

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New Jersey	
COUNTY: Essex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
The Old First Presbyterian Church

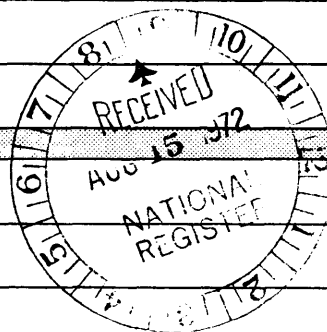
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
820 Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Newark

STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34** COUNTY: **Essex** CODE: **013**



3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Old First Presbyterian Church

STREET AND NUMBER:
820 Broad Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Newark** STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Essex County Hall of Records

STREET AND NUMBER:
High Street

CITY OR TOWN: **Newark** STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **D.C.** CODE: **11**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: New Jersey	FOR NPS USE ONLY
COUNTY: Essex	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1045-13-10

1418



Description		(Check One)				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed	
(Check One)			(Check One)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site			

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

An excellent example of a Georgian-Colonial, center-steepled church, of London city scale, but intact as built in New Jersey in 1787-91, in local - regional adaptation utilizing local brownstone and great austerity of exterior. It is fully intact from the original exterior drawings.

According to the Pastor, Reverend Dr. Alexander Mcwhorter, in 1801- "Its dimensions are 100 feet in length, including the steeple, which projects 8 feet, its width is 68 feet, and the height of the steeple is 204 feet." (various extensions to the side and the side-rear)

The wooden steeple itself which represents about half the total tower-steeple height, has two tall octagonal stages, the upper smaller in circumference than the lower, below the shingle-roofed spire proper. Both of these stages have, uniformly, 8 round-arched windows with louvers, of which the lower stage is slightly more open and is presumably the bell chamber. The next level below the uppermost of four tall stages of brownstone tower-has a large four sided clock, the stage below it-a circular wood wheeled traceried window, then a pediment below that.

The next level down-the second story- has a large round-headed window, with interwoven upper wood tracery forming delicate de-emphasized pointed pan shapes---(the two second story windows in the main facade flanking the tower being identical.) A tablet is set under the second story window directly above the round-headed main entrance of the first tower stage-at ground level.

The double doors themselves are rectangular and painted white. The flank-side entrances in the main facade are similar to the main entrance. Additional tablets and plaques are on the facade's first level.

Under the gambel roof on each side of the facade are beautiful wood-traceried oval-shaped windows, axis-oriented on a slant midway between horizontal (i.e. the nearby horizontal cornice atop the second story below) and the angle of slant of the uncorniced roof, above (weatherplated only, on the front wall). The flatter portion of the gambrel roof, on the front facade, is entirely hidden by the stone portion of the tower, but is visable easily from the rear. A major highlighting or outlining feature of all substantial components of the exterior is the employing of a more reddish, cut sandstone as trim around the entrances, windows, etc., and as corner quoins for the churchand tower.

The interior, while undergoing many refinements, is large-exceptional for its day-and richly treated with classical decor worthy of the finest Renaissance Londen city churches. The original "Venetian"(or "Palladian") window behind the pulpit has been eliminated in 1872 by a slight eastward chancel extension but the "Venetian-Palladian" effect has been echoed boldly by making the large center panal a rounded semi-domed apse, the side panals also being recesses. Side galleries are supported on flutes-columns set on square bases three to four feet above the floor. A richly deep coffered ceiling-classical and in multiple colors-is a highly ornate element. The gallery under-cornices and balustrades are also highly classical in decor. (cont.)

S E E I N S T R U C T I O N S

8 Significance

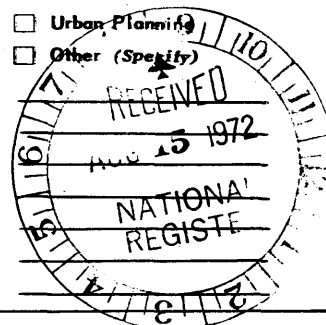
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian | 16th Century | 18th Century | 20th Century
 15th Century | 17th Century | 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sculpture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Music | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old First Presbyterian Church is one of the most elect of historic churches in the United States. The congregation pre-dates the city of Newark itself. One of the early ministers of the Old First was Aaron Burr Sr. He held classes in the Newark Manse which were subsequently transferred to Princeton College.

The congregation was originally a portion of the Branford, Connecticut Colony of Puritans. Because of divergent beliefs many people left for Newark under the leadership of Major Robert Treat in 1666. Hence the church pre-dates the city of Newark.

During the time between the establishment of the congregation in Newark and the actual building of the Old First Presbyterian Church many famous personages belonged to the Church. Among these are included Aaron Burr Sr. (as mentioned above), Abraham Pierson Jr. and the first mayor of Newark, William Halsey.

The Old First Presbyterian Church was built under Dr. McWhorter who was pastor for 48 years from 1759 to 1807. There remains a drawing of the architect's original plans for the church but the name of the architect is still unsure. Several sources attribute the church to Eleazer Ball but it is not known whether he made the drawings or just supervised the construction. The name of Stephen Denfer is also mentioned but no real evidence can be found to document his name.

The construction of the church began in September, 1787 and the first services were held there on January 1, 1791. It has been said of the church that it is an "...excellent example of Georgian Colonial architecture. The freestone was quaried on Bloomfield Ave. and the mortar was made from piles of clam shells left by the Indians along the banks of Newark Bay. The gambrel roof behind the slender tower is a typical New Jersey touch."

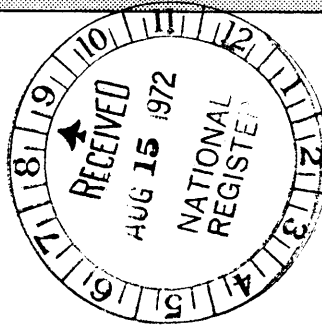
Over the years there have been several minor changes to the interior such as the re-arranging of pews, the elimination of windows and a new roof. The maintenance and upkeep has been done with complete regard to architectural preservation.

For many years the Old First has been the mother church to many newly organized Presbyterian churches. Its own congregation has dwindled. For decades the Old First was noted for its fine German singing societies.(cont.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Historic American Buildings Survey
 New York Magazine, September, 1992
 W.P.A. Federal Writers Guide, New Jersey



10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		40° 44' 02"	74° 10' 21"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Licensed "professional planner" and Architectural Historian**
Donald W. Geyer

ORGANIZATION: _____ DATE: **October, 1971**

STREET AND NUMBER: **351 Broad Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Newark** STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: *Richard J. Sullivan*
Richard J. Sullivan

Title: Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

Date: August 2, 1972

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Robert M. Utsey
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 11/2/72

ATTEST: *William H. ...*
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 10-3-72

SEE INSTRUCTIONS