

Lodore School

Browns Park National Wildlife Refuge – Northwest Colorado

From the 1974 National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form



Brown's Hole, long the famed hide-out for Butch Cassidy and other outlaws of similar status, first set up a school for its children in 1910. The land for the building was donated by a Mrs. Harry Hoy. The building itself was constructed by carpenters Evers, Hunt and Hoover and was 50 feet by 30 feet. Class sessions were held continuously from 1911 to 1947. In 1954 the building came under the maintenance and control of the Brown's Park Women's Club for use as a community center. In 1970 it was acquired by the Fish and Wildlife Resources Development Services, but it still receives heavy use as a community center.

Although the building was built and used to serve the purpose of educating the surrounding ranch children, it quickly became the recognized center of the community in and around Brown's Park for such events as dances, school plays, funerals and community parties for every sort of major occasion in the area. Notices appear continuously in the EMPIRE COURIER from 1911 to 1947 concerning the need for parents to send their children to the school, for community dances, for fund raising events relative to the World War I patriotic leagues. There are references to children whose parents have moved into town in order to send their children to school, other references as to where parents might board their children during the term.

The first teacher was Miss Winford Denny who was hired on a monthly salary of \$65.00. By 1947 wages had climbed to \$150.00 per month.

The school hall is significant in its cultural service to citizens of Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah. It is the only such center for the people of this isolated area to gather and outside of its discontinued use as a school it functions in the same ways as it did when first constructed. Concerned citizens in all three states have contributed information by phone and by letter to further its landmarking and notice by the National Register. It is a fine example of the social life of isolated ranch people both in earlier times and now. It shows how the ties of social interdependence exceed the political boundaries and physical boundaries which would otherwise separate groups of people from their neighbors.

The school is a single story structure made of horizontal planking. The roof is a medium gable covered with shingles. A hipped cupola-style bell tower sits to the fore of the building. The brick chimney is hidden behind it. The eaves are boxed and plain; and the cornice, boxed, plain and pedimented. A semicircular vent adorns the pediment area.

The doors and windows are flat and plain. The windows are double hung and used to have shutters. The entry door is topped by a plain, single transom light and is reached by means of double side stairs flanked by a plain post railing.

Although the building is plain it is sturdy and well built. Its many windows provide ample light and fresh air.

NOTE: The spelling of Ladore or Lodore has resulted from the different references made by local newspapers. The correct spelling is Lodore as given to it by John Wesley Powell in remembrance of the poem "The Gates of Lodore". Newspapers have so long misspelled the name that Ladore has become equally acceptable.