

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



227

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Montville Town House
other names/site number North Ridge Meeting House, Center Montville Meeting House, Union Church

2. Location

street & number 418 Center Road N/A not for publication
city or town Montville N/A vicinity
state Maine code ME county Waldo code 027 zip code 04941

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Evan S. Fitzpatrick 3/5/12
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

John Colson H. Beall 4.24.12
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE

WALDO COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

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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	
1		buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT / City Hall

GOVERNMENT / Government office

RELIGION / Religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

GOVERNMENT / Government office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EARLY REPUBLIC

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE / Granite

walls: WOOD / Weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Montville Town House is an early 19th century timber framed building located in the small Waldo County, Maine town of Montville. The one story, vernacular building has a rectangular foot print with a front facing gable and a gable roofed entry containing two doors on the façade. On the interior, the building consists of an assembly hall/auditorium and one small room used as the office for the town Selectmen. Built originally as a meeting house, but quickly adopted for town use, the vernacular structure is located at the intersection of Harriman, Center, Center Montville, and N. Searsmont Roads, in the part of the town known as Center Montville.¹ The Town House lot is bound on the west and south by a dirt driveway that also services a residence immediately to the west. On the north side is Harriman Road and on the East is North Searsmont Road. Diagonally across the street to the northeast is the two story Union Harvest Grange, and across North Searsmont Road is a former blacksmith's shop. Just a bit further south is the former Kingdom School, which was moved to the current location from its original site on Route 3 and restored for use as a museum and historical society building.

Narrative Description

The Montville Town House is a one story, gable roof building with a rectangular footprint measuring forty by forty-six feet. The primary façade is on the south elevation and features a three-bay, gable roof projection centered between a pair of two-over-two windows set into the main gable-end wall. The projection measures approximately 7 feet deep by twenty two feet wide and contains another two-over-two window flanked by six-panel wood doors. In front of the projection, and spanning its width is a five-foot wide wooden deck, with a ramp built on the west end and four stairs on the front. The two entry doors are positioned adjacent to narrow corner boards. Additional trim elements on the clapboarded building include narrow rake trim (on both the projection and the main building), boxed cornice with short returns and a narrow frieze below the eaves. Both side walls are marked by five evenly spaced two-over-two windows, and the north, or rear, elevation contains four additional windows evenly distributed across the exterior wall. Each window and door is trimmed by unornamented flat stock. The asphalt roof has an eight/twelve pitch and the foundation is granite block. A brick chimney straddles the ridge of the roof approximately ten feet south of the north end of the building.

The interior of the Town House is divided into three spaces: the entrance, the hall and the Selectmen's office. The entry contains two short hallways separated by a handicapped accessible bathroom. Four panel doors at the end of the hallways lead into the main room. This large hall has a line of three chamfered wooden posts positioned in a line under the ridge. The first of the posts is located at the center the room; the next is approximately eight feet to the north and the third is almost adjacent to the chimney stack and about 8 feet south of the north end wall. A barrel stove is positioned between the first two posts and is connected to the chimney via a metal pipe that takes several right angle turns. The selectmen's' office is formed by a pair of partition walls enclosing the northwest corner. Stretching from the southeast corner of the office to the east wall of the building is a wooden rail with rounded banisters; this structure defines the portion of the room actively used for polling. The railing contains two swinging gates. Four un-painted tongue-and-groove voting booths are positioned behind this railing in the northeast corner of the building.

The interior walls are finished with painted wood wainscot, a simple bull nosed chair rail that doubles as window sill, and plaster board above the chair rail. The windows and doors are trimmed with band molding applied over flat stock. Cased timber posts are visible in the corners of the building, and along the exterior walls. At the top of the walls the lower portion of the plates are likewise exposed. Patterned tin panels cover the ceiling, and the floor is finished with wide unpainted pine boards. Two ranks of leather-upholstered theater seats are positioned in rows, facing north, on either side of a central aisle. A second aisle is positioned along the east wall and a third is located directly in line with the west entry door and the door to the selectmen's office. Between this aisle and the west wall are a few long wooden benches, long Windsor back benches and theater seats set against the wall. Additional theater seats are positioned along the east wall, facing west toward the middle of the room.

¹ The four roads intersect at approximately right angles. The intersection is oriented north-northeast by south-southwest, and the front façade of the townhouse faces south-southeast. For the sake of simplicity, the building will be described as if facing true south, and the intersection and surrounding neighborhood as if it were on a true cardinal alignment.

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The selectmen's office is a simple square room, with built-in plywood shelves and older cupboards with raised panel doors. The exterior, plaster walls feature the same bull-nose chair rail and wide board wainscot as in the main hall; however, these trim elements are unpainted in the office. The partition walls are formed of narrow, horizontal, tongue-and-groove boarding, also unpainted. In contrast to the main hall, the ceiling is plaster. In the northeast corner of the office a large steel safe is set into the partition wall (its backside projects into the voting area of the main hall and is covered with plywood panels). The 'Steam Fire Proof Safe' was manufactured by Stedman, Cline and Co. and installed in 1909. A small wood-burning foot stove in this room is connected to the chimney through a lined opening in the partition wall.

Originally constructed in 1827 as a Free Will Baptist Church, the Montville Town House underwent significant remodeling in the twentieth century, and possibly earlier. In 1909 new clapboards were installed and the original twelve-over-twelve windows were replaced with the current two-over-two units. Town records for the purchase of materials suggest the selectmen's office was constructed at that time, and the tin ceiling installed the following year. In the 1950s most of the benches which had been used in the building after the box pews were removed (date unknown) were replaced with the theater-style chairs currently in use. In 1963 the original front entry was replaced with a single-pitch vestibule with one door in the west wall, and a bathroom and wood storage area on the interior. Seven years later the exterior clapboards were replaced with wood shingles, and seven years after that a metal roof was installed.

In 2006 the Town of Montville, in consultation with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, developed plans to restore the Town House. The 1950s were chosen as the target date to reflect the removal of the original box pews. In order to faithfully restore the building the single-pitch vestibule was removed and the gable roof, two door entryway reconstructed. Historic photographs as well as scars on the exterior south wall enabled an accurate reconstruction of the vestibule. At the same time the shingles were removed and spruce clapboards of varying lengths were applied to all the exterior walls, with specific attention given to replicating the nailing patterns and exposure seen in the historic photographs. The metal roof was replaced with asphalt shingles, and most of the windows were rehabilitated by volunteers. (Three new sash were constructed to match the existing windows.) The deck spanning the front wall is also based on a structure seen in a historic photograph, although the ramp and railings are new features.

There is evidence to suggest that the original religious facility was built along a 'reverse plan'. A reverse plan church is notable for the orientation of the pews, which face the front doors and the location of the pulpit/platform, between the two doors. The location of the pews are clearly depicted by 'Dutchmen' patches in the floor. Other patches centered on the floor, just in front of the south wall of the hall, show the location of a structure that could have been a raised platform. A deed recording the sale of two pews in 1836 indicate that there were wall pews and an east-west aisle at the north end (or rear) of the building. Before the single-pitch vestibule was removed the center wall between the vestibule and hall was examined and it indicated the previous location of either a window or opening in the wall. While this evidence is not fully conclusive, it is interesting to note that the North Montville/ Halldale Meetinghouse and the South Montville Church, both also built by Free Will Baptist congregations, were constructed on the reverse plan – the former remains unaltered to date.

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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 a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

POLITICS / GOVERNMENT

RELIGION

Period of Significance

1827 - 1962

Significant Dates

1827, 1828

c. 1898

1909-1910

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Euro-American

Architect/Builder

Edgecomb, Humphrey, builder

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance commences with the construction of the meeting house in 1827. Although the building continues to be significant under Criterion A, 1962 has been chosen as the stated end of the period of significance in accordance with National Register guidance.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Criteria Consideration A applies by virtue of the fact that the building was originally erected, and utilized, as the North Ridge Meeting House, a reverse-plan meeting house erected by a Free Will Baptist congregation. The reverse-plan church (or meeting house) is a building type significant for its architectural design, and in Montville Center the remnants of

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this plan are clearly visible within the simple gable front structure. In 1828 the Town of Montville started to utilize the building for governmental activities; while the religious functions of the building disappear by the end of the 19th century, the building continues to achieve significance as the location of municipal meetings and polling.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Montville Town House was constructed in 1827 by Humphrey Edgcomb as the North Ridge Meeting House. This structure was built to serve the 2nd [Montville] Free Will Baptist Church, which had been organized in 1818. The vernacular building featured box pews and a pulpit situated between the front entrances, a relatively uncommon church arrangement known as a 'reverse plan'. The function of the building expanded in 1828 when the town of Montville started to utilize the structure as a town house – the location of public meetings and town business. During the middle of the nineteenth century the religious function of the building began to diminish, and by the end of the century the property appears to have lost most, if not all of its religious associations. Remodeled extensively in 1909 and 1910, it's wide auditorium is the location of town meetings and polling, and the corner room was the Selectmen's office until recently. The Montville Town House is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its long association as the seat of governance and civic affairs in Montville. It also achieves significance under Criterion D as a building which contains of information about reverse plans, and has the potential to inform our understanding the role of this plan had in religious architecture and nineteenth century theology. By virtue of the building's use as a place for religious services during its period of significance, Criteria Consideration A also applies.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Politics and Government

The Town of Montville is located in western Waldo County, north of Route 3, in central coastal Maine. In the eighteenth century the land was in the possession of the "Twenty Associates' Proprietary." Settlers first started to arrive in 1778-9, and deeds were issued by Joseph Pierce, of Boston, one of the proprietors. By 1800 there were approximately 50 families scattered over eight settlements. Initially known as Davistown Plantation (1802), the town of Montville was incorporated by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1807. Twenty years later the south half of the town seceded and incorporated as the town of Liberty. As recorded in the extant, two volume *Town Records* for Montville, official, plantation or town business, including public meetings, were initially conducted in private homes; state and Federal voting was conducted in homes or in the district schools. Perhaps not coincidentally, the same year that the town of Montville lost half it's population and land mass, the question "See if the Town will Provide a place to hold Town meetings" was posed at March town meeting, held at the school house in District #9. This question was voted in the affirmative, and a committee was formed "to Draft a plan, and Locate a Spot for a Town House & report their doings thereon at the annual Meeting in Sept next."² Although the September meeting came and went without the anticipated report, it was taken up at the October 29th meeting. No record of the committee's deliberations or recommendations has been found, but whatever they may have been, the body politic voted *not* to accept the report of the committee.

Although the town records are mute on what the committee thought should be done and why it was rejected, it is reasonable to suggest that the decisions had to do with the concurrent erection of a new, large, meetinghouse in Center Montville. Built by Humphrey Edgcomb in 1827, probably with or on behalf of the Second Free [Will] Baptist Church, the North Ridge Meeting House, as it was originally called, was the first church built for this congregation. It was clearly built as a church; there are several deeds from Edgcomb to local residents for pews, but other details about its origins are lost – for example, it is not known who owned the land before or after the Meeting House was constructed. Regardless, the warrant for the next town meeting, to be held on March 31, 1828, ordered the qualified inhabitants of the town to assemble at the Meeting House in the North Ridge. From this point on, the North Ridge Meeting House (later also called the Center Meeting House) appears to have been the only location for public meetings, polling, and town business.

The term 'Meetinghouse' as used in New England is often associated with two related concepts. The first is that of a square, or nearly square, two story post and beam building erected from settlement through the early 19th century. The second concept is rooted in the colonial and early post colonial link between church and towns. In 18th century Massachusetts (and the Province of Maine) part of the terms for establishing a township included the construction of a meeting house and settling an Orthodox (or Protestant) minister. These meeting houses were to be utilized both for

² Montville Town Records, March 19, 1827. Book 2, pages 136 and 137.

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religious services and for town business.³ This requirement may not have been strictly enforced in the early 19th century in Maine (the establishment of any official church met with some significant resistance in parts of the Province of Maine) and it was not included in the Constitution of the state, adopted in 1820.⁴ While there only needed to be one meetinghouse in a town, there could be additional churches, and by the late 18th century these were not necessarily constructed on the square plan.

Indeed, in the early 19th century two trends were happening at once: an architectural and spatial change to a 'church plan' (characterized by pews perpendicular to the long side walls and a pulpit on the short or gable end wall) and a distancing of the concepts of 'meeting house' and 'church'. Both had their roots in the cultural and social upheaval of the American Revolution, the Great Awakening and the democratization of the new country. As summarized by Peter Benes & Phillip D. Zimmerman, in New England Meeting House and Church: 1630-1850:

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw the final architectural conversion of the Puritan meeting house into a church. This conversion took place without the abandonment of the dual civic and ecclesiastical role of the structures. The legal separation of church and state and the consequent disestablishment of Congregational and Presbyterian denominations was not to take place until 1807 in Vermont, 1817 in Connecticut, 1819 in New Hampshire, and 1832 in Massachusetts. The result was that for several decades and more, religious architectural forms continued to serve joint ecclesiastical and civic functions. These structures had every appearance of "churches" but were legally, and in fact, municipal meeting houses. (Page 29.)

Historian William Shipman, in Maine Forms of American Architecture also addresses the evolution of the dual function of these buildings:

As in colonial times, the meetinghouse was a focal point for the community. It was customary, at least in the 1790's for public business as well as religious services to take place in the local meetinghouse. Even so, these years can be said to mark an increasing differentiation of function in the larger communities of Maine, and it is not unusual for the single "public" place to be superseded by multiple structures, each with its own specific purpose, by the 1820's. (Page 87.)

What is clear, is that in Maine in the first half of the 19th century, the term "meeting house" was at times retained for purely religious buildings, while other towns continued to utilize a "meeting house" for both religious and civic purposes. Such was the situation in Montville.⁵ However, the details of the relationship between the Second Free Baptist Congregation of Montville and the town of Montville are unclear, but suggest that the town found the solution to their need for a Town House in a functionally religious building already under construction.

Between 1828 and the early 20th century the function and ownership of the building is also unclear. According to George Varney's Gazetteer of the State of Maine, in 1881 there were four Free Will Baptist Churches in Montville. One was located in North Montville (Halldale), one in Center Montville/North Ridge, one in South Montville, and the last "at the four corners near Robert Choat's".⁶ However, with regard to North Ridge, there is also a reference to a "reorganization in 1852 that is the last church there".⁷ On the 1859 wall map of Waldo County the building is designated as the "Union Church". Until about 1880 the Maine Register recorded the name of all the ministers in Montville, but it did specify which

³ Williamson, p. 180.

⁴ The Maine Constitution states: "all persons demeaning themselves peaceably as good members of the State shall be equally under the protection of the laws, and no subordination nor preference of any one sect or denomination to another shall every be established by law, nor shall any religious test be required as a qualification for any office or trust, under this State" Maine Constitution 1819, Article 1 Section 3. Official disestablishment did not occur in Massachusetts until 1832.

⁵ Among the Meeting Houses that were built only for religious purposes are the Union Meeting House, Westport, 1794; Pond Meeting House, China, 1807; Lincolnville Center Meeting House, Lincolnville, 1820; Abyssinian Meeting House, Portland, 1827; Readfield Union Meeting House, 1828; Proprietors Meeting House, Buxton, 1839; Universalist Meeting House, New Gloucester, 1839; and the Troy Meeting House, Troy, 1840.

⁶ The location of this brick meeting house is not known; this description of its location is found in a deed from Nathaniel Cushman to William Jackson for a pew, recorded on page 409, of the second book of Montville town records.

⁷ Letter to Geneva Varney, undated, unsigned. Transcribed from the Ruth Littlefield papers, and included in the Allen Goodwin Papers, University of Maine Special Collections, Orono, ME.

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of the four Free Will Baptist churches each minister served. This changed in 1880 and the name of the minister was provided for each church. However, in 1880 the Montville Center F.W. Baptist church was listed as "vacant" and this description continued until 1895, the last year in which a Free Will Baptist Church is identified in Center Montville. After this, the Register ceases to list a church in Center Montville. Three years later, the town reports indicate that the town received twelve dollars rent for the use of the Meetinghouse – suggesting that by this time, if not earlier, the town had control of the building, although no deed has been found.

Beginning in 1909 the Annual Reports of the Town of Montville record a substantial renovation, which essentially transformed the North Ridge Meeting House to a building better suited to town business. In that year new clapboards were installed and the twelve-over-twelve windows seen on 19th century postcards were replaced with two-over-two sash. The safe was purchased that year, and based on the record of materials and labor, and the fact that the safe is located in the wall of the selectmen's office it appears that the office was constructed at this time. In 1910 the tin ceiling was installed. Considering that new windows and a new ceiling were installed, it is likely that the plasterboard was also placed on the walls at this time. Unfortunately, there is no record of when the box pews were replaced with benches (which in turn were replaced with theater seats in the 1950s), but it is possible that this happened in conjunction with these renovations. Yet interestingly, the 1909 Annual Report also itemizes money 'received of the North Ridge Meeting House' for doors and windows – in effect suggesting that there was still an entity other than the town that had a proprietary interest in the building. By 1924 the term 'town house' had replaced all references to the 'meeting house.'

Although used during the 20th century primarily as the location for town meetings, selectmen's meetings and polling, the large meeting space also has a history of being used for special occasions and gatherings. In small rural towns such as Montville, it is not uncommon for a building like the Montville Town House to be a focal point for community events and activities. Although a new municipal building was constructed just south of the Town House in recent years, the historic building continues to be used as the town's polling place and as the venue for town meetings.

Criterion D: Information Potential, Religion.

As mentioned above, throughout Maine, communities established in the 18th and early 19th century often constructed meetinghouses as combination religious and secular centers. But starting in the late 18th century a new form of religious building, built on what is referred to as a 'church plan' started to evolve from the meeting house form. The church plan had its focus on a pulpit or altar located on the short or gable end wall, while the meetinghouse was a square-ish building. The distinction is described by Denys Peter Myers in the *Maine Catalog*:

Meetinghouses differed from churches in form. They were rectangular, almost square structures with two tiers of windows, gabled roofs, and no towers, although projecting stair pavilions broke the strictly rectangular form in some cases. The exteriors were rather more domestic than public in appearance. The scale was modest, the largest of the extant Maine examples, Alna Meetinghouse, measuring only 50' 8" by 40' 7". The principal difference was that the pulpit was centered against the rear wall opposite the entrance on the shorter axis of the rectangle instead of facing the long axis of a nave-like hall... Pews were of the square box type with nearly half the seats facing away from the pulpit. The meetinghouses were used for public affairs as well as for services of worship." Page 11. *Maine Catalog*.

As referenced above, after the American Revolution it became more common for meeting houses to be built on a church plan (although the traditional meeting house plan was used for the Porter Meeting House in Cumberland County in 1824). The evolution of the church, as distinct from a meeting house reflected theological shifts, democratic philosophies, and the introduction of new architectural styles in urban centers throughout New England. This complicated topic has been the subject of numerous scholarly studies and will not be further examined here.⁸ However, what is pertinent is that the evolution from one form to another was not a linear progression. As religious practitioners in New England and Maine began to question aspects of Calvinist doctrine and embrace the more populist Methodist, Baptist and Free Will Baptist messages of the Great Awakening, the relationship of the congregants to the minister, and to each other also changed.

One of the plans that emerged during this shift was that of the reverse plan. Dr. Philip D. Zimmerman concisely describes this plan in chapter five of his dissertation "Ecclesiastical Architecture in the Reformed Tradition in Rockingham County, New Hampshire, 1790-1860," as follows:

⁸ See Zimmerman, 1985, and Sweeney, 1993; both are referenced in the bibliography.

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The plan, in short, reversed the position of the pulpit. Instead of being located against the far or rear wall, it was centered on the auditorium wall closest to the entrance or front. As in the earlier Reformed meeting houses built on a church plan, entrance to the auditorium was through a vestibule. Location of the pulpit limited access to the auditorium to two doors, one at each side. The central longitudinal axis effectively blocked by the pulpit, the central aisle disappeared in favor of two aisles each feeding wall pews from one side and center-section pews from another. (Chapter 5, pages 3-4.)

Additionally, some reverse plan churches also had a third, transverse aisle near the rear of the auditorium, which created a distinct block of pews stretching from side to side against the back wall.⁹ Congregants entering the building proceeded down an aisle with their back to the pulpit and facing the seated parishioners. Only upon settling in a pew did they view the pulpit or platform. As reported by Zimmerman, this plan emerged in Connecticut and in New Hampshire in the 1820s, but no thorough study of the form has been completed in Massachusetts and Vermont.

Twelve reverse plan churches have been identified in Maine.¹⁰ The earliest, the 1820/21 Lincolnville Center Meeting House is a hybrid form – a square-ish building with galleries, two aisles and the pulpit located between the entry doors. In the Buxton Upper Corner Church and the United Baptist Church in Eastport, both also constructed in 1820-21, the rectangular footprint prevailed. The example from Morrill is no longer extant, and many of the reverse plan churches have reoriented their pews and pulpit (South Montville, date unknown, Farmington Falls, date unknown; Weeks Mills, China, by 1842; South Cushing, 1854). Of the remaining examples only the Hall Dale Church in Montville and the East Harpswell Meeting House in Harpswell are known to retain their original pews and orientation.

There have been several, non-theological suggestions as to why reverse plan churches were constructed – “so people couldn’t sneak in late” has been a popular theory – and as well as attempts to find a denominational or theological construct for the unusual plan. It is interesting to note that of the four Free Will Baptist Meeting Houses erected in Montville, three were built on the reverse plan (the fourth may have, but as both church records and the building have not been located this cannot be proven). This begs the question of whether the plan was associated only with the Free Will Baptists. In Maine, many of the reverse plan churches were erected by members of this denomination, but Zimmerman’s study reported use of this form by Congregationalists and Methodists in New Hampshire. While Zimmerman suggests that like seventeenth and eighteenth century meetinghouses, the reverse plan church was a way of “demystifying” sacred buildings – creating distance from Anglican forms of ritual space even as the overall plan of the church was looking to medieval European precedents – he summarizes this interpretation as “speculative at best”.¹¹

The Montville Town House was built as a reverse plan church: this is documented by the pew deeds and confirmed by scars of the pews and platform on the floor, and the now-covered patch in the south wall of the auditorium. It is possible that the building may yield other evidence under the plasterboard on the walls of the layout of the pews. Research comparing the design and construction of the three reverse plan churches in Montville could reveal whether the buildings were built along similar lines, or whether they diverged with regard to the implementation and details of the form. Overall, this resource type is scarce in Maine, but the presence of three extant reverse plan churches in one small rural community has the potential to greatly expand the understanding of how this design expressed or reflected theological, cultural or community values in antebellum Maine.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Benes, Peter and Philip D. Zimmerman. New England Meeting House and Church: 1630 – 1850. (Boston: Boston University and The Currier Gallery of Art), 1979.

⁹ This is the plan extant at the Halldale Church in North Montville.

¹⁰ A thirteenth church in Chesterville, Maine has been tentatively identified.

¹¹ Zimmerman, p. 40 of Chapter Five.

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Varney, George. J. A Gazetteer of the State of Maine. (Boston: B.B. Russell), 1882.

Williamson, William D. The History of the State of Maine Volume I. (Hallowell, ME: Glazier, Masters & Co.) 1832.

Zimmerman, Philip D. "Ecclesiastical Architecture in the Reformed Tradition in Rockingham County, New Hampshire, 1790-1860." (Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1985). Chapter five on file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Montville Historical Society, Montville, Me.

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>19</u>	<u>480365</u>	<u>4921223</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSEWALDO COUNTY, MAINE

Name of Property

County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the subject property is designated by the Town of Montville as tax map 25, lot 24. The property is bound on the north by Harriman Road, on the east by Center Road, and on the west and south by an elliptically shaped dirt driveway that arches from Harriman Road to Center Road and encloses the Town House property.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The precise boundaries of the property in 1827 are not known. However, late 19th century postcards show the wood frame house to the west, on Harriman Road (then a store), and a late 18th century center-chimney cape with long rear barns immediately south of the Town house on Center Road. These photographs also show the dirt driveway, thus establishing a natural dividing point between the property immediately surrounding the town house and the neighboring structures.

11. Form Prepared Byname/title Christi A. Mitchell, Architectural Historianorganization Maine Historic Preservation Commissiondate 20 January 2012street & number 55 Capitol Streettelephone (207) 287-2132 x 2city or town Augustastate Mainezip code 04333-0065e-mail Christi.mitchell@maine.gov**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE**WALDO COUNTY, MAINE**

Name of Property

County and State

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Montville Town House
City or Vicinity: Montville
County: Waldo **State:** Maine
Photographer: Christi A. Mitchell
Date Photographed: 29 November 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 7. **ME_WALDO COUNTY_MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE_0001.TIF**
South façade and east elevation from street; facing northwest.
- 2 of 7. **ME_WALDO COUNTY_MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE_0002.TIF**
North and west elevations, facing south southeast.
- 3 of 7. **ME_WALDO COUNTY_MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE_0003.TIF**
Reconstructed front entry with two doors; facing north.
- 4 of 7. **ME_WALDO COUNTY_MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE_0004.TIF**
Interior assembly room and polling area. Selectmen's office at far left. Facing north northwest.
- 5 of 7. **ME_WALDO COUNTY_MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE_0005.TIF**
Interior, original floor, c. 1827. Dutchmen show double line of pew ends on either side of aisle. Facing south.
- 6 of 7. **ME_WALDO COUNTY_MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE_0006.TIF**
Interior, assembly hall; facing south.
- 7 of 7. **ME_WALDO COUNTY_MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE_0007.TIF**
Interior, selectmen's' office; facing northwest. Cupboards reconstructed from pew doors and shadow on unpainted wainscot shows location of former box pew.

Property Owner:

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

name _____
 street & number _____ telephone _____
 city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Montville Town House
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MAINE, Waldo

DATE RECEIVED: 3/09/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/02/12
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/17/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/25/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000227

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 4.24.12 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places**

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE ; WALDO CO., ME



MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE; WALDO CO., ME



MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE; WALDO CO., ME



MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE ; WALDO CO., ME



MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE; WALDO CO., ME



MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE; WALDO CO., ME

Goff



MONTVILLE TOWN HOUSE; WALDO CO., ME



Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field check 1961.

Polygonic projection. 1927 North American datum

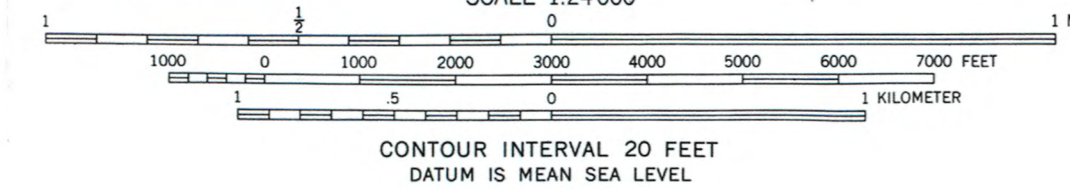
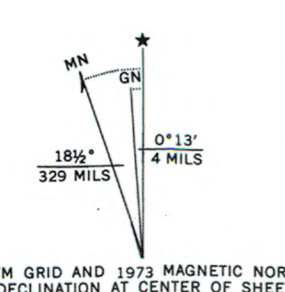
10,000-foot grid based on Maine coordinate system, east zone

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 19, shown in blue.

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs.

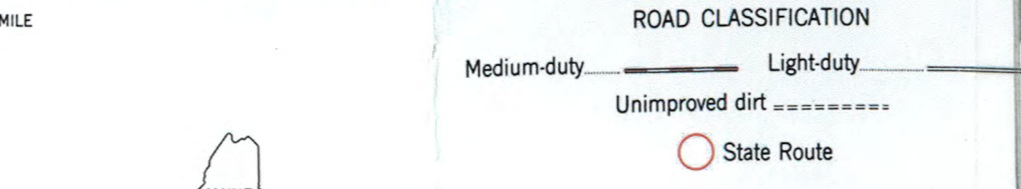
This information is uncheckd

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1973. This information not field checked



SCALE 1:24,000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Medium-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Unimproved dirt - - - - -
State Route

LIBERTY, MAINE

N4422.5—W6915.7/5

PHOTOINSPECTED 1979

1961

PHOTOREVISED 1973

AMS 7172 IV NE—SERIES V81

Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field check 1960.

Polygonic projection. 1927 North American datum

10,000-foot grid based on Maine coordinate system, east zone

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 19, shown in blue.

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is uncheckd

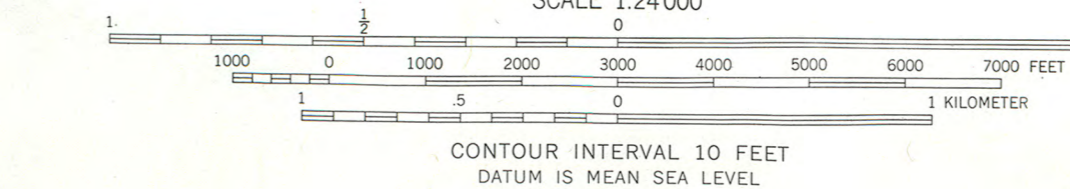
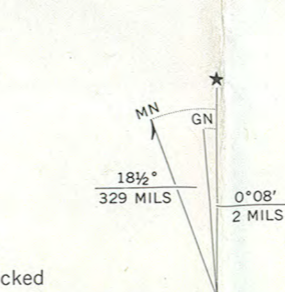
Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1973. This information not field checked

Map photoinspected 1979

1961

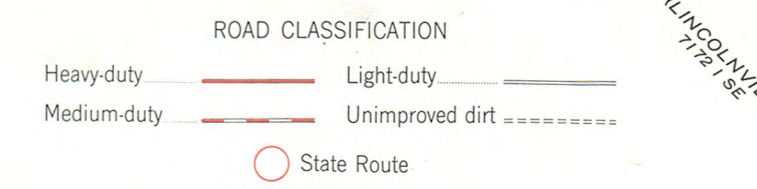
PHOTOREVISED 1973

AMS 7172 IV NE—SERIES V81



SCALE 1:24,000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 30 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - -
State Route

MORRILL, MAINE

N4422.5—W6975.7/5

PHOTOINSPECTED 1979

1960

PHOTOREVISED 1973

AMS 7172 IV NW—SERIES V81



PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
55 CAPITOL STREET
65 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333



EARLE G. SHETTLEWORTH, JR.
DIRECTOR

5 March 2012

Keeper of the National Register
National Park Service 2280
National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW,
Washington D.C. 20005

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed please find four (4) new National Register nominations for properties located in the State of Maine:

Frank C. Frisbee Elementary School, School, York County
Waterboro Grange #432, York County
Mill at Freedom Falls, Waldo County
Montville Town House, Waldo County

If you have any questions relating to these nomination, please do not hesitate to contact me at (207) 787-2132 x 2.

Sincerely,

Christi A. Mitchell
Architectural Historian

Enc.