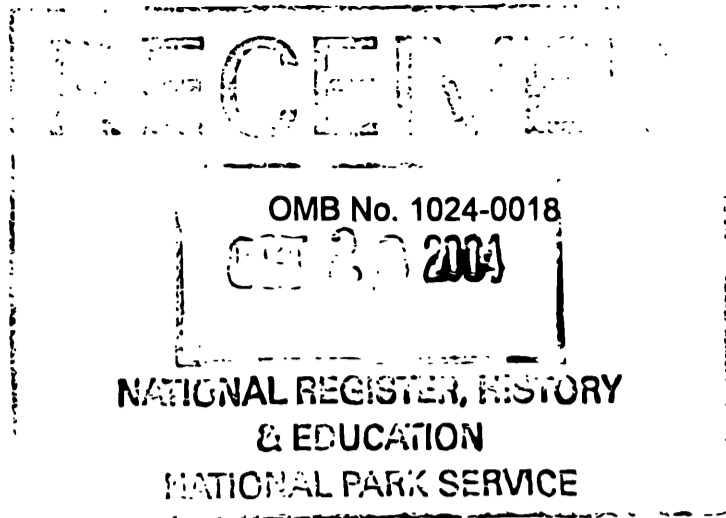


1327

NPS Form 10-900  
(Rev. 10-90)

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 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 any 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 Allenstown Meeting House

other names/site number Old Allenstown Meeting House; Church of Christ (1807); Christian Church (1827)

**2. Location**

street & number Deerfield Road  N/A not for publication

city or town Allenstown  N/A vicinity

state New Hampshire code NH county Merrimack code 013 zip code 03275

**3. 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James McCosha 10/21/04  
Signature of certifying official Date

NEW HAMPSHIRE  
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 commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

Name of Property Allenstown Meeting House

County and State Merrimack Co., NH

Page # 2

**4. 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

Signature of Keeper

Edson H Beall

Date of Action

12/6/04

other (explain):

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Government</u>	Sub: <u>City Hall</u>	Cat: <u>Social</u>	Sub: <u>Meeting hall</u>
<u>Religion</u>	<u>Religious facility</u>		

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

<u>Early Republic--Federal</u>	foundation <u>Stone--granite</u>
	roof <u>Asphalt</u>
	walls <u>Wood--weatherboard</u>
	other <u>N/A</u>

**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Please see continuation sheets.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section 7 Page 1**

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**7. Description:** The Allenstown Meeting House stands close to the northern boundary of the township on a sandy, level site not far from Bear Brook, the principal stream within Allenstown. The building stands on a small lot that measures approximately 100 by 190 feet, fronting on Deerfield Road, the principal public road that passes through the township of Allenstown in an east-west direction. The present lot may represent the property that has historically been associated with the meeting house since local judge and church elder Hall Burgin (1770-1844) donated land for the building about 1815. In any case, the lot has remained unchanged since 1908, when the property was conveyed by quitclaim deed to Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution. The lot is partly enclosed by remnants of a split-rail fence of chestnut, which was built by Company 1123 of the Civilian Conservation Corps between 1936 and 1938.

The meeting house lot is devoid of trees, but is surrounded by a dense pine forest. To the north and west of the meeting house, most trees are eastern white pines (*Pinus strobus*), which have regenerated on this land since the district was swept by a forest fire that threatened to consume the old meeting house in 1914 (see Section 8, following). To the east of the meeting house is a stand of 25,000 red or "Norway" pines (*Pinus resinosa*). These trees were planted in 1940 as the "Jubilee Penny Pines Forest" under the sponsorship of the New Hampshire State Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the National Society of the DAR. A roadside boulder, standing east of the meeting house and bearing a bronze tablet, commemorates the planting of the "Jubilee Penny Pines Forest."

The meeting house stands close to Deerfield Road, some fifteen feet north of the right-of-way line of the highway. Directly opposite the meeting house, on the south side of Deerfield Road, is a stone-walled cemetery enclosure (not included within the present nomination), measuring about 95 by 100 feet. The enclosure is shaded by large white pine trees that grow within the walls, but reveals only a fragment or two of its original gravestones.

Both the meeting house lot and the burying ground stand within Bear Brook State Park, and the land parcels of both buildings were part of the park between 1991 and 2004, when the State of New Hampshire owned these properties. Originally containing 6,436 acres, Bear Brook State Park was created by the National Park Service on lands that were denuded by the forest fire of 1914 or were otherwise classified as submarginal for agriculture or commercial forestry. From 1935 to the outbreak of World War II, Civilian Conservation Corps personnel reforested the land

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section 7 Page 2**

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and created roads, trails, and recreational camps, deeding the property that surrounds the meeting house to the State of New Hampshire early in 1943.

The meeting house is a one-story, gable-roofed building of framed construction, supported by underpinning of split granite slabs. The building measures 42'-8" wide by 35'-7" deep, with eleven-foot posts. The structure has a heavy braced frame of hewn sills, wall posts, and wall plates. Although much of the depth of the wall framing is obscured behind square-edged wooden casings or covered by wall plaster, the building is characterized by four major posts that project from the wall surfaces of its front and rear walls, and by two additional wall posts in each gable end.

The walls are clad with clapboards on the exterior and are plastered on split-board lath within, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The building is entered by a single four-panel doorway in the center of the south façade, which faces Deerfield Road. The building has a five-bay façade, with two windows on each side of the central doorway. Each end elevation has three windows, and the rear (north) elevation has five windows, with the central (pulpit) window slightly elevated above the other four. Window sashes are either missing, where they were damaged by fire hose streams in 1985, or are reproductions of federal-style sashes appropriate to the period of the building's construction in 1815. All window openings are protected by solid wooden board-and-batten exterior shutters hung on T hinges.

Except for the area above the wall plates, where the roof frame was destroyed by fire in 1985, the interior of the building survives in nearly original condition, or at least in the condition in which it was placed by Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, in 1909. As is typical of larger, two-story meeting houses, the reading desk is located in the center of the north wall, directly opposite the central entrance door. An area of level flooring about seven feet wide extends from the front doorway across the depth of the building to the pulpit. On each side of this central aisle, the floor slopes gently upward to the two end walls of the building in the manner of the floors of galleries in two-story meeting houses, or of schoolhouses of the early nineteenth century.

The reading desk or pulpit of the meeting house is a rectangular enclosure of vertical boards, much simpler than the elevated pulpits of elaborate joinery that are usually seen in larger and more ambitious New Hampshire meeting houses.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section 7 Page 3**

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A series of box pews begins at the doorway of the building and extends around the perimeter of the room to the pulpit, adjacent to the exterior walls. The building originally had twenty box pews; seventeen remain intact. The level floors of these enclosures step up from one to the next as the slanting floor rises. These privately-owned enclosures have paneled fronts, with raised panels but unmoulded stiles and rails. Above a lower range of panels, the stiles and rails of the pew walls and corresponding pew doors are left unfilled by panels. Unlike corresponding openings in more elaborate meeting houses, these areas are not filled with miniature turned balusters. Pew doors are hung on cast iron butt hinges with an adequate throw to allow the doors to be folded back against the pew walls without interference from simply moulded wooden caps that finish the tops of doors and walls. Paper cards, identifying original pew holders, are tacked to the doors of many pews. The pews have fixed wooden seats within.

The central areas of the slanting floors on each side of the meeting house are filled with double ranges of wooden benches, separated from one another and from the perimeter box pews by three narrow aisles. There are five benches in each range, and their feet are anchored by tenons in heavy wooden cleats affixed to the slanted floors. The benches in the two ranges closest to the front of the building have solid plank seats and backs. Most benches in the two ranges closest to the pulpit have solid plank seats but open backs, with a backrest provided by a thin upper rail.

On each side of the room, near the center of the central side aisle between these ranges of fixed benches, a heavy, hewn octagonal wooden column rises through the slanting floor to the height of the former ceiling. These two columns formerly supported the midpoints of tie beams that extended from front to rear wall plates in the original roof framing system.

Window and post casings in the room are simple, square-edged boards.

A fire set by an arsonist on July 15, 1985, burned upward from beneath the northwest corner of the building and spread laterally through an attic area above the ceiling plaster of the meeting room. Although the fire was extinguished effectively, flames destroyed the wall framing at the northwest corner of the building, damaged several wall pew enclosures in this area, and destroyed the original roof frame. Today, the building exhibits a small area of new framing at the northwest corner of the auditorium, and is roofed with a gable roof composed of some twenty prefabricated wood trusses. Window sashes that were damaged by fire hose streams exhibit a muntin profile that suggests that they were installed by Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, during a restoration in 1909. These damaged sashes have largely been

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section 7 Page 4**

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replaced by sashes with a muntin profile that is appropriate to the period of 1815. A brick chimney that extended from the roof framing through the roof prior to the fire has not been rebuilt.

Damage caused by the fire, and the necessary repairs that followed, reduced the percentage of original fabric in the building. The structure nevertheless remains visually intact below the ceiling line of the meeting room. It retains the characteristic features that distinguish it as a meeting house, including box pews, benches, pulpit, wall plaster, simple door and window casings, and its distinctive slanted floors.

**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 significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

**D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory history.

**Criteria Considerations**  
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a 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.

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Politics/government
- Religion
- Conservation: historic preservation

**Period of Significance**

- Criterion A: 1815-c 1886 (Politics/Government: religion)
- Criterion A: 1908-1954 (Conservation: historic preservation)
- Criterion C: 1815

**Significant Dates**

- 1815
- 1908

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

James, Samuel, and Nathaniel Kenison, and others (see Section 8, page 6)

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical 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: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Property Allenstown Meeting House County and State Merrimack Co., NH

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### 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** 0.44

**UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>19</u>	<u>306387</u>	<u>4781170</u>	3	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
2	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	4	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>

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.)

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### 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title James L. Garvin, Architectural Historian

organization New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources date May 29, 2004

street & number 19 Pillsbury Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor telephone (603) 271-6436

city or town Concord state NH zip code 03301-3570

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### Additional Documentation

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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)

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### Property Owner

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Allenstown, New Hampshire

street & number 18 School Street telephone (603) 485-4276

city or town Allenstown state NH zip code 03275

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**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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.



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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section 8 Page 1**

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**8. Significance:** The Allenstown Meeting House is significant under National Register Criterion A for its role in the social history of the community between its construction in 1815 and its final abandonment as the site of political and religious meetings in the 1880s. It is also significant under Criterion A for its role in the early historic preservation movement in New Hampshire. It is significant under Criterion C for its architecture.

Under Criterion A, the period of significance for religious and political history extends from its construction in 1815 to its abandonment for both political and religious meetings around 1886. Under the same criterion, the building's significance as a focus of historic preservation extends from its acquisition by Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, in 1908, and its subsequent restoration, to the arbitrary cut-off date of fifty years before the present. Buntin Chapter maintained the building faithfully during this period.

Under Criterion C, the Allenstown Meeting House is the only surviving one-story building in New Hampshire that is known to have served both the traditional civic and religious functions of a meeting house. The building is also the only surviving New Hampshire meeting house that incorporates a slanted main floor, common in schoolhouses of the period as well as in the galleries of two-story meeting houses, for better visibility of its pulpit. The period of significance of the building under National Register Criterion C is 1815, its date of construction.

The Allenstown Meeting House retains integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association. The building's integrity of materials and workmanship was diminished, but not destroyed, by the fire of 1985. The heat of the fire was largely concentrated in the upper portions of the building. The meeting room, with its furnishings, survived the fire in an almost miraculous state of preservation. Even the paper cards that were tacked to the pew doors to identify their original owners, perhaps as long ago as 1909, are largely unscathed by the fire. The room has been thoroughly cleaned and returned to use for meetings and programs.

The Allenstown Meeting House stands on land that descended from the ownership of Walter Bryent, a noted land surveyor who by the 1780s had obtained ownership of two mile-long proprietors' lots east of the Suncook River and crossed by Bear Brook.<sup>1</sup> Bryent's daughter

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<sup>1</sup> For a plan showing the proprietors' lots of Allenstown in 1781, including Walter Bryent's two adjacent lots at Bear Brook, see Albert Stillman Batchellor, ed., *Township Grants of Lands in New Hampshire included in the*

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section 8 Page 2**

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Elizabeth (1739-1832) married Ede (or Edward) Hall Burgin.<sup>2</sup> In 1790, Bryent deeded a 120-acre portion of his proprietor's holdings to his daughter and son-in-law.<sup>3</sup> Ede Hall Burgin continued to acquire land in the Bear Brook area, eventually owning hundreds of acres and operating a large tavern close to Bear Brook, at the intersection of Epsom Road and Deerfield Road.<sup>4</sup> The son of Ede Hall Burgin and Elizabeth Burgin, Judge Hall Burgin (1770-1844), was a principal benefactor of the Christian Church, which began to build the Allenstown Meeting House in 1815 on land that Judge Burgin had donated for that purpose.<sup>5</sup>

The small building that was built on the lot provided by Judge Burgin served both the religious and political needs of the local community until the late 1800s (see below, "Significance, Religion and Politics/Government"). As long as Allenstown remained a sparsely settled rural community, this building stood near the center of population and on the main east-west route of travel through the township, and was regarded as an appropriate meeting place.

Allenstown never grew in wealth and population during the agricultural era to a degree that matched surrounding communities like Pembroke and Deerfield. When the meeting house was built in 1815, Allenstown had a population of about 390. The number of inhabitants grew to 526 in 1850, but had dwindled to only 414 by the time the first large textile mills began to appear in Suncook Village in 1860. By 1870, when China Mill had been built on the Allenstown side of Suncook Village, Allenstown's population had jumped to 804, but it is safe to assume that most or all of this growth was in the Village, not in the agricultural hinterlands where the old meeting house stood. By contrast, neighboring Pembroke had a population of about 1,200 in 1815 and Deerfield a population of about 1,990.<sup>6</sup>

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*Masonian Patent, Issued Subsequent to 1746 by the Masonian Proprietary*, Vol. 27 of the *New Hampshire Provincial and State Papers* (Concord, N. H.: Edward N. Pearson, 1896), pp. 52-53.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. William Wallace McPherson, "Burgin (Bergin, Beargin) Family," typescript, New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, N. H.

<sup>3</sup> Carol A. Martel, *The History of East Allenstown, New Hampshire, and Bear Brook State Park* (Allenstown, N. H.: Catamount Publishing, 2003), p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>5</sup> No deed for the meeting house lot, or of the cemetery opposite, from Burgin to the church or the Town of Allenstown has been located, but local historian John Dowst concluded that such a deed must once have existed. See letter of October 7, 1914, from Dowst to Mrs. James H. Tripp, *Daughters of the American Revolution*, at the New Hampshire Historical Society.

<sup>6</sup> New Hampshire State Planning and Development Commission, *Population of New Hampshire*, Part One (Concord, N. H.: by the Commission, 1946), pp. 16-19.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 3

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Allenstown's slow growth during its pre-industrial era can be attributed to sandy soils that were conducive to forest growth but poor for agriculture. These soils supported extensive stands of white pine trees that made Allenstown a center of logging and lumber production, but did not encourage the growth of prosperous farms or large agricultural populations. When surveyor Walter Bryent drew plans of Allenstown for the Masonian Proprietors in 1752 and 1781, he indicated the quality of soil on each of the thirty large lots into which the town was divided. The majority of lots in the southern part of town were labeled as "Very Bad" or "Middling Bad."<sup>7</sup>

For this reason, the Allenstown meeting house may be characterized as the public building of a poor town.

After the town's population increased with the arrival of new industry and immigrants at Suncook Village after the Civil War, the meeting house was regarded as remote and inadequate for civic functions. It was abandoned as a site of town government in 1876.<sup>8</sup> The newly arriving French-Canadian population of Allenstown was predominantly Roman Catholic in religion, and built a large parish church in Suncook Village even as the tiny Protestant congregation that had used the old meeting house finally dispersed. Church-going Protestants in Allenstown thereupon began to attend services in neighboring towns, leaving the old meeting house with neither an active civic or religious use except for the camp meetings that gathered annually but briefly at the building and its nearby pine grove. This situation allowed the building to survive quietly as a unique example of a single-story meeting house.

*Significance, Criterion C (architecture):* The Allenstown Meeting House was constructed in 1815 by local craftsmen, of whom only a partial record survives. The early history of the Allenstown Meeting House is somewhat clouded by lack of good written records. Local historian John Dowst, a descendant of early pew-holders in the building, researched the structure in the early 1900s and presented his findings at a meeting of Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the

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<sup>7</sup> Albert Stillman Batchellor, ed., *Township Grants of Lands in New Hampshire included in the Masonian Patent, Issued Subsequent to 1746 by the Masonian Proprietary*, Vol. 27 of the *New Hampshire Provincial and State Papers* (Concord, N. H.: Edward N. Pearson, 1896), pp. 43-54.

<sup>8</sup> The Town of Allenstown voted to discontinue use of the meeting house for town meetings in November, 1876, convening future meetings in Hayes Hall in Suncook Village, some five miles away. Carol A. Martel, *The History of East Allenstown, New Hampshire, and Bear Brook State Park*, p. 20.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section 8 Page 4**

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American Revolution, on November 30, 1910. Dowst subsequently published his research as an article in the *Granite Monthly* magazine in 1912.<sup>9</sup>

Dowst concluded that the "Christian" Church (a distinct sect or religion) of Allenstown began to build the meeting house, but were prevented by lack of funds from completing it. Thereafter, the Town of Allenstown appears to have taken over the structure and finished its construction, reimbursing the town or the town's building committee through the sale of pews, a traditional method of funding any meeting house, whether erected by a town or by an independent religious society.<sup>10</sup>

Probably gleaning his information from the Allenstown selectmen's book, which begins in 1806 (and which Dowst located and studied during his research), Dowst determined that Samuel Kenison made clapboards and shingles for the structure, that Jonathan Philbrick and John Johnson put in the underpinning (the split granite slabs beneath the sills), and that James, Samuel, and Nathaniel Kenison, Alexander Salter, Ichabod Clark, Jacob Edes, Andrew O. Evans, Joseph C. Wallace, and Jonathan Brown worked on the building.<sup>11</sup>

Tradition states that these men were working on the meeting house when the Great Gale of 1815 struck New England on September 23. This was one of the most powerful hurricanes ever to devastate the region.

The building is characterized by plain finish and small size. Its architectural character derives from the fact that until the advent of major industry some five miles distant at Suncook Village in the period after 1860, Allenstown was small in population and poor in agricultural wealth. The town's limited resources prevented the construction of a larger and more ambitious public meeting house of the type commonly found in more prosperous communities.

Although comparable buildings were undoubtedly erected in New Hampshire communities in similar circumstances, the Allenstown Meeting House is the only remaining example of a town

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<sup>9</sup> John Dowst, "The Old Allenstown Meeting House," *The Granite Monthly* 44 (January-December 1912): 5-11.

<sup>10</sup> John Dowst quotes and discusses the significance of one of the deeds by which the town's building committee sold a pew to Henry Dowst in a letter of October 7, 1914, to Mrs. James M. Tripp of the Daughters of the American Revolution (copy at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources).

<sup>11</sup> John Dowst, "The Old Allenstown Meeting House," pp. 9-10.

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Continuation Sheet

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meeting house of a modest scale and level of finish. As such, it is an important document in the architectural history of a state that possesses no comparable example of this building type.

In most New Hampshire towns, meeting houses were large, two-story structures—usually the largest building in any community. These buildings often had exterior “porches” or stair enclosures that provided access to balconies or “galleries” at the second-story level; otherwise, the stairs to the galleries were inside the main walls, usually at the front corners of the building.<sup>12</sup> Few meeting houses of the 1700s were built with original steeples. Most looked like large, gable-roofed barns with many windows. Steeples and belfries, when present, were usually added after the original construction, when a town had attained sufficient prosperity to engage in a second building campaign.

Unaltered examples of two-story meeting houses can be seen today in the southern New Hampshire towns of Danville (1755), Sandown (1773), and Fremont (1800). As noted above, a tower or steeple might be added to such a meeting house when a town became financially able to purchase a bell, or even a tower clock. Meeting houses with added towers can be seen in Hampstead (building constructed in 1745; tower added in 1792), Jaffrey Center (building constructed in 1775; tower added after 1817), Washington (building constructed in 1787; tower added in 1820), and Canaan Street (building constructed in 1793; tower added in 1829).<sup>13</sup>

Smaller towns like Allenstown sometimes constructed one-story meeting houses, especially during their first years of settlement. Relatively few were built, however, and fewer survive. Other one-story meeting houses that survive in New Hampshire were usually built by church organizations and never served a civic function. Examples of such church buildings include the Dana Meeting House in New Hampton (1800), the Early Settlers' Meeting House at Leighton's Corner in Ossipee (circa 1812), and a number of later small churches or chapels like the Smith Meeting House in Gilmanton (circa 1840) and the Cotton Mountain Community Church in

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<sup>12</sup> Peter Benes, “Twin-Porch versus Single-Porch Stairwells: Two Examples of Cluster Diffusion in Rural Meetinghouse Architecture,” *Old-Time New England* 69 (January-June 1979): 44-68.

<sup>13</sup> For information on these buildings and their added towers, see individual or historic district nominations to the National Register of Historic Places at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (NHSHPO), Concord, New Hampshire.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**Continuation Sheet**

**Section 8 Page 6**

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Wolfeborough (circa 1852).<sup>14</sup> Most of these buildings have gable-end entrances rather than the classic central entrance on a long elevation, as seen in Allenstown. Meeting houses at New Durham Corner and Milton, New Hampshire, which today resemble the Allenstown Meeting House, are former two-story buildings that were later cut down to one story in height.

At first, New England meeting houses were not heated. People appreciated the fact that meeting houses provided shelter from winter winds, but no one since the time of first settlement had expected any degree of warmth in such buildings. Those who wanted or needed some heat brought warmed stone slabs or tin foot warmers, containing live coals, from home or from a nearby tavern. When stoves were first introduced in some meeting houses, generally between about 1815 and about 1840, many people objected to this luxury as proof that the modern generation of that era was growing soft and unworthy of the traditions of its ancestors.<sup>15</sup> The Allenstown Meeting House was eventually provided with a small stove chimney, located near the center of its ridge. Records indicate that a stove was installed in the building in 1844.<sup>16</sup>

The Allenstown Meeting House may be the only surviving town meeting house in New Hampshire that was built originally as a one-story structure and yet served the full range of civic and religious functions that were traditionally required of a town meeting house. The building is also the only surviving New Hampshire meeting house to employ a slanted first floor for visibility of the speakers in the pulpit. This structural characteristic is known to have been commonplace in district schoolhouses of the early 1800s, but has not been documented in any other meeting house.<sup>17</sup> By creating a modest amphitheater effect within the building, such a floor

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<sup>14</sup> For information on these buildings and their added towers, see their individual nominations to the National Register of Historic Places at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (NHSHPO), Concord, New Hampshire.

<sup>15</sup> For information on heating meeting houses, see Jane C. Nylander, "Toward Comfort and Uniformity in New England Meeting Houses, 1750-1850," *New England Meeting House and Church: 1630-1850*, Volume IV of the *Annual Proceedings of The Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife*, 1979 (Boston: Boston University, 1979), pp. 86-100.

<sup>16</sup> "[Miscellaneous] Notes on Allenstown," Vol. IV, p. 28, New Hampshire Historical Society.

<sup>17</sup> For a general discussion of slanted floors in schoolhouses, see Catherine M. Fennelly, *Town Schooling in Early New England, 1790-1840* (Sturbridge, Mass.: Old Sturbridge Village, 1962). For New Hampshire examples, see James L. Garvin, "Report on the District No. 8 Schoolhouse, Peterborough, New Hampshire," typescript, May 11, 1996, New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Concord, N. H., and Garvin, "Report on the Buck Street Community House (District Number 3 Schoolhouse), Thompson Road, Pembroke, New Hampshire," typescript, November 11, 1997, New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Concord, N. H. The files of the New

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increased the visibility of the rather low pulpit and undoubtedly improved the acoustics in the more distant corners of the building.

*Significance, Criterion A (religion and politics/government):* Under Criterion A, the Allenstown Meeting House is significant as the only site of organized political activity from 1815 until its abandonment for town meetings in 1876, and for its role as a site of religious observances from 1815 until the dissolution of the Allenstown Christian Church about 1860, followed by its function as the focus of religious camp meetings from about 1830 to about 1886.

Most New Hampshire towns had a meeting house, which served as the most important publicly-owned structure in the community. Meeting houses filled both a civic and a religious purpose, providing a site for regular and special town meetings and being used for religious services on the Sabbath. The March annual town meeting would usually be held in the town meeting house. If the warrant was long or if much debate occurred, the meeting would often be adjourned to subsequent days. Sometimes several adjournments occurred, so town meetings might continue well into the spring or summer. Special town meetings and elections were also held in the meeting house.

The Town of Allenstown maintained its rights in the meeting house until the twentieth century, and continued to hold town meetings there until about 1876. By that date, Suncook Village had grown into a busy manufacturing center in response to the construction of the Pembroke, China, and Webster cotton mills and the continued operation of such other water-powered manufactories as Osgood's sawmill. As Suncook became the center of Allenstown's population, the number of inhabitants in the old meeting house locale dwindled, despite the building's central geographical location within the township. The majority of the town's inhabitants found it inconvenient to travel from their village homes to the small, isolated building for meetings. In 1876 the annual meetings of the town were moved to an auditorium in the village.<sup>18</sup>

Religious diversity was relatively slight in New Hampshire during the 1700s, and the use of a town-owned building for religious services was a familiar practice that dated from the 1600s in

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Hampshire Division of Historical Resources do not include either another meeting house, or a surviving schoolhouse on its original site, that retains a slanted main floor. A schoolhouse from Candia, New Hampshire, was moved to Old Sturbridge Massachusetts and restored with a slanted floor and characteristic fixed wooden benches.

<sup>18</sup> Carol A. Martel, *The History of East Allenstown, New Hampshire, and Bear Brook State Park*, p. 20.

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the coastal region. The combined secular and religious functions of the meeting house were accepted without question until after 1800, when the advent of several new religious sects caused traditional practices to be questioned. Adherents of these non-established churches objected to being taxed for the support of a minister with whose tenets they disagreed, and to being denied, in many cases, the use of the town meeting houses for their own religious services.<sup>19</sup>

In most New Hampshire towns before 1800, there was one established church, referred to as the "orthodox" church or the "standing order." In most communities, this was the Congregational church; in some, it was a Presbyterian or a Baptist church. Ministers who served the "orthodox" church were supported, in part, by public funds, and were often given the use of publicly-owned lands or houses for their farms or parsonages.

At the time that the Allenstown Meeting House was begun, the town remained small and sparsely settled, with fewer than 400 inhabitants. Because Allenstown was a township of relatively poor soils and sparse population, it never employed or "settled" a regular minister. None of the predominant New Hampshire churches of the period—Congregational, Presbyterian, or Baptist—had been organized there, so there was no "standing order" or town-supported minister. For this reason, the town attracted itinerant preachers and was susceptible to the influence of one or more of the "experiential" or Arminian sects that began to proliferate in New Hampshire in the late 1700s and early 1800s.

This situation encouraged one of the smaller New England sects to gather members in Allenstown. This was the "Christ-ian" or Christian Church, which had been founded by people who repudiated some of the practices of the larger, established churches and who adopted a name that signified their intention to return to a simple form of Christianity. Various itinerant ministers are credited with founding the Christian Church, but recent histories trace the origins of the sect, at least as it existed in New England, to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in 1803. Elias Smith of Portsmouth, a former Baptist, is generally regarded as the most influential of the several preachers who established the new religion.

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<sup>19</sup> The eventual result of objections to taxation for support of a "standing order" was the passage in New Hampshire of the "Toleration Act" in 1819. This law severed the connection between church and town, making support of a religious organization a voluntary act. See Everett S. Stackpole, *History of New Hampshire*, 5 vols. (New York: American Historical Society, 1916-17), IV:230, and *Laws of New Hampshire: Vol. 8, Second Constitutional Period, 1811-1820* (Concord, N. H.: 1920), pp. 820-821.



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The Allenstown Christian Church was organized by twenty-three local people on July 10, 1807, as a result of the preaching of Elias Smith and of Abner Jones, another of the founders of the sect.<sup>20</sup> Jones appears to have been the first regular pastor of the Allenstown church, but apparently did not occupy the pulpit full-time due to his wide-ranging itinerary as a traveling minister.<sup>21</sup>

The clerk of the church was elder Hall Burgin (1770-1844), who donated the lot upon which the church began to build the meeting house in 1815.<sup>22</sup> Elder Mark Fernald (1784-1851) of Kittery, Maine, one of the leading itinerant ministers of the Christian Church, often preached in the building. Some of the meetings in Allenstown were large conferences. Fernald mentions one apparently contentious event in August, 1820, in which "the Lord revived His work, though satan raged," and a general conference of New Hampshire Christian clergy in Allenstown in May, 1830, at which

about twenty-five preachers attended, though all did not belong to the conference. Judge Hall Burgin, his wife and daughter waited on us, and he was as a father to us. On the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, [we] held public meetings, which were crowded, and I believe good was done. We then retired in different directions, and [on] the 31<sup>st</sup>; I went to Wolfeborough.<sup>23</sup>

Hall Burgin kept a large tavern at the intersection of Deerfield and Epsom Roads, west of Bear Brook and a short distance from the meeting house. In the absence of a compact village nearby, the Burgin Tavern was essential to the accommodation of those who attended conferences at the meeting house.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Dowst, "The Old Allenstown Meeting House," p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> For information on Elias Smith, Abner Jones, and other contemporary leaders of "Christian" churches, see Russell R. Paden, "From the Churches of Christ to the Boston Movement: A Comparative Study," M. A. thesis, University of Kansas, 1994, especially pp. 8-9.

<sup>22</sup> See Mrs. William Wallace McPherson, "Burgin (Bergin, Beargin) Family," typescript, New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, N. H. (929.2/B956, acc. no. 84042).

<sup>23</sup> Mark Fernald, *Life of Mark Fernald, Written by Himself* (Newburyport, Mass.: Geo. Poore Payne and D. P. Pike, 1852), pp. 142, 224.

<sup>24</sup> For a newspaper account of the 1830 conference, and further information on the Burgin Tavern, see Carol A. Martel, *The History of East Allenstown, New Hampshire, and Bear Brook State Park*, pp. 17-21 and 28-29.

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It is likely that ministers of the Christian denomination predominated in the religious services that were held in this building until the Allenstown Christian Church dissolved about 1860. As was typical of most country meeting houses, however, the pulpit was probably made available to any minister who was willing to preach. Farmer and Moore's *New-Hampshire Gazetteer* of 1823 says, "There is no settled minister in Allenstown; their meeting-house is open to all religious sects, and they occasionally have preaching."<sup>25</sup>

The Allenstown Meeting House continued to be the focus of occasional religious meetings even after the Allenstown Christian Church dissolved about 1860. For more than forty years, "Evangelical Grove Meetings" were held on the first Sunday in August in Ela's Grove, now the group picnic area in Bear Brook State Park. The last and largest of these meetings was held on August 1, 1886. Between three and four thousand people attended, with eight hundred teams of horses.

After 1886, however, it appears that the building was seldom opened and received little maintenance. In 1908, the Town of Allenstown voted to transfer all its rights in the meeting house to Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, on the condition that the chapter restore the building to its original condition and maintain it thereafter.<sup>26</sup> The building was conveyed by John M. Mitchell to Buntin Chapter by deed dated October 30, 1908.<sup>27</sup>

*Significance, Criterion A (conservation; historic preservation):* The Allenstown Meeting House was preserved because it has been deliberately treated from 1908 until the present time as a focus of active historic preservation efforts. When the Town of Allenstown voted in March, 1908, to relinquish the building to Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, the warrant article specifically required the chapter to restore the building to its original condition and

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<sup>25</sup> John Farmer and Jacob B. Moore, *A Gazetteer of the State of New-Hampshire* (Concord, N. H.: Jacob B. Moore, 1823).

<sup>26</sup> *Annual Reports . . . of the Town of Allenstown for the Fiscal Year Ending February 15, 1909* (Manchester, N. H.: E. R. Richard & Co., 1909), report on Article 10 of the Town Warrant of March 10, 1908: "To see if the town will transfer all its rights in the "Old town House" to Buntin chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, on condition that the chapter shall restore the building as far as possible to its original condition, and shall at all times keep it in repairs. Voted yes."

<sup>27</sup> Quitclaim deed, John M. Mitchell to Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, Merrimack County Registry of Deeds, book 381, page 286.

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maintain it thereafter in a good state of repair. Internal evidence, and documentation kept by Buntin Chapter (see bibliography), show that the chapter complied with this stipulation.

Under regent Sarah E. W. Cochran, Buntin Chapter undertook restoration of the building. The structure was rededicated on August 22, 1909.<sup>28</sup> Photographs of the period show that the DAR renewed the exterior of the structure. On the inside, some machine-planed casings on the wall posts and machine-planed boards in parts of the desk or pulpit suggest that the DAR replaced missing elements or repaired deteriorated woodwork. In general, however, the interior of the building had probably survived without much change since the building was first opened. At the completion of the restoration in 1909, a bronze tablet was donated by J. A. Lang and affixed to the front of the building; it is now inside.

Buntin Chapter's work on the building made the structure one of the earliest examples of conscious architectural preservation in New Hampshire. Restoration of the meeting house was preceded only by the acquisition of the Ladd-Gilman House in Exeter by the Society of the Cincinnati in 1902 and by the restoration of the Thomas Bailey Aldrich Memorial in Portsmouth in 1907. In 1912, shortly after the restoration of the meeting house, the Daniel Webster Birthplace Association recreated the birthplace of Webster in West Franklin, and the Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of New Hampshire began to lease the Moffatt-Ladd House in Portsmouth from family heirs. It is perhaps significant that these contemporary pioneering efforts at preservation were impelled by veneration for prominent individuals or events, whereas the preservation of the Allenstown Meeting House seems to have been motivated largely by affection for the ancient building and by the memories that clustered about the structure and site.

Around 1910, under regent Mary S. Head, Buntin Chapter acquired title to the burying ground opposite the meeting house.<sup>29</sup> No graves are obvious today among the pine trees that grow within the stone wall that encloses this plot, but one fragment of a broken gravestone has been discovered in the ground. It is recorded that two gravestones formerly survived within the enclosure. One, bearing the familiar urn design of the early 1800s, was inscribed, "Elizabeth,

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<sup>28</sup> Lucy C. Pratt, "Old Allenstown Meeting House," in Mollie Somerville, comp., *Historic and Memorial Buildings of the Daughters of the American Revolution* (Washington, D. C.: National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, 1979).

<sup>29</sup> Lucy C. Pratt, "Highlights of Buntin Chapter, DAR," unpublished typescript, no date; copy at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Concord, N. H.

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consort of Ede Hall Burgin. Died Jan. 22, 1832, aged 93 yrs." Elizabeth Bryant (1739-1832), the wife of Ede (or Edward) Hall Burgin and the mother of Hall Burgin (the donor of the meeting house lot), was a daughter of Walter Bryant, who compiled the early surveys of Allenstown and was a grantee of much land in the township.<sup>30</sup> The second gravestone, a broken remnant, retained only the fragmentary epitaph, "My flesh shall slumber, till the last trumpet joy. . . Then burst the chains with . . . in my Savior's image. . ." This stone may originally have marked the grave of Hall Burgin, who donated the meeting house lot to the Christian Church.<sup>31</sup>

Speaking to Buntin Chapter in 1910, John Dowst remarked of the meeting house, "Considering the location of the building, so far away from any dwelling, in the midst of a pine forest through which a fire would sweep like a whirlwind if it once started, it is remarkable that it has stood for so many years."<sup>32</sup> Dowst's premonition of potential disaster was nearly fulfilled at the end of May, 1914. A spark from a passing locomotive on the Suncook Valley Branch started a fire near the Bombay Bridge, where North Pembroke Road crossed the Suncook River to Allenstown. The flames burned southward, consuming huge quantities of standing timber and sawn and stacked lumber in the woods, until they neared the meeting house. According to one newspaper article,

One of the hardest battles of the day came when the flames reached the vicinity of the old Allenstown meeting house, an historic relic recently restored by Buntin Chapter, D.A.R., of Pembroke. The structure was erected in 1815, and was known as the First Christian church. The interior has been preserved in the old-fashioned style of church furnishings, with its elevated pulpit and box pews. A band of 50 men arrived at this church just in time to hastily surround the building with a deep ditch before the flames reached the thick growth of pine which encompasses it. The saving

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<sup>30</sup> Mrs. William Wallace McPherson, "Burgin (Bergin, Beargin) Family," typescript, New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, N. H.

<sup>31</sup> Lillian Rich Gilligan and Mary P. Willis, "Allenstown, N. H. Cemetery Inscriptions, Copied 1931," New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord, N. H. The inscriptions on the now-missing gravestones were copied by Mrs. James J. Gilligan of Concord, N. H., on April 12, 1931.

<sup>32</sup> Dowst, "The Old Allenstown Meeting House," p. 10.

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of the old church was due in large measure to C. Parker Bailey who directed the men in the fight to save this ancient structure.<sup>33</sup>

Another newspaper article of the same time identifies the fire-fighting crew that saved the meeting house as "some railroad men from Concord of whom several hundred had been sent by special train to help subdue the flames."<sup>34</sup>

Following the fire, Buntin Chapter continued to maintain the building, opening it on the first Sunday of every August to perpetuate the tradition of the former Evangelical Grove Meetings of the 1800s. Between 1936 and 1938, under regent Fannie W. Robinson, a split rail fence of chestnut was placed around the meeting house lot by Civilian Conservation Corps 1123<sup>rd</sup> Company, a "Juniors" company. Remnants of this fence survive.<sup>35</sup>

In 1940, the Daughters of the American Revolution carried out a major reforestation project in the vicinity of the meeting house. For some years prior to that date, the Civilian Conservation Corps had maintained a camp opposite the meeting house, engaging in extensive tree planting, bridge and trail building, and general improvements to the land that would become Bear Brook State Park. In conjunction with the CCC work, the New Hampshire State Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, undertook sponsorship of the "Jubilee Penny Pines Forest," a planting of 25,000 red or "Norway" pine seedlings (*Pinus resinosa*) that commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, in 1890. These trees were set out by members of the Bear Brook Veterans' CCC Camp on a tract of fifty acres adjoining the meeting house. In June, 1940, a bronze tablet was unveiled on a roadside boulder east of the meeting house, and commemorative exercises were held in the old building. State Forester John A. Foster was one of the speakers; he outlined plans for the future development of Bear Brook State Park, which officially came into being through federal transfer

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<sup>33</sup> "Valuable Timber Land Swept by Flames," undated newspaper clipping (1914); copy at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Concord, N. H.

<sup>34</sup> "Allentown Swept by Terrible Fire," undated newspaper clipping (1914); copy at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Concord, N. H.

<sup>35</sup> Lucy C. Pratt, "Highlights of Buntin Chapter, DAR," unpublished typescript, no date; copy at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Concord, N. H. The fence when new is illustrated in Carol A. Martel, *The History of East Allentown, New Hampshire, and Bear Brook State Park*, p. 94.

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and state legislation in 1943.<sup>36</sup> Today, the matured Penny Pines and an adjacent stand of eastern white pines surround and shade the meeting house.

The Allenstown Meeting House remained under the care of Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, who continued to open it once each August. On July 15, 1985, however, an arsonist attempted to destroy the building. Flames had largely engulfed the northwestern corner of the structure and had found their way into the attic before a passing early-morning motorist noticed the smoke and summoned local fire departments. Before the fire could be brought under control, the rear corner and much of the roof structure had been destroyed.

Buntin Chapter took immediate steps to brace the walls of the structure and to provide a temporary roof over the building. The first such roof collapsed under the weight of winter snow, and a second was constructed by Roland A. Martel of Allenstown. Later, the present roof of prefabricated trusses was installed atop the wall plates.

In 1991, recognizing that it lacked the resources to manage the repair and restoration of the damaged building, Buntin Chapter voted to offer the meeting house to the State of New Hampshire. The building was to be administered by the Division of Parks and Recreation in consultation with the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (the State Historic Preservation Office) as a historic site within Bear Brook State Park. The state accepted the building, installing new window sashes, of a style appropriate to the period of 1815, in 1993 and carrying out some sill repairs in 1994.<sup>37</sup>

After 1994, dwindling state resources and the self-funded budget of the Division of Parks and Recreation slowed the momentum of state care of the meeting house, leaving much planned work undone. At its annual meeting in 2003, the Town of Allenstown adopted a town master plan that urged the town to promote the welfare of the meeting house and to seek to reacquire the building from the state for use as a gathering place for local meetings.

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<sup>36</sup> State of New Hampshire, *Biennial Report of the Forestry and Recreation Commission for the Two Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 1940* (Concord, N. H. 1941), p. 56; "Jubilee Penny Pines Forest Dedicated by State D. A. R.," "Meeting House in Large Role at Dedication," undated newspaper clippings (June 1940); copies at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Concord, N. H.

<sup>37</sup> Quitclaim Deed, November 5, 1991, Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, to the State of New Hampshire, Merrimack County Registry of Deeds, book 1870, page 2428.

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In December 2003, the Allenstown board of selectmen signed a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Resources and Economic Development, permitting the town to carry out temporary stabilization of the building. In March, 2004, the State of New Hampshire transferred title of the building and its lot, and of the burying ground across the road, to the Town of Allenstown by quitclaim deed.<sup>38</sup> At the same time, the town and the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (the State Historic Preservation Office) signed a perpetual preservation easement by which the town and the Division of Historical Resources agreed to work together toward the rehabilitation and care of the building, and the state office agreed to provide support and technical assistance to the town in this effort.

Within its three areas of significance, the Allenstown Meeting House stands as a unique survivor of a building type that may once have been characteristic of small and agriculturally poor towns in New Hampshire. In its combined social and religious functions, the building provided all the attributes that were expected of larger, two-story meeting houses in wealthier towns. Although small in size and scale, the building accommodated town meetings for some sixty years and sheltered both regular religious services and evangelical camp meetings for some seventy years. Architecturally, the building exhibited the plain style that was expected of all rural meeting houses, simplifying that attribute still further by its small dimensions and one-story height, while adopting now-unique slanted floors for better visibility and audibility. Because of the solicitude of the Town of Allenstown when it transferred title to the building in 1908 with requirements for its restoration and preservation, and because of the integrity with which Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, met those requirements, the Allenstown Meeting House took its place as a pioneering example of historic preservation in New Hampshire.

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<sup>38</sup> Quitclaim Deed, February 20, 2004, State of New Hampshire to the Town of Allenstown, New Hampshire, Merrimack County Registry of Deeds, book 2631, pages 553-555.

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Verbal Boundary Description:** A parcel of land with the building thereon, situated on the northerly side of the highway leading from Deerfield to New Hampshire Route 28, known as "Deerfield Road," and bounded and described as follows: Beginning at a stone bound standing at the northwest corner of the herein described tract; thence running S 65°00' E, 189.2 feet, more or less, along the line of an old fence, as indicated by old posts now standing, to a stake and stones; thence turning at nearly a right angle and running S 24°15' W, 106.3 feet, more or less, along the line of the old fence, as indicated by old posts now standing, to the northerly sideline limit of Deerfield Road; thence turning at nearly a right angle and running northwesterly, 190 feet, more or less, along the northerly sideline limit of Deerfield Road to a point; thence turning at nearly a right angle and running N 24°15' E, 95.9 feet, more or less, along the line of the old fence as indicated by old posts now standing, to the point of beginning, containing 0.44 acres, more or less.

**Boundary Justification:** The nominated property is the same that was conveyed by John M. Mitchell to Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, by deed dated October 30, 1908 (Merrimack County Registry of Deeds, Vol. 381, page 286); and by Buntin Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, to the State of New Hampshire, by quitclaim deed dated November 5, 1991 (Merrimack County Registry of Deeds, Vol. 1870, page 2428); and by the State of New Hampshire to the Town of Allenstown, New Hampshire, by quitclaim deed dated February 20, 2004 (Merrimack County Registry of Deeds, Vol. 2631, pages 553-555). The boundaries of the meeting house lot have remained unchanged through these transfers, although compass citations have varied over time and dimensions in rods and links have been converted to feet and tenths of feet.

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PHOTOGRAPH LABELS

The following information pertains to all views, exterior and interior:

- 1.) Allenstown Meeting House
- 2.) Allenstown (Merrimack County), NH
- 3.) Photographer: James L. Garvin
- 4.) Photographs taken February 2004
- 5.) Negatives at: New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, Concord, NH

Photo #1:

View: Exterior of the Allenstown Meeting House, south (front) and east elevations, looking northwest.

Photo #2:

View: Interior of the Allenstown Meeting House, looking northeast from the southwest corner of the meeting room, showing the pulpit (at left) and the benches mounted on a slanted floor.

Photo #3:

View: Interior of the Allenstown Meeting House, looking east, showing the benches mounted on a slanted floor and the box pews around the perimeter of the meeting room.

Photo #4:

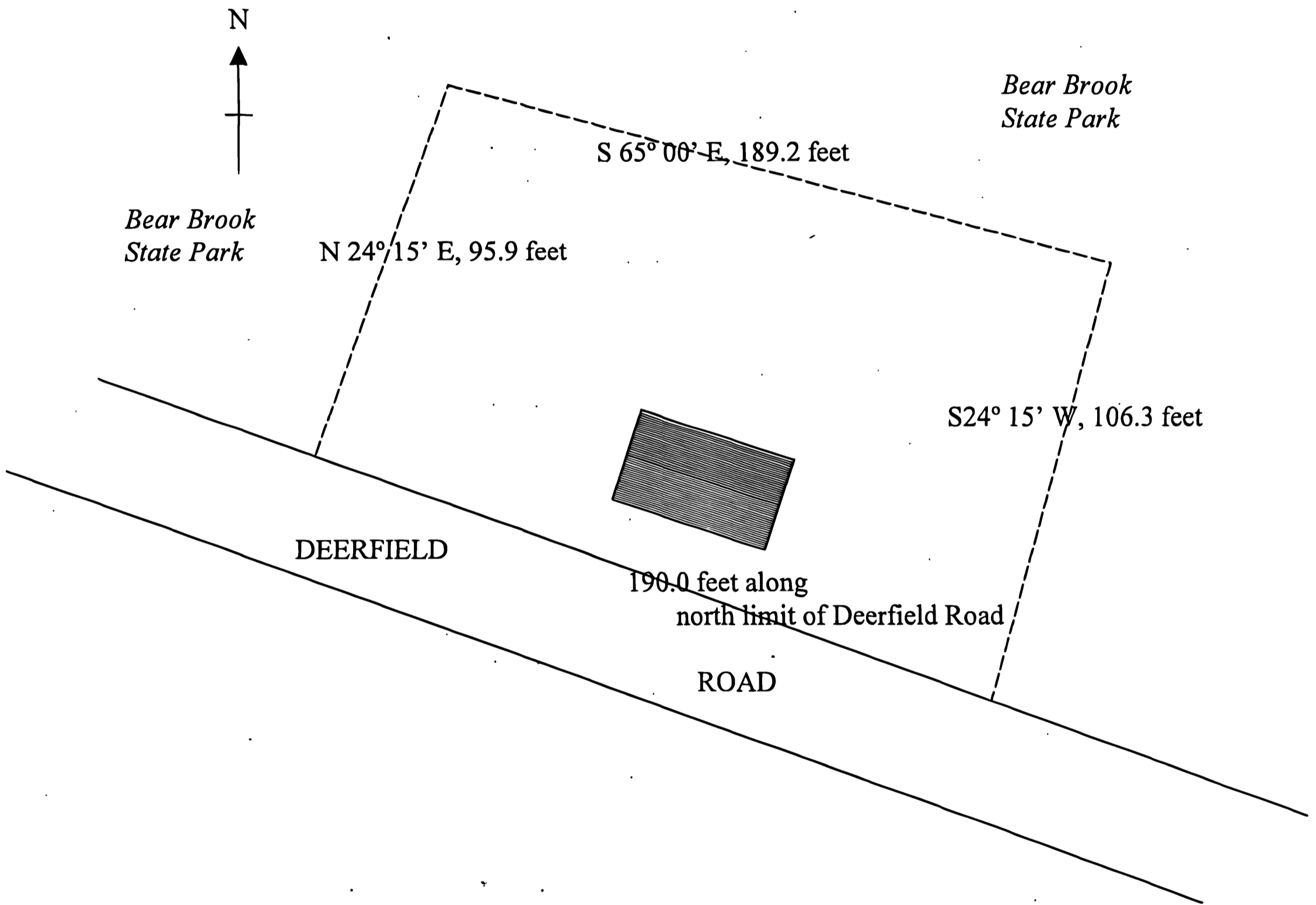
View: Interior of the Allenstown Meeting House, looking southwest, showing the benches mounted on a slanted floor and the box pews around the perimeter of the meeting room.

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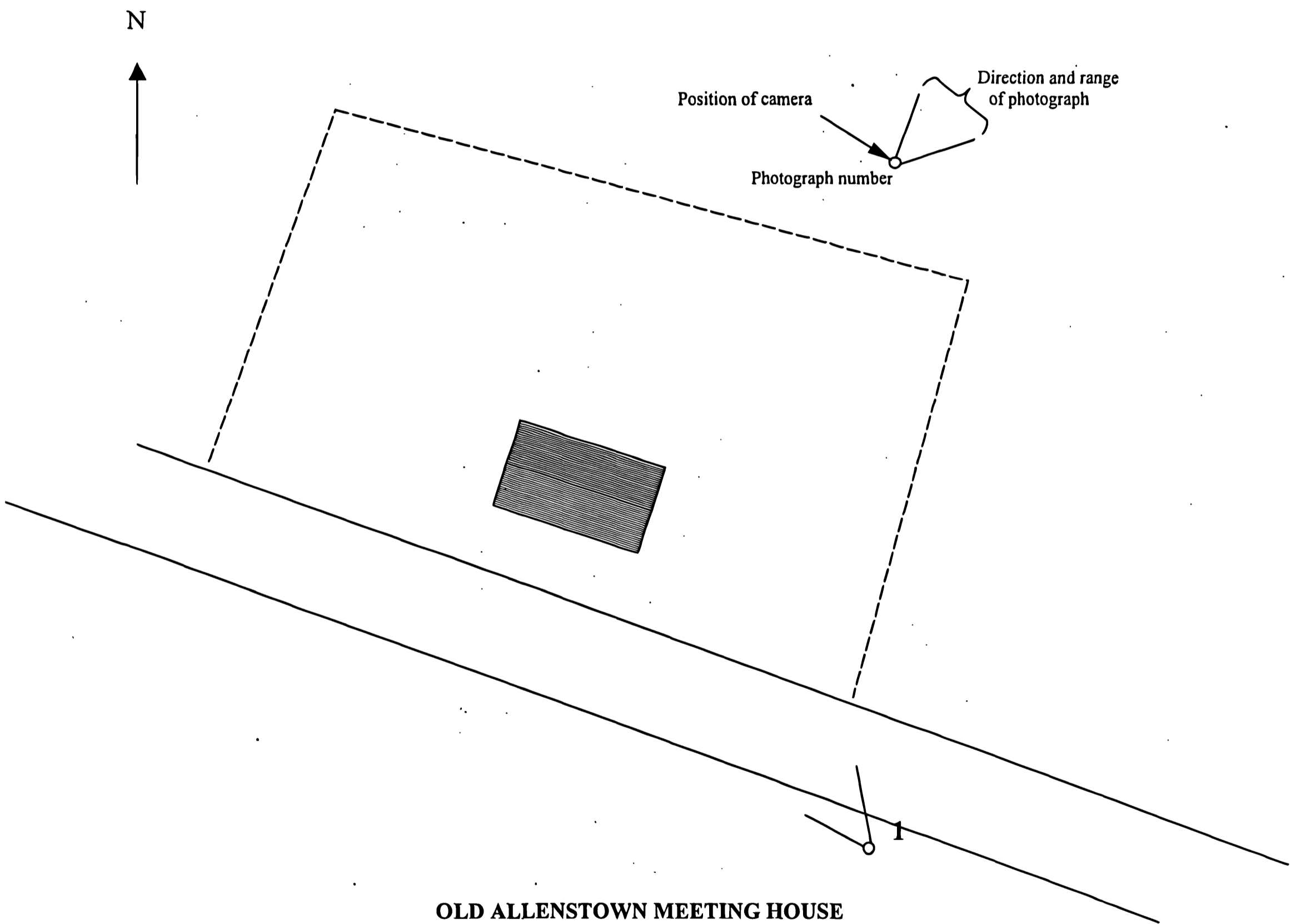
**OLD ALLENSTOWN MEETING HOUSE  
SKETCH MAP  
(No scale)**

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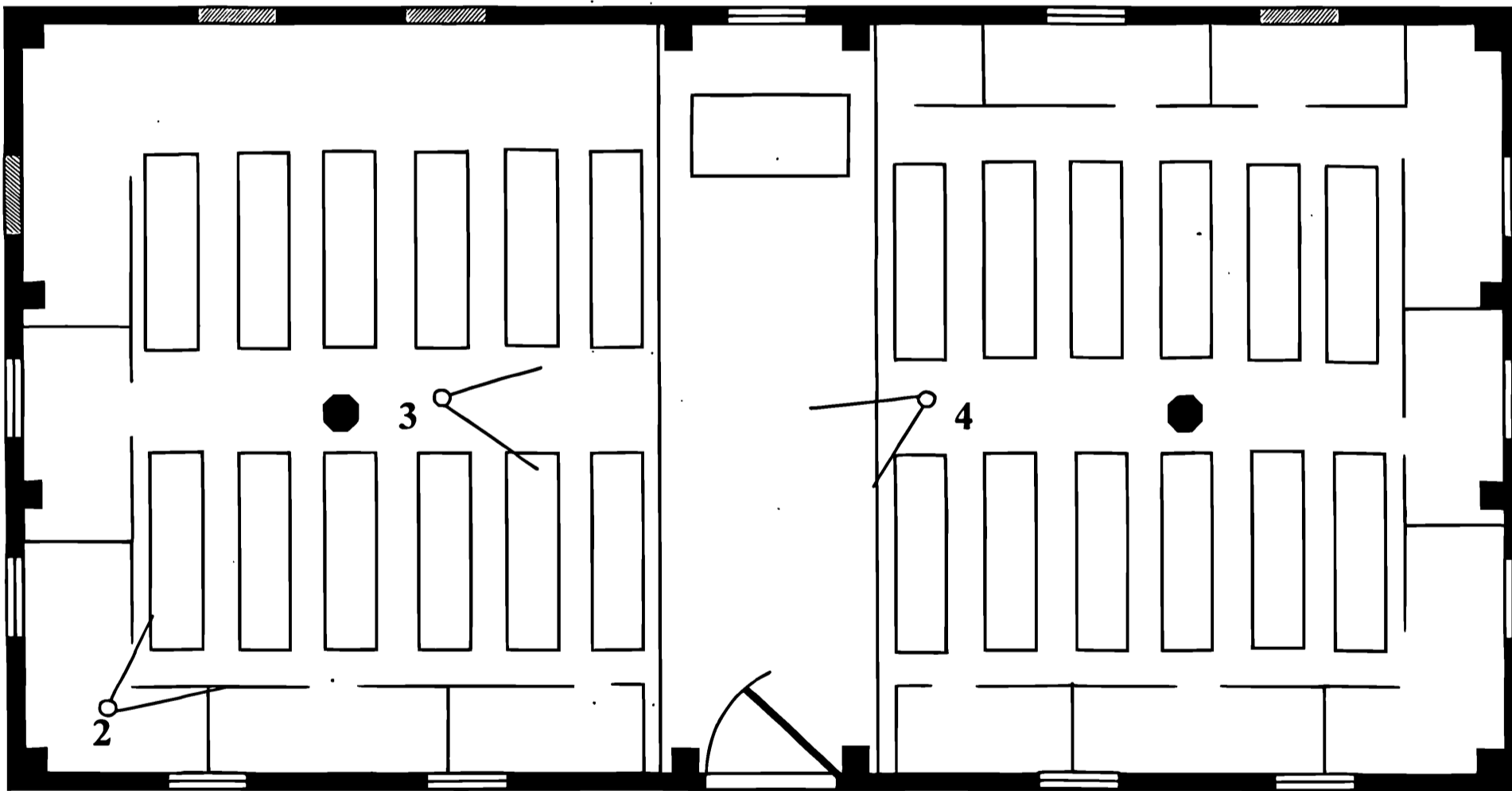
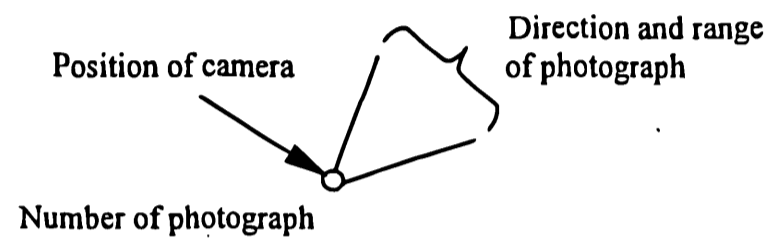
**OLD ALLENTOWN MEETING HOUSE  
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