

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**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 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bridgeton School

other names/site number Burrillville Historical & Preservation Society

2. Location

street & number 16 Laurel Hill Avenue not for publication

city or town Burrillville vicinity

state Rhode Island code RI county Providence code 007 zip code 02859

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 forth 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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
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"/> See continuation sheet. | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet. | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (explain) | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

Bridgeton School
Name of Property

Providence County, Rhode Island
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.)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | | structures |
| | | objects |
| 1 | | total |

Name of related multiple property listings

(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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation BRICK

walls WOOD: clapboard

roof ASPHALT: shingles

other METAL: copper (at roof)

Narrative Description

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

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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.
- 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.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

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):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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 #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Education

Architecture

Period of Significance

1897

Significant Dates

1897

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Spaulding, G.W., architect

Kimball, Nehemiah and William H. Gory, builders

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository

Burrillville Historical & Preservation Society

Bridgeton School
Name of Property

Providence County, Rhode Island
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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | |
|---|-------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | 1 9 | 2 7 5 1 7 8 | 4 6 4 9 1 9 0 |
| | 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 Betty Mencucci, President

organization Burrillville Historical & Preservation Society date May 2005

street & number 16 Laurel Hill Avenue telephone 401-568-8449

city or town Burrillville state Rhode Island zip code 02859

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 _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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 amend listings. 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 20503

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Burrillville

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DESCRIPTION

The Bridgeton School is a plain 1 ½-story rectangular wood-frame structure, 40x60', set under a high T-gable roof. The two-room schoolhouse faces south at the intersection of Laurel Hill Avenue, Church Street, and Wallum Lake Road, on a partially paved lot in the residential neighborhood of Bridgeton, near the village of Pascoag in the town of Burrillville.

The school is 6 bays wide and 3 bays deep and is set long side to Laurel Hill Avenue. There is a pedimented entry porch at each end of the front elevation. The end of the T-gable is the principal architectural feature of the façade; its broad roof is capped by a heavy hip-roof square belfry, and a Palladian window is set under its apex; a shortened version of the Palladian window is set in each of the short (east and west) gable ends.

The building is set on a high foundation, rubblestone to grade level and buff-colored brick above. There is a short red brick chimney at the center of the building. The exterior walls are covered with clapboards with a 4" exposure; there are flat corner boards, heavy eaves, and exposed rafter ends. A long wheelchair ramp of unpainted timbers wraps around the west end and the rear of the building.

The two doorways are set under gable-roof entrance porches, somewhat altered from their original appearance. The porches now have concrete steps and decks (installed in 1970), replacing wooden ones. Slender iron columns have replaced half-height round wooden columns; the appearance of the original columns is suggested by the matching engaged versions at the back of each porch. Wrought iron and pipe railings have replaced the simple wooden balusters shown in historic photographs, and the pediment of each porch is now paneled with flat boards—once there was a decorative relief (showing a lamp and laurel branches?) on each of them. But the sharp angle of each porch pediment still reflects the angle of the cross-gable. The porches remain important features, and restoration of the wood elements is planned. The original doorways are still intact—double-leaf paneled doors (glazed on the upper half), with flat-board surrounds and transoms.

The tall rectangular window openings are single on the front of the school, paired on the rear elevation. On the ends of the building there are both paired and single openings. They are surrounded by flat boards with a simple molding and are filled with replacement double-hung sash, vinyl-covered wood, with simulated muntins dividing the sash into 12/2 on the rear of the building and 9/2 on the front, with both arrangements on the end elevations, an historic pattern; the tripartite windows in the gables have their original sash.

The interior of the building is divided into two equal size roughly square classrooms with service areas ranged along the front (south) side of the school. Through each of the two main doors, one passes into a small

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(8x8') foyer and then directly into each of the classrooms. On each side of each foyer is a small closet or office; the office on the west side has been converted to a small kitchen; the closet at the southeast corner has been fitted as a bathroom. Additional closets separate the two classrooms from each other. The attic/basement stair is located at the center of the front elevation in a tiny hall that also allows passage between the classrooms without exit and re-entry. The western classroom contains the Burrillville Historical & Preservation Society's research library; the east classroom serves as a meeting place.

Throughout the interior, the schoolhouse retains original finishes and fittings. The ceilings are plaster or pressed tin (installed in 1914). A picture molding runs around each of the classrooms. The walls are plastered and are lined with chalkboards in the classrooms. The woodwork is largely intact—paneled doors, surrounded by heavy moldings, have their early 20th-century brass hardware. Low wooden shelves set on metal brackets line the window walls. There is a small porcelain sink in each classroom on the closet wall. The flooring is 2¼" oak strips, installed in 1944, and covered by vinyl tiles in the east classroom.

The attic is unfinished; access to the belfry is by a wooden ladder. The basement is roughly finished, with a concrete floor and bead board partitions. The school's heating plant is located here. Toilet facilities installed in the basement in 1928 replaced the privies which originally served the school. A small partitioned area, fitted with tables and benches, served as a lunch room for students.

The school lot is partially paved for parking, partially lawn. Just west of the schoolhouse is a small cast-iron trough, moved here in 1999 from a nearby location. Also on the site are two millstones moved here from the site of a nearby gristmill.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

The information for items 1 through 5 is the same for all of the photographs, as follows:

1. Bridgeton School
2. Providence County, Rhode Island
3. Betty Mencucci, Photographer
4. July 2005
5. Original digital image on file at: Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission
150 Benefit Street, Providence, RI 02903

6. View of the south (façade) and west elevations of Bridgeton School, from Laurel Hill Avenue. View facing northeast.

7. Photograph #1

6. View of the south (façade) elevation of Bridgeton School. View facing north.

7. Photograph #2

6. View of the west elevation of Bridgeton School. View facing east.

7. Photograph #3

6. View of the north elevation of Bridgeton School. View facing south.

7. Photograph #4

6. Interior view of the east classroom of the Bridgeton School. View facing southeast.

7. Photograph #5

6. Interior view of the west classroom of the Bridgeton School. View facing east.

7. Photograph #6

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SIGNIFICANCE

The Bridgeton School (1897) is significant for its ability to document some significant patterns of settlement and development in the town of Burrillville and for its association with the history of public education in Burrillville. One of several small school buildings constructed in the town's mill villages in the 1890s, Bridgeton School is the best preserved of the group. While the others have been demolished or converted to alternative uses, Bridgeton School is maintained by the Burrillville Historical & Preservation Society as a museum of the town's history. The well preserved turn-of-the-century interior documents the appearance and feeling of a school built for the children of the town's farm and factory workers a century ago.

Burrillville was first settled in the late 17th century, but it remained a sparsely populated agricultural area, its rocky wooded landscape dotted by a few subsistence homesteads, until well into the 19th century. Beginning in early 19th century, the town's streams and small rivers, the Branch River and its tributaries, the Chepachet, the Clear, and the Pascoag Rivers, were harnessed to power small textile and other mills.

Through the 19th century, some of the settlements surrounding these mill sites remained small, but others grew into substantial communities, and the characteristic pattern of development in Burrillville was set-- the town never developed a single center, but became an aggregation of villages. While some farms continued to operate in the 19th century, the mill villages were the real nodes of development. New residents came to work in the mills, from surrounding areas and from northern Europe and southern Canada, and by the turn of the century, there were more than a dozen industrial villages in Burrillville.

Burrillville's villages were centers of civic as well as working life for their residents. While the tiniest hamlets comprised no more than a small mill and a few houses, the larger villages had churches, schools, libraries, meeting halls, and stores. Even into the 20th century, as Burrillville developed into a suburban community and a regional recreation center, the town's villages remain an important organizing principle for development.

Bridgeton is one of Burrillville's smaller villages. Located near Pascoag village on the Clear River, the Bridgeton area developed originally as several tiny hamlets (Huntsville, Laurel Hill, and Saxonville), each centered on a minor mill site. By the late 19th and early 20th century, the distinct character of each settlement had disappeared, and the area was known as Bridgeton. Today, the village includes a mill, a number of historic mill sites, and several houses from the 19th and 20th centuries. Its center is the triangular intersection of Laurel Hill Avenue, Wallum Lake Road, and Church Street.

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The Town of Burrillville constructed a number of district schools in the middle decades of the 19th century, most of them small, 1-story frame buildings with a single classroom. By the later decades of the century, the town's population had increased substantially and new schools were required, both as replacements for earlier buildings and to serve newer areas, now more heavily populated. In the decades at the turn of the century the Town constructed schools at Mapleville (c1890), Nasonville (c1890), Pascoag (1893), Bridgeton (1897), and Harrisville (1904)—all of them 1- or 2-story wood-frame buildings. Larger than the earlier set of school buildings, these have 2 or 4 classrooms each.

The Burrillville School Committee had noted in the mid-1890s that a new building was needed in the Bridgeton area. The existing school, dating from mid-century, was condemned by the State Commissioner for Public Schools in early 1897, and by May the School Committee had engaged architect George W. Spaulding to draw plans for a new 2-room school to serve elementary students from Bridgeton and an overflow of students from the new primary school in nearby Pascoag.

Spaulding was a native Rhode Islander who had worked for several decades as a mechanical engineer for the Woonsocket Machine & Press Company, a textile machine shop in nearby Woonsocket, RI. In 1885 he set up as an engineer and architect, with an office located in Woonsocket's Exchange Block.

Bridgeton School was constructed on land purchased from Nehemiah Kimball who also served as contractor and builder of the school. In August 1897 the foundation had been constructed; construction work continued until November of that year when the school was opened.

As with the other 1890s schools in Burrillville, Bridgeton School was built to serve the primary grades 1 through 4. For much of the student population of the town, schooling ended after these early grades. With its expanding mills offering work, many students applied for labor certificates after the fourth or fifth grade—so that the early grades were overflowing, and there were few students in the upper grades. In 1905, for example, the town had 140 students in its first grade classrooms, but only 13 students in its eighth grade.

For the first two years of operation at Bridgeton, only one classroom was occupied. The school's first teacher was Bertha N. Smith who was paid \$42 per week. Seventy-six students were enrolled, though only 39 attended on an average day. After 1900, grades 1 and 2 were taught in one classroom, grades 3 and 4 in the other. Enrollment increased in the early decades of the 20th century; by 1935, the school had 101 students in its classes. The Bridgeton School continued to operate until 1966 when it was closed by the Town; in 1970 it was reopened as a neighborhood kindergarten and re-named Joseph Sweeney School (after a Burrillville superintendent of schools). When the Town built the Steere Farm Elementary School in 1995, it closed Bridgeton finally and transferred ownership to the Burrillville Preservation & Historical Society.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Pascoag Herald and Burrillville News Gazette: 1897.

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission. Historic and Architectural Resources of Burrillville, Rhode Island: A Preliminary Report. Providence, R.I., 1982.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Co. Maps of Pascoag-Harrisville, R.I.: 1921.

Town of Burrillville.

Annual Reports of the Town of Burrillville School Committee: 1896-1971.

Town Council Minutes: 1897.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the nominated property follow the lot lines of the entire parcel occupied by the Bridgeton School (A.P. 157, Lot 198).

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated property comprise all of the land area historically associated with the Bridgeton School.





THIS PROJECT IS FUNDED BY A
STATE PRESERVATION
GRANT
RECEIVED BY THE
STATE OF OHIO
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES





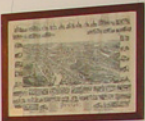


EXIT

Four framed certificates or notices are displayed in a row on the wall above the chalkboard.

Four framed photographs or small posters are displayed in a row on the wall above the chalkboard.

Repeat in the Works...
Day of Jesus Pass...
Consider him led in a...
1841-1849



A row of several small framed notices or documents is mounted on the wall above the bulletin board.

A large black bulletin board covered with various notices, photos, and documents.

d Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx
12345
678910





49°51'

49°50'

49°49'

49°48'

BRIDGETON SCHOOL
BURRILLVILLE
PROVIDENCE COUNTY, RI

UTM REFERENCE:
19 275178 4649190

57°30"