

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 18). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Buffalo Town Square Historic District
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number W Va State Route 62 N/A not for publication
city, town Buffalo N/A vicinity
state West Virginia code 54 county Putnam code 079 zip code 25033

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official [Signature] Date 6/26/91

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education: school
Religious: churches

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

vacant
churches

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation sandstone
walls brick
roof metal
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2 Buffalo Town Square Historic District

The Buffalo Town Square Historic District is located on the small town square in the middle of the Town of Buffalo, Putnam County, West Virginia. The district is composed of three red masonry buildings that stand on a small rise on the east side of West Virginia Route 62 (in Buffalo, LaFayette Street). All three of the buildings face west to the Great Kanawha River, less than a mile distant. The three buildings date from 1849, 1857 and 1870, and all are stylistically Greek Revival.

The Buffalo Academy is the centerpiece, or focal point, of the Buffalo Town Square. Constructed in 1849, it is a two-story side gabled red brick building. The front and rear are stretcher bond, while the side elevations are constructed in a common (8/1) bond. It is five bays wide, with long narrow windows on both floors and a single entrance door on the first floor, at the central bay. The surviving windows are two over two, though the majority of the windows have been boarded up. The door is surrounded by segmented sidelights and a multi-rectangular six over six paned overlight. Above the front door is a date block, or stone, that is carved "Buffalo Academy MDCCCXLIX." All of the windows have slender stone lintels above and sills below. The academy sits on a solid sandstone foundation. There are two semi-circular attic windows on both side elevations. At the first level of the south side, there is a masonry "ghost" of a narrow doorway that has been bricked over. This door is clearly shown in an existing 1861 photograph of troops being mustered in front of the academy. On the south side of the academy are three metal brace "nuts", two in the shape of stars and one an elongated "S". Two "window ghosts" are on the north end elevation, also bricked over. There is a small one bay stone porch floor. For many years the academy had a one-bay one story central porch, not original to the building. Due to severe deterioration, this feature has been removed. The gabled roof is metal, and was recently replaced with S.H.P.O, funding using the Secretary's Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings.

The interior of the academy is a simple two over two arrangement with a central stair. There are a number of antiques stored in the interior, which was recently cleaned.

The Buffalo Presbyterian Church stands immediately adjacent to the academy on the north. It is a one-and-a-half story front gabled Greek Revival church, constructed in 1857. The gable is surmounted at the front elevation by an octagonal belfry which has eight louvered openings, with a cross-crowned spire atop.

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The Buffalo Presbyterian Church, like the district's other two buildings, is of red brick masonry. The front has a Flemish bond, while the sides are common (7/1) bonded. The front elevation has the familiar 19th. century Presbyterian feature of twin entrance doors, one for men and one for women. Both doors have panelling and have rectangular multi-paned overlights containing 12 panes. Crowning the overlights is a cornice head with Greek keys. The church is three bays deep, with three windows on either side. The windows are long and recessed and have the rather unusual feature of being triple-sashed with a 20 pane-15 pane-20 pane arrangement. Each window has thin wooden lintels and sills. In the front gable end of the church is a semi-elliptical fan light that is decoratively broken up into eight unequal sized panes.

The interior of the Buffalo Presbyterian Church is relatively unaltered. The central seating hall is a clock of almost enclosed boxed pews. An extremely long central board separates the central section into two halves, thereby continuing the male-female segregation arrangement begun at the doors. There are two eight-sided narrow posts near the front of the church upholding a former slave gallery that is now enclosed. The woodwork on this gallery contains carved wooden Greek Revival motifs, such as dentilation. The organ in the church dates to around 1880.

There is a small one story cinder-block addition to the rear of the church, invisible from the main road. It does not detract from the integrity of the 1857 structure.

The third component of the Buffalo Town Square Historic District is the Buffalo Methodist Church. This building was constructed in 1870 to replace the original church which was burned during the Civil War. The church is a Late Greek Revival style one-and-a-half story red painted masonry building, 30' by 40'. The masonry on the front is a stretcher bond, while that of the sides is common (7/1) bonded. It is front gabled with rather massive returned cornices. It is three bays in

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length, each bay having tall narrow double-hung windows with 12 over 12 lights. The windows have thin lintels and sills. At the front elevation there is a one-bay one-story portico with a triangular Greek Revival pediment, containing dentilation. The double doors, which close together, are paneled and have a rectangular 6 over 6 pane overlight. There is a double boxed window(s) above the portico, both of which have 4 over 4 lights. The windows have stone lintels and sills. Beneath the windows is a large block, reading "M.E. Church South - 1870." Above the windows, in the gable end peak is a 2-paned semi-elliptical fanlight, The windows still possess their shutter hardware (pintels), though shutters are not in evidence.

The interior of the church, with its excellent hardwood floors, has undergone some modern re-modeling, but its layout and configuration remain essentially the same.

There is a low unobtrusive one story cinder block flat-roofed addition to the north rear end elevation that only meets the original building at one spot (for a connecting door). It is brick veneered on two sides. Largely hidden by foliage, it does not detract from the integrity of the 1870 church.

The Buffalo Town Square Historic District is a small complex, sitting atop a rise overlooking the main section of the ancient village of Buffalo, that embodies the historic ambiance of this community's 19th century beginnings.

There are three contributing structures in the district. There are no non-contributing elements.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Education
Social History
Religion
Architecture

Period of Significance

1849-1941

Significant Dates

1849; 1857
1870

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Thomas C. Atkison; Mary Meeks
Atkison; Col. W. F. Fife, et. al.

Architect/Builder

Not Known

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

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The Buffalo Town Square Historic District, in the heart of the small town of Buffalo, in Putnam County, West Virginia, is significant under National Register Criteria C as a highly significant grouping of Greek Revival semi-public architecture in Putnam County. It is also significant under Criteria B for having been associated with persons of historical importance. The district, two of the components of which are religious properties, also meets Criteria Consideration A when viewed for their architectural and historical significance.

The Buffalo Town Square is on a small rise at a major turn of what is today West Virginia State Route 62, nestled in the valley of the Great Kanawha River, nearly mid-way between Point Pleasant on the Ohio River and the state capitol of Charleston. The old Indian trail, later made into a road by white settlers, ran through Buffalo and in front of the town square, later becoming first State Highway 35 and then Route 62. The three tall and narrow red brick buildings on the square are and have been since the 19th century, easily the most prominent group of buildings in this small municipality of around 1000.

The centerpiece of the town square is the Buffalo Academy. The Academy building is, in fact, a focal point for the entire community and the most historically significant structure on the fifty mile route of the right bank of the Great Kanawha between Point Pleasant and Charleston. Criteria C is especially fulfilled when looking at the three Greek Revival buildings as a unit, speaking pointedly, as they do, to the early and mid-19th century. Putnam County has very few Greek Revival structures intact, and they are all private residences located primarily on the opposite side of the river.

The Buffalo Academy was founded as an educational institution in 1835. A two-story red brick structure was built in 1849, as the academy had outgrown its original log building. The land for the academy was donated by Dr. Naret, who also supplied the clay for the bricks used in the academy's construction. A joint stock company was formed locally to oversee and guide the school building project. The members of the company were Erwin McCoy, J.E. Pitrat, Benjamin K. Craig (the founder of Buffalo and its first mayor), L.L. Bronaugh, and George E. Allen. Among the original incorporators was Dr. Lawrence A. Washington, a grand-nephew of President Washington, and Robert T. Harvey, whose son, William "Coin" Harvey was born here. Harvey was one of the foremost economists of his day. His best selling book Coin's Financial School (1894) was the leading influence on the economic policies of William Jennings Bryan, and Harvey's theories became the basis for the "Free Silver" movement that was the main plank of the Democratic party's platforms in 1896 and 1900. He was a minor third party (Liberty Party) candidate for President in 1932.

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Harvey was a graduate of the Buffalo Academy, as was Confederate Brigadier General John McCausland (1836-1927). It is interesting to note that the father and family of Confederate Lieutenant General Jubal A. Early, who would later command McCausland, moved here in 1845, after Jubal had reached adulthood. The family attended church here, as did General Early on his frequent visits. We do not, however, claim these individuals as significant persons, as extant structures representing their lives are already listed.

Among other noted persons who attended the academy were Colonel William F. Fife, C.S.A., Major M.S. Kirtly, C.S.A. (late county superintendent of schools), and Judge Thomas H. Harvey. Famed author and agriculturalist Thomas C. Atkeson, who was the chronicler of the Grange Movement and father of the agriculture school at West Virginia University, attended Buffalo Academy, as did his daughter Mary Meeks Atkeson, a noted author in her own right and lecturer on rural life.

The first principal of Buffalo Academy was George Rosetter, who later became president of Marietta College. The academy is said to have drawn students not only from the Buffalo area, but from throughout western Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky. Beginning in 1857, the academy published The Wreath of Kanawha Valley, which was for long a noted literary journal.

During the Civil War, the Buffalo Academy was used by both sides as a barracks. It was also a mustering point for the Buffalo Guards, who formed the nucleus of the famed 36th Virginia Infantry. Extensive damage was done to the academy during the war. A small skirmish was fought here in 1862, as bullet marks on the academy's walls attest. It was sometime before it could be repaired and re-opened. After re-opening, the academy became part of the Buffalo School District and was, for a time, the home of Buffalo High School. It ceased to function as a school in 1952. Except for occasional civic activities, such as woman's club meetings, the building has been vacant since that time, although plans are being made to return it to active use. Part of the roof was restored in 1986-87 with S.H.P.O. funding.

Directly to the north of the Buffalo Academy stands the Buffalo Presbyterian Church. Like the academy, it is a red brick one-and-a-half story building, Greek Revival structure. Its tall narrow side windows have the somewhat unusual arrangement of being triple-paned with a 20-15-20 light design.

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The front has two double door entrances (one for men and one for women), while the slave gallery is still extant, though enclosed in wood paneling. There is a nice semi-elliptical fanlight in the front gable that adds to the simple elegance of the building's appearance. An octagonal cupola crowns the roof at the front elevation.

Presbyterianism had been firmly planted in Putnam County for at least several decades when it was decided that the local congregation needed a church of their own. They petitioned the Greenbrier Presbytry for a separate organization. The petition was granted and the Buffalo Presbyterian Church was organized on December 8, 1856. Built with locally donated materials and labor, the present building of the Buffalo Presbyterian Church was dedicated on August 22, 1857. The first three elders elected were Samuel Couch, B.H. Sterrett and B.F. Ruffner. A.B. Alexander was elected deacon. M. Sterrett was ordained as clerk of the session and served in that capacity until his death in 1892.

The famed Buffalo Guards were mustered into service at the Buffalo Presbyterian Church on May 13, 1861. They later became one of Virginia's most famed units (see above).

The Presbyterian Church is largely unaltered from its original appearance. Even the interior, including the original box-like pews, remain unchanged.

The Buffalo Methodist Church, the third component of the town square, stands immediately to the south of the Buffalo Academy. Like the academy building and the Presbyterian Church, it is a red brick Greek Revival building. It has undergone extensive unsympathetic alterations to the interior, but it retains, for the most part, exterior integrity. The Methodist Church has tall windows, with a 12 over 12 light arrangement. It is crowned at the front elevation by a rectangular belfry that supports a tall spire.

The Methodists came early to the Buffalo area. Their first meeting hall was a log structure in the flood plain near the river. This building was abandoned and the Methodists moved, in 1848, to a building at the rear of the Buffalo Academy. This church burned during the Civil War. To replace it, the Methodists constructed the present elegantly simple Greek Revival church in 1870-71. The dedication service was presided over by Bishop George Pierce of Georgia.

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Although the two churches have continued to thrive since their construction, the academy building languished after its abandonment as a school in 1952. It was only through the efforts of preservationists, led by the late John Davis, that the building survives into the current era when prospects for preservation are much greater.

Taken together, these three mid-19th century semi-public buildings form a historic and architecturally compatible unit on the town square of Buffalo. The entire community has, for well over a century, revolved around the activities that have taken place on the town square and, in fact, it can be said that these three buildings, as one entity, have defined the public character of Buffalo.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Cork, J.F. "Early Academies of the Great Kanawha Valley; Buffalo Academy." Southern Historical Magazine, Vol.I, No.6, June, 1892

Frazier, Carolyn, Evelyn Sterrett, William Benford. "History of the Buffalo Presbyterian Church," The Vandalia Journal, Upper Kanawha & Vandalia Historical Society. July, 1975.

Hardesty's West Virginia Counties, Vol. I. Richwood, W.Va. Jim Comstock, publisher. 1973.

See continuation sheet

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 # N/A
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # N/A

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property Two (2) Acres (approx.)

UTM References

A 17 414660 4274600
Zone Easting Northing

C

B
Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the point where the northeast side of High Street intersects with the southeast side corner of LaFayette St (WV Rt.62); thence approximatley 200 ft. along the east of LaFayette St. to its intersection at the wouthwest corner of a private drive just to the north of the Presbyterian Church; thence due east(along the side of the drive) approximately 175 feet to a fence that runs along the west side

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries are drawn so as to include the elevated area on which the three closely related buildings have stood since the 19th century, and includes all three buildings as well as green space and several aged trees. The line of West Virginia Route 62 has always ran to the front of the district, while the deep ravine at the rear has formed an over century old natural boundary.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michael J. Pauley, Historian

organization State Historic Preservation Office date May, 1991

street & number Cultural Center, Capitol Complex telephone (304) 348-0240

city or town Charleston state West Virginia zip code 25305

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Major Bibliographical References ..2

Harding, James E. "Buffalo Academy." "Buffalo Presbyterian Church,"
"Buffalo Methodist Church." W.Va. Historic Properties Inventory Forms,
State Historic Preservation Office. Charleston, WV. Nov. 1, 1977.

History of Buffalo, Putnam County, West Virginia. Point Pleasant, W.Va.
Mattox Printing Co. 1976. (Bi-Centennial pamphlet)

Oral Interview with Mrs. Elizabeth Martin." by Michael Pauley. Buffalo, W.Va.
May 13 & 17, 1991.

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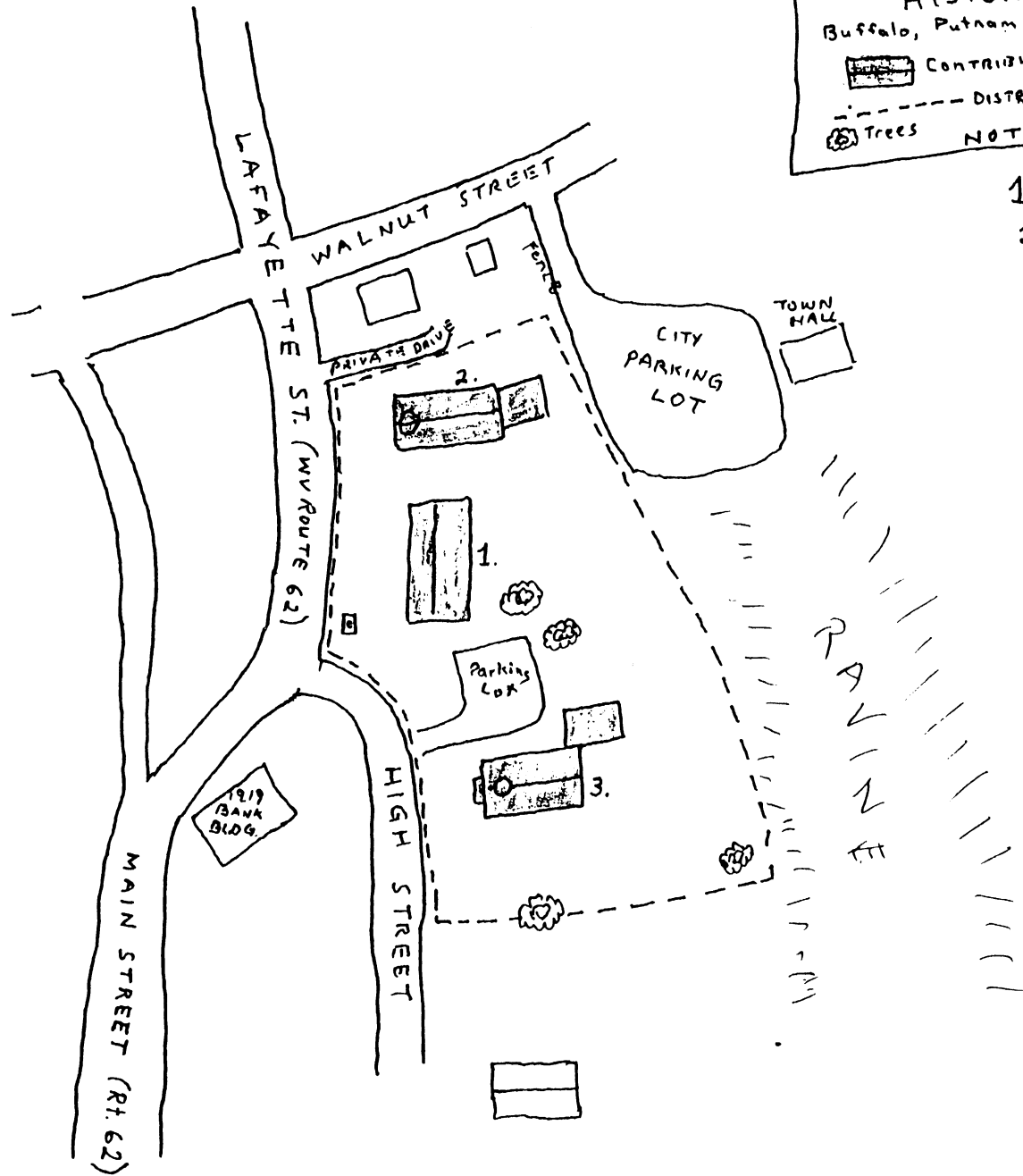
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Verbal Boundary Description ..2

of a gravel drive leading to the town hall; thence due southeast approximately 400 feet, the line running along the west side of the gravel drive and then along the western lip of a deep ravine; thence in a line due west approximately 200 feet, bisecting a large elm, to the eastern side of High Street; thence in a line north 175 feet along the east side of High Street to the point of beginning, enclosing approximately two acres.

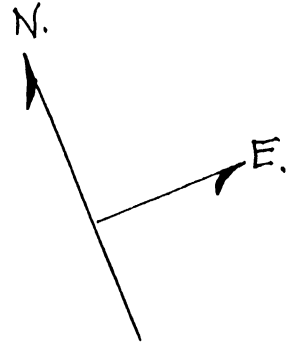
GREAT KANAWHA RIVER



LEGEND
BUFFALO TOWN SQUARE
HISTORIC DISTRICT
Buffalo, Putnam County, West Virginia

CONTRIBUTING	NON-CONTRIBUTING
- - - - - DISTRICT BOUNDARY	
Trees	NOT TO SCALE [MJP]

1. Buffalo Academy
2. Buffalo Presbyterian Church
3. Buffalo Methodist Church



4265

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

4561 11 NE
(ARLEE)

82°00'
38°37'30"

414000m E

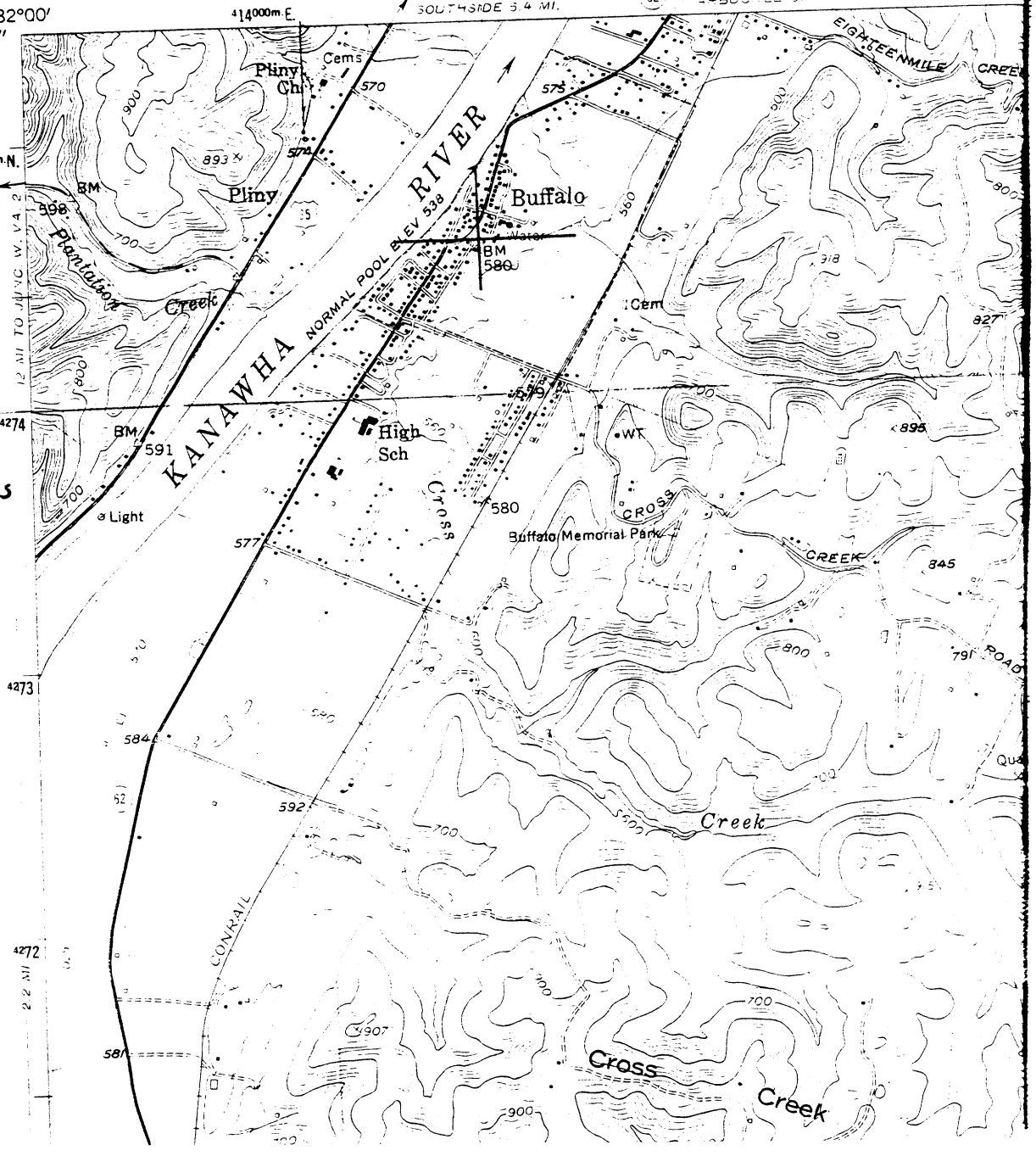
HENDERSON 19 MI.
SOUTHSIDE 5.4 MI.

62

POINT PLEASANT 19 MI
18BUCKLE 5.4 MI.

57'30"

Buffalo Town
Square Historic
District,
Buffalo,
(W.V. Route 62)
Putnam County
West Virginia
Winfield U.S.G.S.
Quadrangle
U.T.M. Coordinates
17/414660/4274600
Z. E. N.





Buffalo Town Square Historic District
S.R. 62, Buffalo, Putnam Co., WV

April 1991

Photo by Michael Keller

Negative at S.H.P.O.

Facing Southeast, Buffalo Presbyterian
Church at Left, Buffalo Academy at center,
Buffalo Methodist Church (partially hidden)
at Right.

#1 of 9



Buffalo Town Square Historic District

SR. 62, Buffalo, Putnam Co., WV

April, 1991

Photos by Michael Keller

Negative at S.H.P.O.

Facing east, front & side elevation
of Buffalo Academy, Methodist
church at right.

2 of 9



Buffalo Town Square Historic District,
S. R. 62, Buffalo, Putnam Co., W. Va.

April 1991

Photo by Michael Keller

Negative at S. H. P. O.

Facing Northeast, front and side
elevation of Buffalo Academy,
Buffalo Presbyterian Church at left.

3 of 9



Buffalo ~~Front~~ ^{Town} Square Historic District
S.R. 62, Buffalo, Putnam Co. WV

April, 1991

Photo by Michael Keller
Negative at S.H.P.O.

Facing North, Buffalo Methodist Church,
with academy and Presbyterian church
in distance.

#4 of 9



Buffalo Town Square Historic District
S.R. 62, Buffalo, Putnam Co, WV

April 1991

Photo by Michael Keller

Negative at S.H.P.O.

Facing east, front elevation of
Buffalo, Methodist Church

#6 of 9



BUFFALO ACADEMY

MDCCCXLIX

Buffalo Town Square Historic District

S.R. 62, Buffalo, Putnam Co. WV

April 1991

Photo by Michael Keller

Negative at S.H.P.O.

Looking east, close up of date

block over door of Buffalo Academy

#7 of 9



Buffalo Town Square Historic District
S.R. 62, Buffalo, Putnam Co. WV

April 1991

Photo by Michael Keller

Negative at S.H.P.O.

Facing east, interior of southeastern
1st floor room in Buffalo Academy

#8 of 9