medical clinic with extensive alterations), two sheds and the firehouse (recent constructions that also occupy the one-acre parcel.)

**COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Page 9
Section V**

Property Name Coaldale School

Sketch Map

Property Name Coaldale School

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to all photographs:

Name of Property: Coaldale School / Coaldale Community Building
Location: Coaldale, Fremont County
Photographer: John Walker
Date of Photographs: 4 July 2004
Negatives: on file with Coaldale Community Building Association

Photo No. Photographic Information

- 1 View of school from parking lot with clinic at left; camera facing NE
- 2 Front (southwest side) of school; camera facing NE
- 3 Façade; camera facing E
- 4 Façade; camera facing N
- 5 Southeast end of school; camera facing NW
- 6 Northwest end of school; camera facing SE
- 7 Rear (northeast side) of school; camera facing SW

**COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Page 11
Section VII**

Property Name Coaldale School

USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Coaldale Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series