

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED AUG 18 1975

DATE ENTERED

AUG 29 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Fisk Chapel

AND/OR COMMON

A.M.E. Bethel Church

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Cedar Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Fair Haven

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3rd of New Jersey

STATE

New Jersey

VICINITY OF

CODE

34

COUNTY

Monmouth

CODE

025

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE

SITE

OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

MUSEUM

PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

RELIGIOUS

SCIENTIFIC

TRANSPORTATION

OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Bethel A.M.E. Church of Fair Haven

STREET & NUMBER

38 Fisk Street

CITY, TOWN

Fair Haven

VICINITY OF

STATE

New Jersey

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Monmouth County Hall of Records

STREET & NUMBER

20 Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Freehold

STATE

New Jersey 07728

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

1975

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Historic Sites Office/Box 1420/Dept. of Env. Prot.

CITY, TOWN

Trenton

STATE

New Jersey

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE <u>6/24/75</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Fisk Chapel is a wooden frame structure in excess of 1500 square feet and originally built in the shape of a cross.

As a building of the Victorian Era, the Chapel is different from the ornate and extreme examples one usually associates with that period. Fisk Chapel stressed the conservatism of the area but included a few tasteful Victorian touches.

Gothic style windows, the rose windows at each end of the building, the "exposed beam" at each gable, as well as the "saw tooth" edge of the gable siding, are typical of this era. The exposed beam style was widely used in Fair Haven a century ago.

The building has an exterior of white clapboard lapped closely together with the gables finished with vertically arranged siding. The Chapel is covered by a sheathed roof now finished with grayish asphalt shingles. A simple narrow style chimney of red brick is located on the west wall of the Chapel.

Five tall and narrow Gothic stained-glass windows are located on each side of the Chapel and two similar windows are on the sides of the main entrance. Two rose or circular windows of stained glass are on the gable ends.

The main entrance has a small vestibule which was added on to the building at a later date. The interior of the Chapel is bright and airy with finished plaster walls and a four-foot high wainscoting which is varnished in a mahogany finish. An extremely interesting tin ceiling, painted white, is remarkably well preserved.

The chancel, very simplistic in style and furnishing, is adjoined by a choir loft which is about three feet above the Chapel floor and fenced by an elaborate varnished railing. Varnished wooden pews occupy each side of the aisle.

The two transepts are entered from the nave and are used as the minister's office and choir room, respectively. Two rest rooms were subsequently added to the transepts and also have exit doors.

The building was moved on June 24, 1975 to a site in a residentially zoned area. In doing so, the building will be saved as the original plan was to demolish the building.

Further, following the move, the Chapel will be used as a community center for meetings, exhibits, school-affiliated activities, and general civic affairs. It will be dedicated in the summer of 1976 by Governor Byrne.

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" 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 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 1882

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Religion and Social/Humanitarian

Fisk Chapel A.M.E. Church, a very simplistic white edifice, was built in 1882 by a congregation which comprised a small but significant minority in this area during the Nineteenth Century. Most of the members had come northward after the Civil War, augmenting a smaller black population that carried over from earlier times.

Named in memory of General Clinton B. Fisk, Civil War soldier and benefactor of Fisk University, Fisk Chapel has survived almost a century. Presently this structure has the distinction of being the oldest religious edifice still in use on Rumson Neck, an area of seven square miles comprising the Boroughs of Fair Haven and Rumson.

During the half century before Fisk Chapel was built free blacks had organized two separate African Methodist Episcopal congregations in Fair Haven. The first of these was formed in 1833, having a church on the Port Washington Road. Known as the St. James A.M.E. Zion Church, this group later moved to Red Bank after their church was destroyed by fire in 1873.

The second congregation formed was the A.M.E. Bethel Church, organized in 1858. This group in 1882 received a donation from General Fisk amounting to \$3,000.00 for the erection of a new chapel. A nationally known Methodist layman and ardent Prohibitionist, General Fisk employed many of the blacks in this congregation on his large estate in Rumson. He was the Prohibitionist Party's candidate for President in 1888.

Members of the congregation also contributed money and their labor to make the Chapel a reality. It was formally dedicated on August 20, 1882. These members of the congregation were generally servants or farm hands for the wealthier, neighboring community of Rumson.

Historically significant is the fact that Fisk Chapel's completion was at the beginning of a "new era" in local black history. It had hardly opened its doors when a school for black children was opened nearby. This school and its successor were to serve the black children of Fair Haven for over sixty years. New Jersey in 1884 adopted a Public Accommodations Law which in effect gave the State's blessing to segregation as long as the idea of "separate but equal" was maintained.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Monmouth County, New Jersey, 1664-1920, edited by Frank R. Holmes, (New York, Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1922) Vol. 1, p. 350.
 A booklet entitled "One Hundred Fourteenth Anniversary, Fisk Chapel A.M.E. Church, 1972" p. 3.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre
 UTM REFERENCES

38 Fisk A	18	58,16,8,0	44,6,8,1,1,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
Cedar C	18	58,14,3,0	4,4,6,8,0,1,0	D			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Reference A designates original site, 38 Fisk St., Fair Haven, N.J.
 Reference C designates New (present) site, Lot 11, Cedar Ave., Fair Haven N.J.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Historic Sites Section: Nancy Israel: research compiled Fair Haven Bicentennial Committee.

ORGANIZATION Historic Sites Office DATE

STREET & NUMBER P. O. Box 1420 TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN Trenton STATE New Jersey

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL XX

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 *Daniel J. B...*

TITLE Commissioner, Dept. of Environmental Protection DATE 8/13/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <u>10/29/95</u>
ATTEST: <i>[Signature]</i>	DATE <u>OCT 24 1975</u>
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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CONTINUATION SHEET

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Fisk Chapel
A.M.E. Bethel Church
Fair Haven
Monmouth 025
New Jersey 34

8 Significance continued

Fisk Chapel was used for meetings, recitals, and concerts given by students of the school, in addition to the yearly June graduation ceremony. It served the black community longer than any other local public or quasi-public building. In fact it continued the earlier tradition of the common goal of education and religion after the closing of the black school. The school system in Fair Haven remained segregated until the twentieth century.

Fisk Chapel is significant, in part because it is today the major survivor of this locality's black legacy of the nineteenth century. It served not only as a religious center but also as the major social center for the black residents of Fair Haven. It remains as a symbol of the type of society in which the black population of the area lived. A community in which the church stood at the center of all society's activities, ranging from religious and educational to social.

The building is also the oldest religious edifice on Rumson Neck, which includes Rumson and Fair Haven. It is also one of the few remaining Black Churches in Eastern Monmouth County.

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9 Major Bibliographical References continued

A booklet entitled "A Short Talk on Fair Haven History" by Thomas Irving Brown, 1953.