

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



1983

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

1. Name

historic John N. M. Brewer House

and/or common "Our School" and "The Four Elms"

2. Location

street & number US Route 1 N/A not for publication

city, town Robbinston vicinity of congressional district

state Maine code 23 county Washington code 029

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> park |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. & Mrs. Harold Smith

street & number P. O. Box 969

city, town Bethel Island, vicinity of _____ state California 94511

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washington County Registry of Deeds

street & number _____

city, town Machias, state Maine

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Sunrise County Architecture has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Sunrise Research Institute

city, town Machiasport, state Maine

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 Brewer House is a wood-frame, amphiprostyle, Greek Revival temple house of the Ionic order. Both colonnades have four columns, and five ionic pilasters separate the four window bays on the east side, facing the ocean. The gable ends are two bays deep, with the main hallway running along the west wall, and the doors placed accordingly. The door surrounds consist of Ionic pilasters with heavy entablatures. The broad (east) wall is clapboarded, but that of the gable ends and pediment is flush-boarded, and a triangular diamond-paned window (a common period feature in Washington County) occupies the pediment. Two chimnies stand at the roof ridge.

A two-story, pitched-roofed ell abuts the west wall of the house, its north wall on a plane with the north colonnade. The entablature of ^{the} colonnade continues uninterrupted onto the north wall of the ell. A one-and-one-half story pitched-roofed ell extends west from the gable end of the main ell.

All windows on the first story of the main section are French, with 9/9 sash and the original storms. Each is surrounded by a Grecian border. The second-story windows are 6/6.

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 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/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------------|---------|
| Specific dates | 1828-1830 | Builder/Architect | Unknown |
|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------------|---------|

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John N. M. Brewer House in Robbinston derives particular significance from the fact that it is, in addition to being a particularly refined piece of architecture, the only example of amphiprostyle Greek Revival temple house in eastern or northern Maine; that is to say east of the Penobscot River and north of Bangor. In addition it reflects the prosperity which shipping and shipbuilding brought to the area in the early years of the 19th century.

John Nehemiah Marks Brewer was the son of General John Brewer, a shipbuilder and commander of the Washington County Militia during the War of 1812, who built the "Mansion House" nearby (N. R. 5/22/73). The younger Brewer, at first serving as a Captain on his father's vessels, became a highly successful shipbuilder himself and operated yards both in Robbinston and St. Andrews across the river in Canada.

Not long after his death in 1857 the property came into use as a local school and served in this capacity for many years. In the early 20th century it returned to private ownership and in recent years has been neglected to some degree. New owners have strongly indicated that they plan to restore this handsome structure for use as a summer residence.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Fernald, Anne, Sunrise County Architecture. Machiasport: Sunrise Research Institute, 1979.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1/2

Quadrangle name Robbinston

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Assessor's Map 7, Lot 21

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

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Frank A. Beard, Historian/Gregory K. Clancey, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date July, 1983

street & number 55 Capitol Street telephone 207/289-2132

city or town Augusta, state Maine 04333

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Eva S. Patterson*

title S.H.P.O. date 9/6/83

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date 10/6/83

Melores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration