

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED JAN 7 1976  
DATE ENTERED MAY 4 1976

## 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**  
\* \* Indian Shaker Church  
AND/OR COMMON

### 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: North Meridian Avenue (Church Road) *W of Marysville*  
CITY, TOWN: Marysville Tulalip Reservation  
STATE: Washington CODE: 53 COUNTY: Snohomish CODE: 061  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: #2 - Honorable Lloyd Meeds

### 3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

### 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Indian Shaker Church, c/o Tulalip Tribes  
STREET & NUMBER: 6700 Totem Beach Road  
CITY, TOWN: Marysville VICINITY OF: STATE: Washington 98270

### 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Western Washington Indian Agency U. S. Department of the Interior Also: Snohomish County Courthouse, Everett, Washington 98201  
STREET & NUMBER: Federal Building 3006 Colby Avenue  
CITY, TOWN: Everett STATE: Washington 98201

### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: None  
DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY, TOWN: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_FEDERAL \_STATE \_COUNTY \_LOCAL

# 7 DESCRIPTION

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

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Indian Shaker Church on Tulalip Reservation was erected by church members in 1924. One of the last buildings to be constructed on Puget Sound in general conformity with sect doctrine, the church at Tulalip is among the best preserved examples of Indian Shaker architecture, a tradition peculiar to the Pacific Northwest. The church is a rectangular frame structure of the most fundamental sort in which exterior cladding is conventionally unpainted and left to the weather. Its straightforward treatment is aptly expressive not only on its materials of construction but of the function of the building as well. Despite the building's comparatively recent construction and the best efforts of a lone caretaker to keep up with maintenance needs, a reasonable amount of stabilization and repair work is required. For many years the Indian population at Tulalip has remained at a figure approaching 500. At present, there are reported to be only two members of the Shaker faith living on the Reservation. Nevertheless, the building is used an average of once a month by larger groups of Shakers who gather from all around to practice their strenuous ritual in a building of the old style which provides a high ceiling for the circulation of air not afforded by cramped and makeshift structures of more recent date.

The Indian Shaker Church at Tulalip is located in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 36, T.30N., R.4E., of the Willamette Meridian. It occupies parcel 09, the westerly 330 feet of the northerly 264 feet of Tract E of the Plat of Priest Point Park. The site is on alienated land within the boundary of Tulalip Reservation, an area of some 22,000 acres in the Snohomish River drainage basin. The church is sited in a clearing in the center of its two-acre wooded tract. Because it is bordered by lofty trees and dense undergrowth, the setting is well buffered from potential visual encroachments of nearby subdivisions. Ironically, it is because of its isolation from general view, as well as its limited use at present, that the building is vandalized from time to time. The property is readily accessible from Marysville-Tulalip Road, a few blocks north of the principal highway's intersection with North Meridian Avenue, also known as Church Road.

The basic block of the church is rectangular in plan, measuring 48 by 28 feet, with the long axis conventionally oriented in an east-west direction. The frame structure rests on a post-on-stone foundation in which some of the stones have been replaced by concrete blocks. An 8 by 10-foot projecting bell tower shelters the entrance centered in the west end, and a 5 by 12-foot prayer table alcove projects from the center of the east end. The belfry appears to be a simplified translation of the tower form on the face of St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church which was built on Tulalip Bay 20 years earlier. The Indian Shaker Church at Tulalip departs from convention in one important respect. The fact that the belfry and cross are placed on the west end instead of over the east, or altar end points further to the possibility that the builders of Tulalip's church emulated a model close at hand. The lower third of the tower is open to a height of 10 or 12 feet on the front face to give access to the building. The entrance is a double-leaf, five-panel stile and rail door with plain surround. Shiplap siding is carried all the way to the porch deck on either side of the tower. No doubt an echo of the frontal oeil-de-boeuf on St. Anne's belfry, there is a single, unglazed square opening centered above the porch. Uniform in plan, the nearly square tower extends above the ridge of the roof and terminated in an open timber framework from which the bell is suspended.

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The pyramidal shake roof protecting the belfry is in disrepair, but it still supports its Latin cross finial.

Eaves of the gable roof overhang the walls, and rafters are exposed. Stud walls are clad with unpainted shiplap siding which has been so long exposed to the weather that rust from nail heads makes the spacing of studs discernible on the exterior. Corner boards are used only on the bell tower. The shake roof was only partially upgraded as a result of a recent re-roofing project which came to a halt when volunteer labor dissipated.

There are no window openings in the end walls of the church. The nave is lighted on the south side by three double-hung sash windows with pointed arch heads, a refinement typical of the later, more substantial Shaker churches. These openings have lug sills and plain surround embellished with a molded frame around the arch. On the south wall is evidence of a lateral bracing system which may have been devised when a kitchen and dining hall were extended from the north wall sometime after 1942. Between each bay, under the eaves, are short planks held in place against the siding by loops of cable. Dining halls were frequently added to traditional Indian Shaker facilities, normally as detached structures. At Tulalip the dining hall and kitchen were provided after 1942 by a shed-roofed 19-foot addition running the length of the north side and a 6 by 18-foot extension telescoped from its northeast corner. These shed additions are fitted with ordinary modern household window casings. The roofs are surfaced with tar paper. Exterior wall cover, both shiplap and flush board siding, is left unpainted to match the main body of the church. Some of the window trim in the annexed portion, however, is painted.

The focal point of the interior is the prayer table alcove at the east end, the back wall of which is embellished with a large wooden cross with a smaller cross nailed at its center. Placed within this recess is the prayer table containing candles and handbells used at appropriate points of the service. Indian Shaker church interiors are customarily painted white. The church interior at Tulalip is at present pale pink, having been so painted during a maintenance campaign some years ago.

H. G. Barnett, who attended a service in the church on July 5, 1942, observed that candle branches were placed near the four corners of the room at that time, and another candle holder in the form of a circle circumscribing a cross was suspended from the center of the ceiling. Seating in Shaker churches is typically arranged so that benches for spectators or other non-participants are lined up on either side of a central aisle in the rear or westerly third

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of the church. Floor space toward the front of the church is kept vacant for purposes of practicing the ritual. A string of benches lining the three walls of the east end, or front of the church is reserved for participants. Apparently, a railing to set the prayer table space off from the common floor was never used at Tulalip.

The church is now supplied electricity from a feeder line directly to the northerly side of the west face, or principal facade.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Civil Rights Movement
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1924

BUILDER/ARCHITECT      Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Indian Shaker Church at Tulalip is significant to the Puget Sound region because it is among the best preserved examples of church building by the adherents of Shakerism, a Messianic and healing sect founded in 1881 by John Slocum, a member of the Squaxin band who lived on a homestead outlying Olympia. Entirely unrelated to the more widely known Protestant monastic sect of the same name introduced to this country by Mother Ann Lee in 1774, the Indian Shaker movement is peculiar to the northern Pacific Coast. It spread to most of the reservations of Washington and Oregon and spilled over into southern British Columbia and northwestern California within several decades. Despite certain legal sanctions, Shakerism was discouraged on the reservations, sometimes harshly, and sect followers endured persecution and years of suppression before they were able to practice their religion openly.

The origins of the sect lie in the apparently fatal illness of a self-confessed profligate Squaxin Indian, John Slocum, and his seemingly miraculous resurrection in the fall of 1881. Under the impression that he had died, returned to earth, and had been instructed by God to "lead other sinners into a Christian way of life," Slocum again lay critically ill, and his wife, Mary, was seized with hysteria. A "devoted adherent of her husband's teachings", Mary approached her husband's body in a state of "praying, sobbing and trembling." When her convulsion subsided it was seen that Slocum's condition had improved slightly. The seizure was interpreted as a manifestation of divine power, and as a consequence the sect was revitalized and spread in all directions. Within a relatively short time, however, leadership of the movement shifted to a figure known as Mud Bay Louis, who erected the mother church of the sect at Mud Bay on Puget Sound in the vicinity of Olympia. Louis' church set the pattern for subsequent Shaker architecture in which, whether by design or accident, proscribed orientation in an east-west direction happened to coincide with Catholic practice. The mother church at Mud Bay was rebuilt in 1910.

The right of Indian Shakers to practice their religion was only gradually realized. The Dawes Severalty Act passed by Congress in 1887 provided that Indian tribes everywhere were to be granted lands in severalty at the discretion of the President, and it provided that any Indian who had received an allotment or who should take up habits of Western civilization and reside apart from his tribe was to be declared an American citizen. When Washington was admitted to the Union in 1889, qualified Indians became citizens of the State and therefore subject to its laws. In 1891 a U. S. District Court ruled that citizens of the State could not be placed under the jurisdiction of an Indian Agent.



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Shortly after the U. S. District Court ruling, a delegation of Shakers called upon Olympia lawyer James Wickersham to determine their rights as members of a religious denomination. In a test case Wickersham established that they were free to worship in any peaceful manner they chose, and he assisted the Shakers to organize themselves into a regularly constituted church body. A meeting was held June 6, 1892 for purposes of drawing up a charter. Thereafter, though they continued to be harassed, the Shakers were launched on a course of worshipping openly, and the impetus for church building dates from this time. In 1893, when there were five churches in use: those at Mud Bay, Oyster Bay, Chehalis, Puyallup, and Kelso, Wickersham estimated total church membership at 500. On December 17, 1910 the Indian Shaker Church of Washington filed articles of incorporation with the Secretary of State, and church rules and by-laws were drawn up at the same time.

A survey by H. G. Barnett indicates that at the time of the Second World War the sect had produced as many as 35 specially constructed and recurrently used meeting places throughout the Pacific Northwest since its inception. When Barnett published his study of Indian Shakers in 1957, 15 of 25 churches still extant were located in the State of Washington. The size of the Shaker community has fluctuated over the years. Because no records are kept, it is not possible to document the present number of adherents. At Tulalip the resident congregation, never as numerous as adherents of the Catholic and Protestant faiths, reportedly has dwindled to two. The church is used more often than might be expected under the circumstances, however, as Shakers gather there from outlying districts for special services approximately once a month.

Tulalip Indian Agency initially encompassed four separate reservations sited on the tidewaters of upper Puget Sound. Port Madison, Swinomish, Lummi and Tulalip, the largest of the four, were established in accord with the Treaty of Point Elliott negotiated by Governor Isaac Ingalls Stevens in 1855 and ratified by Congress in 1859. Shakerism was introduced to the Indians of Tulalip Reservation around 1896 when Johnny Steve and his wife are said to have brought word of having witnessed a cure effected by the shaking ritual. The sect grew slowly at Tulalip because it faced the combined opposition of Agency officials headquartered there and the Roman Catholic Mission of St. Anne. Tulalip's early Shaker converts were jailed, released and imprisoned again in a cycle which was ultimately ineffective in getting the religious gatherings stopped.

The Indian Shaker Church at Tulalip was one of the last to be built on Puget Sound in conformance with sect tradition. Tulalip Shakers acquired a parcel of land and dedicated their church in 1924, in the same year that all Indians born in the United States were admitted to full U. S. citizenship, and four years

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after the death of Charles M. Buchanan, the widely-respected Superintendent of Tulalip Agency from 1901 to 1920. Buchanan's long and vigorous opposition to the healing cult may seem inconsistent with what is known of his distinguished service to the Indians until it is recognized that Buchanan perceived Shakerism as a threat to the well-being of his charges. Reliance upon a shamanistic ritual at the expense of conventional medical treatment was anathema to Buchanan. He had been trained in medical science and entered service at Tulalip as Agency physician in 1894, at about the time when Shakerism was introduced there. An Indian Shaker Church is known to have been erected at only one other location associated with the original jurisdiction of Tulalip Agency: namely, at La Conner adjacent to the Swinomish Reservation. In 1920 Tulalip Agency was expanded to include reservations of Cushman Agency on the Olympic Peninsula, where there were several Shaker communities.

The shaking sect combined Christian elements with native traditions. It underwent some changes as it was reinterpreted by diverse Indian groups throughout the region, but individual interpretation was always contained within a doctrinal framework derived from Christian sources. The Shaker prayer table and handbells are based on the altar and handbell used in the first services conducted by John Slocum, who had witnessed Roman Catholic ritual at various mission stations. The prayer table did not require consecration, and it became customary for Shakers to set up prayer tables in their homes. The emphasis upon spontaneity and self-expression during the Shaker service, on the other hand, is based upon Protestant practice also transmitted by missionaries.

Barnett, who observed a typical Shaker service at Tulalip on July 5, 1942, reported that it commenced with the church bell summoning the faithful to prayer. Inside the church handbells like the ones used by early Catholic missionaries and catechists were used to introduce successive phases of the service, to signal turns and points at which the congregation must rise, and to accompany songs and treading of feet. The invocation was followed by prayers, in English, clapping and stamping, and the singing of Christian hymns. During the second phase, the exhortation, a text was read from the Bible and expounded upon in an evangelistic manner. In the final phase participants sang and tread their feet in rhythm with handbell ringing, making a counter-clockwise circuit of the floor space. This was followed by the offering of individual prayers while in a kneeling attitude, and another circuit was made. It was in this culminating phase of the service that participants experienced their spiritual release in the form of shaking. The service was formally closed with a ritual handshake. When healing of a sick person is required, the patient is seated in a chair in the center of the floor and is treated by participants in a ritual of laying on of hands accompanied by shaking.



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In his study, Barnett shows that in addition to drawing inspiration from ancient beliefs such as the ability of supernatural powers to drive away evil spirits represented by human illness, Shakerism incorporated aspects of native secular life. The practice of holding feasts in conjunction with the larger meetings is believed to be derived from the old custom of tribal potlatches. In time, many Shaker churches, such as the one at Tulalip, were provided a cookhouse and dining hall, though usually in a smaller building adjacent to the church. Where no such adjunct was available, meals were taken outdoors or at a member's home.

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Whitfield, William, ed. History of Snohomish County, Washington, Vol. 1  
(Chicago-Seattle: Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, 1926), pp. 821-822.