

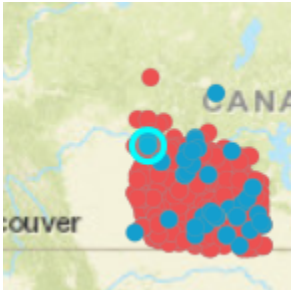



Heritage Property - Shiloh Baptist Church and Cemetery

Street Address	Municipality	Designation Type	Designation Date
	Provincial	Provincial Heritage Property	August 28, 2018
			
			

Statement of Significance

Shiloh Baptist Church and Cemetery is valued for its association with Saskatchewan's first and only African American farming community. In 1910, twelve African American families, some of them former slaves, homesteaded in the Rural Municipality of Eldon. These families and others that followed came to Saskatchewan seeking land and freedom from the racial segregation of their native Oklahoma. By the 1930s, up to 75 families had settled in the area. Despite racism that also existed in Canada, these African American pioneers persevered and became respected members of the wider community, helping to shape Saskatchewan's multicultural identity. The Shiloh community began to decline during the 1930s Depression, and by the 1950s, only a handful of families remained.

There is also heritage value in the one room log structure that the settlers built as their church and meeting place in 1911, and in the associated cemetery that was established in 1913. The log church is the settlement's only known surviving building, and speaks to the importance of religious faith and the church as a vital institution in African American communities. The cemetery is the only known location in Saskatchewan where traditional African American burial practices were followed, including the planting of spruce trees near gravesites.

The log church is also valued for its representative design and construction. Built with locally harvested, hand hewed logs, the small, rustic church is typical of log buildings erected in Saskatchewan in the early twentieth century.

The heritage value of Shiloh Baptist Church and Cemetery resides in the following character-defining elements:

- elements that speak to the property's association with the African American farming community, for example, the church building located on its original site in relationship to the cemetery; the cemetery's gravesites and spruce trees; and the otherwise undeveloped state of the hedge-bordered parcel of land that was established as the site for the church and cemetery;
- elements of the log building that speak to its role as the community's church and meeting place, for example, its interior assembly space and handcrafted benches made from planks and peeled logs;
- elements of the log building that are typical of early twentieth century log construction, for example, its simple form and massing; square-hewed, dove tailed log walls; hip roof; and wood shingles.