

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

FINAL

**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.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lyles Consolidated School
other names/site number Lyles Station School

2. Location

street & number C.R. 100 N N/A not for publication
city or town Lyles Station N/A vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Gibson code 051 zip code 47670

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 36CFR 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]
Signature of certifying official/Title

7/26/90
Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
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:

- 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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

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

- building, district, site, structure, object

Table with columns: Contributing, Noncontributing, buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total. Values: 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1.

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Indiana's Public Common and High Schools MPDF

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

19th & 20th c. AMER.: Prairie School

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

WOOD: Weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

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.)

- 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.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

c. 1919-1949

Significant Dates

c. 1919

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

9. Major Bibliographic 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 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Lyles Consolidated School _____
Name of Property

Gibson _____ IN _____
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property _____ 2.3 _____

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	6	4	4	2	3	3	0	4	2	4	6	8	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3

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Zone Easting Northing

2

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Zone Easting Northing

4

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Zone Easting Northing

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 Julie Zent, Community Services Intern _____
organization Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana _____ date 11/15/98 _____
street & number 340 West Michigan Street _____ telephone 317-639-4534 _____
city or town Indianapolis _____ state IN _____ zip code 46202-3204 _____

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 Norma Greer _____
street & number P.O. Box 273, Rural Route 3 _____ telephone _____
city or town Princeton _____ state IN _____ zip code 47670 _____

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 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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Section number 7 Page 1 *Lyles Consolidated School, Gibson Co., IN*

Section 7 - Description

Lyles Consolidated School is situated on the western third of a 2.3 acre rectangular site in Lyles Station, Gibson County, Indiana. The square-shaped building has a footprint measuring 54'-0" x 57'-0" with its primary facade facing east. A long east-west dirt drive leads up a small knoll upon which the school sits. A dense growth of trees is located on the west side of the grassy site behind the school with a few scattered trees in front.

The two-story brick and wood building exhibits features of the Prairie Style with its low, flat roof and overhanging eaves. Horizontality is emphasized through the use of brick on the first-story and clapboard siding on the second. The building lacks ornamentation and exemplifies its style through simplicity of form. The structure employs load-bearing masonry walls at the lower level and conventional wood framing for the upper level and flat roof.

Lyles Consolidated School has remained unaltered by human hands since its construction circa 1919 with only nature's forces causing the deterioration of the building's fabric. Deterioration is most evident at the upper level, where a portion of the northwest corner has collapsed over the first-story brick walls leaving the interior exposed to the elements. While the brick appears to be in good condition, the wood elements are deteriorating and most of the windows are missing their glass panes. In 1998, efforts began to stabilize the building against further deterioration.

The building rests upon foundation walls of smooth-faced red brick with approximately 12" exposure topped by twenty-seven courses of rough-faced red brick. The bricks measure 2¼" x 8½" with ½" light gray mortar and are laid in a running bond pattern. Above the brick, horizontal wood 6" clapboard siding is used. At the top of the walls, flush 8" wood boards extend approximately 34" down from the overhanging eaves. A simple wood cove moulding encompasses the perimeter at the juncture between the eave and wall.

Exterior cladding material and corresponds to the floor level on the interior. The first floor is covered with bricks while the second floor is sheathed in clapboard. The roof structural system is located behind the flush wood boards. The window head heights like the exterior cladding materials articulate the interior levels with second-story windows located immediately under the flush wood boards and first-story windows directly beneath the clapboards.

The flat roof is composed of wood decking covered by tar with eaves extending approximately 2' beyond the wall surfaces. A 10'-0" square cupola with a hipped roof projects from the center of the roof. Each side of the cupola is composed of three sections of wood louvered panels. A brick chimney rises from the northeast quadrant of the roof.

The typical windows on Lyles Consolidated School are double-hung, two-over-two wood sash. The first-story windows measure 3'-1" x 5'-4" with a 5½" concrete sill. The second-story windows are slightly larger, measuring 3'-4" x 8'-4" with a 2" wood sill. A variety of fixed wood sash windows are located on the east elevation. Many of the windows have been boarded up with clapboard siding, metal or plywood. None of the windows have retained their full complement of glass panes and most have broken sashes and muntins.

The east elevation features the main entry to the structure. A 5½" high concrete step leads to the double doors contained within a 14'-6" tall central projection. This vestibule area is formed by two brick columns carrying a simple wood entablature. The columns extend 36" from the east wall and measures 41" across. Eight-light, two-paneled wood doors with interior metal pushbars are flanked by ten-light sidelights. Above the doors, a thirty-light transom spans the area between the columns. The fenestration is symmetrically placed around the entry area. Eight typical windows are dispersed equally between the floors. Three nine-light fixed wood sash windows are centered on the facade above the projecting entrance. A metal fire alarm bell is situated above these windows.

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The north elevation has fallen into a state of disrepair. The western half of the facade has collapsed. However, this portion of the wall appears to be mostly intact and currently rests in front of the first-story brick wall. A two-paneled wood door with a single top light and metal hardware holds a centralized position on the elevation. A typical first floor window is adjacent to the door on the east side. Eight windows are divided into two sets of four. The sets are situated near the east and west corners of the elevation with two windows on the first-story level aligning with two windows on the second-story.

A portion of the west elevation has also collapsed. The northern half of the wall rests in front of the first-story brick wall and appears to be mostly intact. Seven typical windows are featured on this elevation with six on the second-story level and one on the first-story. A grouping of five second floor windows is situated on the south half of the facade. The center-most window aligns with a first floor window. A single second floor window is located near the north corner.

The south elevation contains ten typical windows, five on the first-story and five on the second. The first floor windows are symmetrically placed with groupings of two windows near each corner with a single window holding a central position. The second floor windows are situated on the eastern half of the facade. The first, third and fifth windows align with those on the first floor.

Lyles Consolidated School features a well organized interior plan. The main entry on the east elevation enters upon two flights of wooden stairs. The steps to the south lead to the first floor while those to the north lead to the second level. The upper floor was primarily used for educational purposes while the lower level contained areas for large assembly, home economics classes, storage and mechanical systems. Surface-mounted duplex outlets and conduit indicate that electricity was a later addition to the structure.

The first floor level is divided into two portions by a central east-west hall that terminates in a dressing room. An auditorium is located on the south side of the hall. A home economics classroom in the northeast quadrant contains the only plumbing hook-ups in the building. A utility area is found in the northwest corner with a boiler room and coal storage room in the middle. The boiler room features a set of concrete steps leading to the exterior door on the north elevation.

A variety of materials are employed on the first floor level. The ceiling surface is corrugated metal. Heating pipes are hung from the ceiling with metal rods. The cast iron radiators are also ceiling-mounted along with metal and glass light fixtures. The walls are painted brick and the floor is concrete. The windows possess a plain 4 ½" wood surround. The interior doorways have a plain 2" wood surround with large single-light horizontal pivot transoms. The only exception to this door type is the one entering into the utility room which is composed of vertical wood boards. The materials in the lower level are in a state of deterioration due to water infiltration.

The second floor consists of three classrooms, an office, coatroom and small storage room. The office is located in the northeast corner with the classrooms occupying the remaining three corners. The coatroom holds a position adjacent to the office on the south side. A central hall links the rooms and the storage space is situated above the stairs to the first floor. The northwest corner of the second floor has collapsed, rendering one of the classrooms inaccessible.

The materials of the second level vary from those of the first, mainly through the greater use of wood elements. The ceiling surface is corrugated metal with hung metal and glass light fixtures. A 3" cavetto crown moulding is located along the ceiling perimeter. The walls are plaster over lathe with a 4" wood chair rail and an 8" wood baseboard. The floor surface is covered with 3 ½" flush tongue-and-groove wood boards running in an east-west direction. The windows

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have a plain 4 ½" wood surround. The two-panel wood doors with single top light have metal hardware and a plain 4 ½" surround with entablature. A single-light horizontal pivot transom is situated over the door. A set of double doors are located at the top of the stairs neither these doors nor the solid wood storage room door have transoms. The materials in the second story are in a greater state of deterioration than those of the first level.

Lyles Consolidated School has remained unaltered since its construction. The materials, while in a state of deterioration, are all original. Architects and engineers asked to evaluate the structural integrity of the school have responded that the building retains enough integrity to be repaired without losing a great deal of historic fabric. The main structural concern is the northwest corner. Plans are under way to shore up the northwest corner of the building, using as much of the failed wall sections as possible. Lyles Station Preservation Association, a non-profit group, just received funds from Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana's revolving loan fund. The Lyles Station group now has adequate funds to acquire, stabilize and mothball the building. After stabilization, The Lyles Station Preservation Association will undertake a capital campaign to rehabilitate the building. Listing the school is a significant step toward the beginning of this process.

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Section 8 - Statement of Significance

Lyles Consolidated School in Lyles Station, Indiana is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as a significant event in regard to African-American heritage and education. The school is located within an African-American founded and named community. Black rural communities are a diminishing resource in the United States and Lyles Station is one of very few examples in the State of Indiana. Lyles Station remains a predominantly black community and many of the present inhabitants are descendants of the original pioneers. Lyles Consolidated School provided education to many African-Americans during the era of racially segregated education in Indiana. Lyles Consolidated School is a property type specifically mentioned in the *Indiana's Public Common and High Schools MPDF*, and meets the registration requirements set forth in that document.

Before the Civil War, the majority of African-Americans in Indiana resided in rural settings with farming as their source of livelihood. Isolation was their ally during this period, protecting them from prejudice and persecution. However, they lived in poverty, as black people generally received the poorest land and location. After the Civil War, many African-Americans migrated to urban areas with the prospects of receiving regular wages, a better education and greater opportunities for social entertainment.¹ Lyles Station is the exception to this rule, possessing fertile land, a good location, prosperous black farmers and a self-sufficient community in regard to religion, education and entertainment.² The presence of a railroad station also aided in its survival when many other rural black settlements failed.

Liberated slaves from Tennessee, Joshua and Sanford Lyles migrated to the free State of Indiana before the onset of the Civil War. The brothers settled in the fertile farming region between the Patoka, Wabash and White River Valleys on land they purchased from the government. After the Civil War, Joshua returned to Tennessee and encouraged newly freed slaves to join him in Indiana, many of which followed.

Joshua eventually accumulated over 1,200 acres of land, six of which he donated to the Airline Railroad (known today as the Southern Railroad Company) under the condition that a station be built in his community. The train created a successful market for the black farmers and in 1886, in honor of Joshua, the settlement was named Lyles Station. In that same year, a Post Office was formed. William H. Roundtree was appointed the first Postmaster of Lyles Station. In his book, *Lyles Station, Indiana Yesterday and Today*, Carl Lyles avers that Roundtree was the first black Postmaster north of the Mason Dixon line.

Lyles Station claims another contribution to African-American history with one of the first cases taken to the Indiana State Supreme Court and won by a black man. This was a rare occurrence during period of racial discrimination. James Roundtree petitioned the Commissioners of Gibson County to rebuild a bridge over the Patoka River. This bridge allowed for the efficient transportation of produce, grain and timber from the settlement. Gibson County Court refused

¹ Emma Lou Thornbrough. *The Negro in Indiana Before 1900: A Study of a Minority*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993, p. 228 -229.

² Ibid., p. 347-348.

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this request, forcing the case of "Roundtree vs. the Commissioners of Gibson County" to the Indiana State Supreme Court where the decision was reversed in 1881.³

At its acme, Lyles Station accommodated approximately six hundred residents, fifty-five homes, two general stores, two churches, a post office, railroad station, elementary school, lumber mill, blacksmith shop and cemetery. The settlement prospered until 1913, when a flood submerged the community and marked its decline. After the flood, many residents left the risky world of farming and Lyles Station to find secure factory jobs in Evansville, Terre Haute or Indianapolis.⁴

Lyles Consolidated School was constructed in the African-American community circa 1919. At the time, the new school was considered a great asset, not only as a sign of recovery for the flood-ravished community, but also for the improved education offered to the students. The school supplanted two neighboring schools when it opened. Built on property owned by Lewis Liggins and Columbus Russell, the school is situated on a site adjacent to the Wayman Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church.⁵ Willard Dill, trustee of Patoka Township, provided the leadership and supervision during construction. Dedicated teachers such as Joseph Lucas, Henry H. Howard, Nannie Bell and Loretta Simmons Freeman aided in the education of numerous African-Americans who went on to institutes of higher education, many to become teachers themselves.

Lyles Consolidated School was integrated until 1922. In that year, a white student was punished by a black teacher. The parents felt that the punishment received was too severe. This resulted in the transfer of all white students to Baldwin Heights School in Princeton, Indiana. Lyles Consolidated School remained all black until its closing in 1958.⁶

Carl C. Lyles, Sr. is a descendant of Joshua Lyles, founder of Lyles Station. Carl attended Lyles Consolidated School later to become a highly respected educator in Indiana. He articulately sums up the significance of education and heritage in this African-American settlement in his book, *Lyles Station, Indiana: Yesterday and Today*:

Lyles Station can claim an extraordinary number of prominent black leaders, not only those who led Lyles Station itself, but those who went out into the larger community and carried with them the qualities of leadership and idealism they learned at home. Their accomplishments witness to the sacrifice and foresight of the parents who nurtured and shaped them into whatever they

³ Carl L. Lyles. *Lyles Station, Indiana: Yesterday and Today*. Evansville, Indiana: Burkert-Walton, Inc., 1984, p. 19.

⁴ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵ *Bits and Pieces About Rural Grade Schools of Gibson County, Indiana*. Compiled by Alpha Lambda Chapter, Alpha Epsilon State and The Delta Kappa Gamma Society, 1985.

⁶ Carl C. Lyles. *Lyles Station, Indiana: Yesterday and Today*. Evansville, Indiana: Burkert-Walton, Inc., 1984, p. 30.

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became. History will not record the names of these parents, only the names of their children, but it can be assumed that they were hardworking people, wanting more out of life than the menial chores and hard labor that seemed fated for black youngsters in the early 1900's. They saw education as the key to a better life for their children, and determination and hard work by those children have proven them right.⁷

Lyles Consolidated School is unique as it survives in the same environmental conditions in which it was created. The formation of free black communities in Indiana was limited by the 1851 State Constitution which banned all African-Americans from entering the state to settle.⁸ Even so, over forty black farming settlements existed in Indiana after the Civil War. Today, only Lyles Station has endured as a viable community.

There are approximately thirty historic African-American schools remaining in Indiana, two of which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. However, both the Crispus Attucks High School in Indianapolis and the Booker T. Washington School in Rushville are situated in larger, urban communities and these schools are of different architectural styles than that of the modest Lyles Station School. In comparison with the other African-American schools possessing similarities in regard to rural context, building materials, scale and style, Lyles Consolidated School is the only one that has not been architecturally altered.

Lyles Consolidated School is one of the remaining few tangible vestiges of a scarce ethnic heritage and education resource, making it eligible for listing under Criterion A in the National Register of Historic Places. The school building is unaltered since its completion in 1919, thus preserving its integrity in regard to architecture, interior layout, materials and location. The education of many successful African-Americans began with this building and the community hopes to educate others about Lyles Station and black history through preserving a piece of its past.

⁷ Ibid., p. iii.

⁸ Emma Lou Thornbrough. *The Negro in Indiana Before 1900: A Study of a Minority*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993, p. 31.

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Section 9 - Bibliography

Bits and Pieces About Rural Grade Schools of Gibson County, Indiana. Compiled by Alpha Lambda Chapter, Alpha Epsilon State and The Delta Kappa Gamma Society, 1985.

Beil, Kevin D., P.E. "Structural Investigation: School House (1919), Princeton, Indiana." Kevin D. Beil, P.E., Structural Engineering Consultant, Indianapolis, Indiana, 30 May 1997.

Lyles, Carl C. *A History of Lyles Station, Indiana.* Evansville, Indiana: 1973.

Lyles, Carl C. *Lyles Station, Indiana: Yesterday and Today.* Evansville, Indiana: Burkert-Walton, Inc., 1984.

Shaw, Bill. "A Beacon of History." *Indianapolis Star* (2 February 1997).

Thornbrough, Emma Lou. *The Negro in Indiana Before 1900: A Study of a Minority.* Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993.

Zorich, Rebecca C. "Lyles Station." Research paper prepared for Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1997.

Section 10 - Geographical Data - Verbal Boundary Description

Lyles Consolidated School is located in Patoka Township, Gibson County, Indiana, Part of SW ¼ of Section 5, Twp 2, Range 11. The rectangular site is bounded by a row of trees on the west and Rural Route 3 on the east. The longer north and south edges are formed by the property lines of the adjacent owners. The school sits on the western portion of the site with a east-west dirt drive providing access from Rural Route 3. The enclosed 1/64" = 1' scale map shows the precise boundary.

Boundary justification

This is the boundary on file with the Gibson County Recorder's Office. The map records a more precise boundary since official records do not give a firm boundary.

Photographs

All photographs were taken September 5, 1997 by Marsh Davis. Negatives on file with Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, Indianapolis. The following list includes the photo number and view description.

1. Overall view of school and site, looking NW
2. East elevation-looking W
3. North elevation-looking S
4. West elevation-looking NE
5. South elevation-looking N

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6. Detail, primary entrance, looking W
7. Interior, first floor auditorium, looking W
8. Interior, first floor home economics room, looking NE
9. Interior, second floor classroom #2, looking NE
10. Interior, second floor classroom #1, looking NW
11. Interior, detail of door and cabinet, classroom #1, looking N