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WASHINGTON
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

received
date entered

1. Name

historic East Dubuque School
and/or common Esther Hillman House

2. Location

street & number Montgomery Avenue *N/A* not for publication
city, town East Dubuque *N/A* vicinity of
state Illinois code 012 county Jo Daviess code 085

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use <i>VACANT</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<i>N/A</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <i>will be converted housing for the elderly</i>

4. Owner of Property

name Montgomery Street Associates
street & number 208 Pine St.
city, town Portland *N/A* vicinity of state Maine

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jo Daviess County Courthouse
street & number 330 North Bench St.
city, town Galena state Illinois

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date N/A federal state county local
depository for survey records N/A
city, town N/A state N/A

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>N/A</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The East Dubuque School is a freestanding brick building situated on a bluff overlooking the town of East Dubuque, Illinois. The overall plan of the original 2-story building, completed in 1893, is rectangular with a square 3-story bell tower and curved 2-story bay window set into its southwest corner. The 5-bay gable-roofed west end intersects a hip-roofed north-south section, with the transition provided by a gable-roofed dormer flanked by a pair of chimneys on the north elevation and a gable terminating at the bell tower, which is capped by a pyramidal roof. The north elevation has 10 bays; the symmetrical south elevation has 7 bays and is accentuated by a gable-roofed dormer. The masonry bearing wall construction has dark brick exterior walls in common bond with one header course in every 7 or 8 courses. The bricks vary in shade, presenting an irregular, mottled appearance. The foundation is composed of quarry-faced limestone. The asphalt shingle roof is laid in a diagonal pattern of gray squares and is in fair condition.

A 2-story east wing completed in 1914 is well integrated with the original building. Approximately 36 ft. x 68 ft., the rectangular hip-roofed addition has four bays on the north and south elevations and eight bays on the east, dominated by a 2-bay gable-roofed central dormer. The addition is connected to the original building by a 2-story gable-roofed link which provides two entrances from the outside. Entrances to the original building are marked by a massive round arch over a door on the west elevation of the tower, and a pair of pillars flanking the door frame at the north elevation.

Decorative elements include (1) the bell tower, with its entrance arch, corbel table and light stone horizontal bands accentuating the arched openings in the third story; (2) the use of round-arched windows on the original building and in the dormer of the addition; (3) the pattern of vertical divisions created by the round-arched windows on the original building and continuous hood molds on the addition, and horizontal bands of brick and stone at the impost, lintels, sills, and foundation, as well as white stone lintels; (4) receding dark brick panels between stories, at cornice level, and in gables, and a carved stone panel above the entrance arch which reads "Public School Erected 1893"; (5) corbelling at the cornices of both buildings; (6) rounded light stone finials on the entrance pillars; (7) diaper work in the gable over the north entrance. These decorative elements contribute substantially to the Romanesque Revival qualities of the building.

The interior layout is fixed by bearing walls, and remains unchanged with the exception of partitions subdividing rooms, and related doorway alterations. Finishes are plain and institutional, with some wood trim remaining, and hardwood floors. The interior is seriously damaged from heavy use and vandalism, unlike the substantially intact exterior. All of the windows are broken and the multi-paned sash over the tower entrance has been destroyed. The tower bell is on display in the lobby of the new high school.

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A major outbuilding at the eastern end of the site is a gymnasium built in 1952. One story with brick walls and a low, curved metal roof, the rectangular gymnasium (approx. 77 ft. x 96 ft.) occupies a larger area than the classroom buildings. Another outbuilding, in a corner between the east wing and the gymnasium at the northern edge of the site, is a modest one-story wood frame house on a rubble foundation. This was formerly the school superintendent's house and may date from the early 20th-century. The house is in poor condition. The gymnasium is connected to the 1914 addition by an enclosed passageway.

The proposal for adaptive reuse of the East Dubuque School and gymnasium into housing for the elderly calls for exterior repairs, site work and landscaping, replacement windows and doors in existing openings, and new roof coverings. Bearing walls in the school interior will remain, with housing units in subdivided classroom space. New interior finishes, an elevator, and new electrical and mechanical systems will be part of the rehabilitation. Dormers and windows will be added to the gymnasium to make it suitable for housing, and a new connector to the east wing will be constructed. Demolition of the frame house is planned to provide a pocket of landscaped open space at the northern end of the gymnasium near the connector entrance.

Other manmade elements on the site include an asphalt parking area, concrete sidewalks and steps, and retaining walls. Vehicular access to the school is from Montgomery Avenue to the west. A visually significant pedestrian approach is the dramatic northward ascent of 69 steps from a street below to the tower.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates Completed 1893;
east wing 1914; **Builder/Architect** of orig. bldg.: Thomas T. Carkeek

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The East Dubuque School is architecturally significant as an outstanding example in Illinois of a school in the late Romanesque Revival style. It is the only major historic public building in East Dubuque, and was the dominant educational institution in the town for 85 years. Built in 1893 as both the grammar school and high school for East Dubuque children, it also supplemented the one-room schoolhouses in the surrounding countryside by serving as a high school for these small school districts. As the population grew, the school expanded its capacity to approximately 350 East Dubuque high school students before it closed in 1978. The school is prominently sited on a bluff overlooking the town and is a commanding visual element in the skyline of East Dubuque. As the work of one of Dubuque's leading architects in the 1890's, Thomas Carkeek, and as the major public educational institution in East Dubuque and the surrounding rural area, the East Dubuque School meets Criteria A and C of the National Register.

In East Dubuque (formerly Dunleith), a small railroad town along the Mississippi River, the East Dubuque School merits preservation for its historic role in public education, its substantial architectural integrity, and its status as a landmark in the townscape for nearly a century. Residents of the town have expressed continued interest in the reuse of the building.

The original school building, completed in 1893, had 5 classrooms on the first floor, used for the grammar school; 4 large rooms on the second floor for the high school; and a gymnasium in the attic. The 1914 addition is highly sympathetic to the design of the original building and contributes to the significance of the property. This east wing provided an office and 2 classrooms on the first floor, an auditorium/study hall on the second floor, and a new gymnasium in the basement, which was later converted to a shop area. The recent gymnasium, an adjacent brick structure added in 1952, is at a lower grade which reduces its noncontributing impact by partially obscuring its wide bulk and metal roof. These structures were ultimately used entirely by the East Dubuque High School, which moved into a new building in 1978. The small frame house was provided for the school's superintendent, who also functioned as a principal, teacher, and custodian. Later used for storage, the house has been vacant for about 20 years and has suffered from neglect and vandalism. Although the house has an identifiable subsidiary relationship to the school, its lack of visual distinction and its deteriorated condition suggest that preservation is neither worthwhile nor feasible. The coherence of the original school building and the east wing is sufficient to convey the historical significance of the East Dubuque School.

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East Dubuque School
East Dubuque, Illinois

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The architect of the original building, Thomas T. Carkeek, was born in Cornwall, England in 1843, the son of a stonemason, and emigrated to Wisconsin with his parents in 1849. He was a self-taught architect who progressed from cabinetmaker to carpenter and became a draftsman at Carr, Ryder and Wheeler in Dubuque, a manufacturer of architectural woodwork, sash and doors. He left the firm in 1891 to start his own architectural practice. Carkeek designed and supervised over 200 structures including many commercial buildings and residences in Dubuque, among which were the Dubuque engine house (demolished) and the East Dubuque engine house (extant, altered to house the police station). The East Dubuque School is Carkeek's major work in the town, and is characteristic of his work in the Romanesque Revival and Richardsonian Romanesque styles in Dubuque.

The school's construction was accompanied by the aspiration that it would play an important role in the development of East Dubuque. In the dedication speech given by the mayor in 1893, he expressed the hope that a fine new school would help East Dubuque grow faster than Dubuque, its Iowan neighbor across the Mississippi River.¹ In 1890, the population of Dubuque was 30,311 and Dunleith township had 1,282 inhabitants. Ten years later, Dunleith had increased by only 82 people. By 1910, Dubuque had grown 6.1% to 38,494.² Today, East Dubuque is a community of about 2,400, whereas Dubuque is a city of around 65,000. Thus the Mayor's aspirations were not fulfilled, although the reasons had less to do with the school than with Dubuque's topographical advantages that attracted the railroad and industrial development along its flatlands.³

¹Letter from John B. Lang to Keith Sculle, dated May 27, 1982.

²Population, Census Reports, Vol. 1, Part 1, United States Census Office, Washington, D.C., 1901, p. 121; Census of the Population: 1950, Vol. I, Bureau of the Census, United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1952, pp. 15-18.

³Letter from John B. Lang to Kim Lovejoy, dated June 29, 1982.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Teresa Barker, "School Building 'Beauty' in Eye of the Beholder," Telegraph Herald, Dubuque, Iowa, Oct. 12, 1980, p. 32.

Dubuque of Today, Telegraph Job Printing Co., Dubuque, Iowa, 1897, p. 87, p. 165.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.4

Quadrangle name Dubuque South

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	6	9	3	8	3	0	4	7	9	7	0	9	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H

Zone				Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification Lots 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 of Block 111, City of East Dubuque, formerly Dunleith; the vacated alley 15 ft. in width running between lots 18 and 19 in Block 111, bounded on the north side by Sidney St. and on the south side by an unnamed 30 ft. alley.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
<u>N/A</u>			

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kim Lovejoy / Preservation Consultant

organization _____ date 19 July 1982

street & number 12 Highland St. telephone Work: 617-451-5740

city or town Natick state MA 01760

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *David Kennedy*

title *Director* date *9/24/82*

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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Interviews with John Lang, Regional Superintendent of Schools, Jo Daviess County, Galena, Ill., April 1, 1982 and April 6, 1982.

Franklin T. Oldt, editor, History of Dubuque County, Iowa, Goodspeed Historical Association, Chicago, 1911, pp. 708-709.

Interview with Roger Osborne, Dubuque County Historical Society, Dubuque, Iowa, June 16, 1982.