

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received **OCT 16 1979**

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic CENTER MEETING HOUSE

and/or common CENTER MEETING HOUSE

2. Location NH 103

street & number Rt. #103 at Rt. #103-A not for publication

city, town Newbury vicinity of congressional district Second

state New Hampshire code 33 county Merrimack code 013

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input 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 Trustees, Center Meeting House of Newbury, NH

street & number c/o F. Arthur Larson

city, town South Newbury vicinity of state New Hampshire 03272

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Merrimack County Registry of Deeds
Merrimack County Courthouse

street & number North Main Street

city, town Concord state New Hampshire 03301

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date _____ federal state county local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Center Meeting House is located at the southern end of Lake Sunapee near the junction of Routes 103 and 103A. It is a rectangular building with a gabled facade and a two-story central projecting pavilion. Two doors crowned with louvered fans lead into an entry where stairs rise to the gallery above. Above the doors on the second story of the pavilion are rectangular windows with blinds but without louvered fans. The tympanum of the pavilion is ornamented by a louvered fan. Flanking the pavilion on the facade of the main building are two large windows with louvered fans and blinds, echoed on each side elevation by three similar windows. The gables of the main building and the pavilion are ornamented by a decorative cornice which is carried around to the side elevations and repeated above the first stage of a two-stage tower. The square tower has a round-headed louvered window on each elevation of the lower stage, and the open belfry above is surrounded by a balustrade which is repeated around the domed roof of the tower.

According to Eva Speare (Colonial Meeting Houses of New Hampshire, p. 211), the Center Meeting House is the only church structure in New Hampshire with the pews facing the doors and vestibule. This unusual arrangement requires the placement of the pulpit at the front of the auditorium, with the gallery directly behind it. Standing between the entrance doors and reached by stairs that rise from each side, the tall pulpit is supported by free-standing collonettes and has a projecting semi-circular drum at its center, ornamented with fluting and applied ball ornaments. Other portions of the pulpit are ornamented with pilasters having scalloped cavetto capitals.

The auditorium retains its original box pews, each having flat-panelled walls and doors, and each door bearing a painted plate with the number of the pew. The gallery extends across the front of the building behind the pulpit, curving forward slightly from its shallowest depth directly behind the pulpit. The lower portion of the front of the gallery is treated as a full entablature; the cornice of this element has a cavetto crown moulding supported by a row of elaborated dentils. The ceiling of the auditorium is flat, but has small plastered coves at its juncture with the side walls.

The roof of the building is supported by a series of massive king-post trusses, all major members of which are sawn on a reciprocating (up-and-down) saw. The rafters are doubled, and their ends are set into shoulders cut into the sides of the king-posts. Upper and lower rafters in each set are joined by three short struts. Rafters and king-posts are mortised into single lower chords that span the full width of the building. The trusses are joined laterally to one another not only by purlins which are let into the upper rafters, but also by large braced horizontal timbers that extend from king-post to king-post at about two-thirds of the height of each post.

The building has had three chimneys. The first was supported on timbers that still remain in the attic near the rear of the building; it passed through the ridge of the roof. The second was supported on a frame attached to the exterior wall of the structure. The present chimney, built against the northwest wall, extends upward from the ground.

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 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 c. 1832 **Builder/Architect**

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Architecture: The Center Meeting House is one of the best-preserved small meeting houses in New Hampshire. Though built about 1832, the building incorporates no features of the Greek Revival; it is therefore one of the last New Hampshire meeting houses designed wholly in the Federal style. The building displays many of the distinguishing features of Federal architecture, including arched windows, and exterior cornice elaborated with curved wooden brackets, and doorway archivolts decorated with applied wooden lozenge ornaments. The pulpit is one of the most interesting in New England, transforming an earlier Federal type with supporting columns and a projecting drum into a unique and elaborate focal point of the auditorium.

Religion: The first meeting house in Newbury (originally Fisherfield) was built in 1793 on Bly Hill, about a mile from the present structure. Like most eighteenth-century New Hampshire meeting houses, this earlier structure was used for both town and religious meetings. The building was dismantled after 1831, when its location ceased to be regarded as the center of town.

The present meeting house, apparently built by private subscription, was constructed on land leased from the town at the "parade" or "common," which was first laid out in 1773. The building was used by several religious societies; the land was first leased to the "Religious Toleration Society" (also called the "Universal Restoration Society") in 1831. The original subscribers for erecting the building agreed to erect "a meeting house in Fisherfield free for the Use of all denominations of Christians." In 1883 the Free-Will Baptist held their quarterly meeting at the "Pond Meeting House in Fisherfield."

The building was restored through the efforts of local summer residents, including Secretary of State John Hay and his wife, and still serves as a non-denominational chapel.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Published under the Auspices of Daughters of Colonial Wars)
 Eva A. Speare, "Colonial Meeting Houses of New Hampshire," 1938, The Currier Printing Company, Littleton, NH.

10. Geographical Data

ITEM NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property less than one,

Quadrangle name Sunapee, NH

Quadrangle scale 15

UMT References

A

1	8
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7	4	0	3	8	0
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4	8	0	0	5	4	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

B

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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Boundaries of the nominated property are those indicated in red on the attached sketch map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Ernest L. Sherman, Trustee		
organization	Center Meeting House	date	August 16, 1978
street & number	RFD	telephone	(603) 938-5311
city or town	Bradford	state	New Hampshire 03221

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

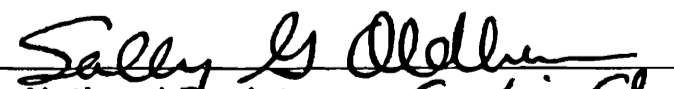
national state local


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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

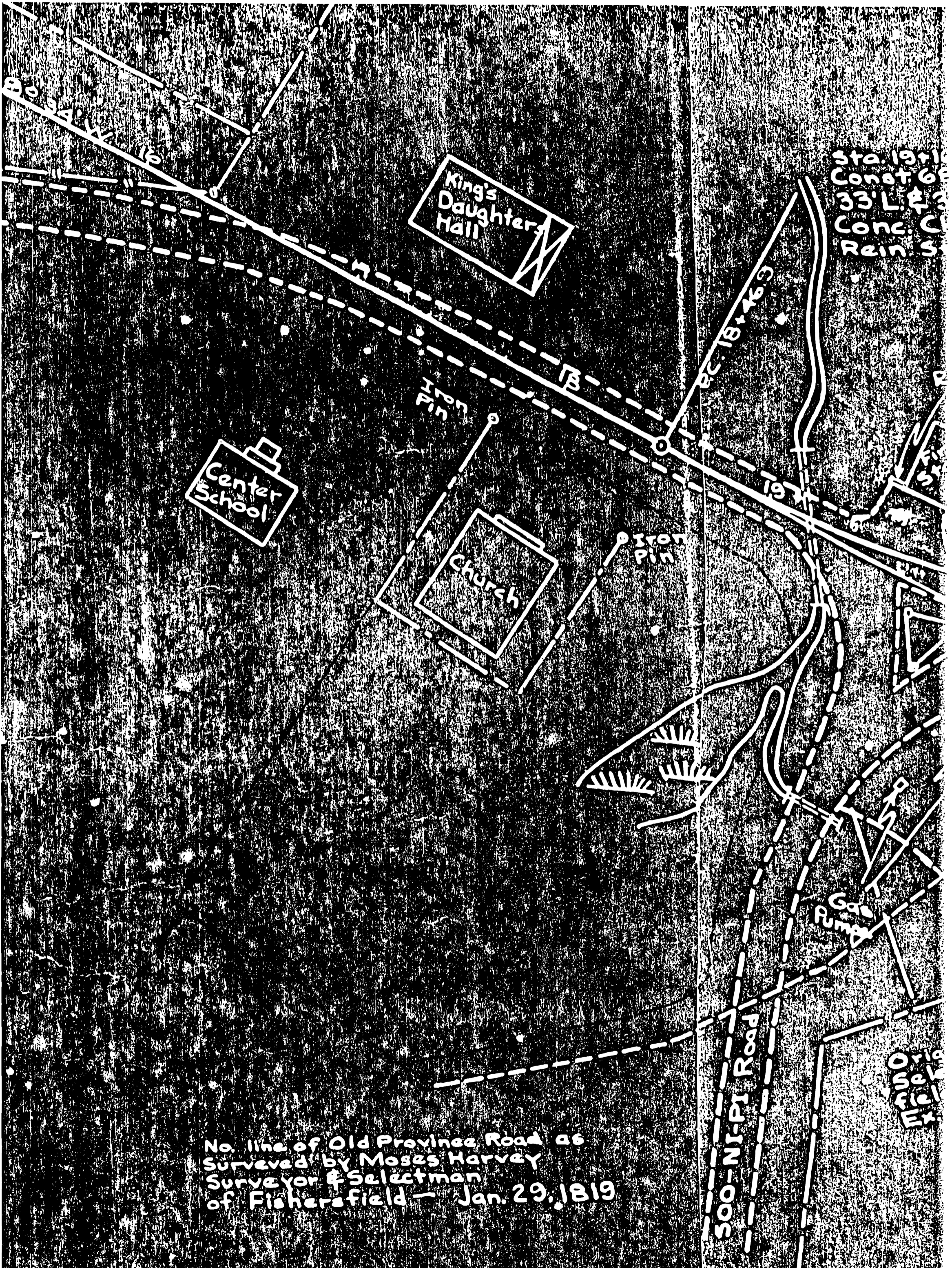
State Historic Preservation Officer signature 
 Commissioner, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development
 title NH State Historic Preservation Officer date July 6, 1979

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

 date 12/19/79
 Keeper of the National Register Acting Chief of Regis

Attest:  date 12/19/79
 Chief of Registration



King's Daughters Hall

Center School

Church

Iron Pin

Sta. 19+10
Const 60
33' L. & 3
Conc. C
Rein S

No. 111e of Old Province Road as
Surveyed by Moses Harvey
Surveyor & Selectman
of Fishersfield - Jan. 29, 1819

Soo-Ni-Pi Road

Gas Pump

Excavation