

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Vermont
COUNTY:	Chittenden
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	JUN 20 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Round Church

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Junction of Bridge Street and Cochran Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Richmond

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
Vt. District

STATE: Vermont CODE: 50 COUNTY: Chittenden CODE: 007

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Town of Richmond

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Depot Street (no street number)

CITY OR TOWN:  
Richmond

STATE: Vermont CODE: 50

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Town Clerk's Office

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Depot Street (no street number)

CITY OR TOWN:  
Richmond

STATE: Vermont CODE: 50

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Vermont Historic Sites & Structures Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1971  Federal  State  County  Local

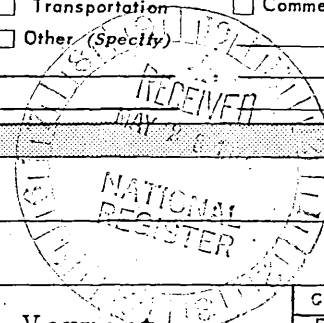
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Vermont Division of Historic Sites

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Pavilion Building

CITY OR TOWN:  
Montpelier

STATE: Vermont CODE: 50

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: Vermont

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\* Open to the public during specified hours.

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" 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		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Round Church is situated on a small common at the southern extremity of Richmond village.

The building is approximately 50 feet in diameter, two stories high, and is polygonal in plan with 16 equal sides. The foundation projects approximately three feet above grade and is constructed of uncoursed stone slabs with mortared joints. The structural system is composed of 16 timber corner posts and 6 two tier, round timber interior columns supporting 16 double rafter roof trusses which converge at the structure's center to support the cupola. Structural members are mortised, tenoned and pegged.

On the exterior the sides of the building are sheathed with clapboards. Two narrow vertical corner boards separate each side. The main entrance is located on the westernmost side towards the road. It consists of wood raised panel double doors framed by tapered pilasters surmounted by an unadorned entablature. Single raised panel side doors with similar frames are located at the north and south quadrants of the building. These doors are each separated from the main entrance by 3 sides.

Fenestration consists of identical, simply framed, rectangular windows with 12 over 12 sash which are in vertical and horizontal alignment; one window above each door and two windows to each remaining side.

The building is capped by a 16 sided pitched roof, sheathed with wood shingles, which approaches a shallow cone in form.

A two tier cupola which is octagonal in plan is situated at the roof apex. The first tier is sheathed in clapboard. A small window with louvered shutters is located in each of the three alternating sides facing west. The second tier consists of an open belfry encircled by an arcade of wood columns surmounted by a sheet metal octagonal dome capped by a weather vane.

A small vestibule, with stairs climbing to the balcony at either side, proceeds into the round meeting room which occupies the remainder of the structure. This large, well lit space has two central blocks of box pews each with paneled double doors supported by iron "H" hinges. Four banks of box pews are located along the perimeter of the room. The horseshoe shaped balcony extends from the north around to the south quadrant of the structure leaving the east or pulpit quadrant unobstructed. It is divided in two sections of wood plank benches and box pews. The outside of the balcony rail is painted to simulate wood grain.

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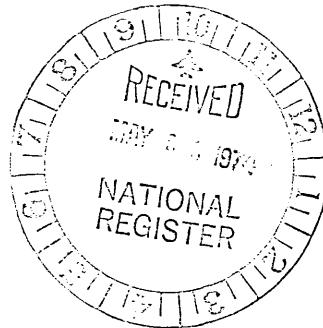
Section 7

(Continuation Sheet)

(Number all entries)

The raised pulpit, also wood grained, which serves as a focus for the room, is reached by a narrow wooden stair. The wall surface of the room is plastered. The structure is heated by two cast and sheet iron wood burning stoves.

The structure appears to be significantly unaltered with the following known exceptions. The bell was added in 1851. Roof truss reinforcements, consisting of laminated reinforcing beams and iron tie rods, were probably added in the early 20th century. Some front pews were removed in the 20th century so that portable voting booths could be used at town meetings. The present weather vane, an exact replica of the original, was installed in 1947. The structure was re-roofed with wood shingles in 1973.



**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1812-13

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input 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 type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE SIGNIFICANCE

The Round Church is most famous as an architectural curiosity due to its 16 sided shape, however, a variety of other factors contribute significantly to making the building a major historic resource.

The Round Church was constructed in 1812-13 as a combined meeting house for town affairs and for use as a house of worship by five religious denominations making it an early example of a community church. The structure accurately interprets the architectural values of public and religious architecture of the region during the first decades of the 19th century due to its almost completely unaltered condition. The building's timber framing and truss work is an excellent document of the vernacular adaptation of braced post and beam timber framing technology to a novel architectural form.

HISTORY

As early as December 6, 1796 residents voted to have a committee of five "look in the different places in the Town and report to the town the most convenient (sic) place to set a meeting house." For 16 years, many other committees were elected for the same purpose but either disagreed among themselves or found their proposed site unacceptable to the voters.

Finally Thomas Whitcomb, a tavern keeper, and his neighbor Isaac Gleason who kept a store, decided to settle matters by giving land for the meeting house. Minutes of a February 7, 1812 meeting show that they pledged themselves "to furnish 60 rods each, clear of expense, to be laid out between Isaac Gleanson's House and Seth Coles on each side of the Road." William Rhoads, Esq. (usually spelled Rhodes), Isaac Gleason and James Butler were elected to draw up plans and advertise pews for sale, with no preference being given to anyone because of his religious tenets or creed, but to be equally free for every denomination professing Christianity. It also was decided that "each of the denominations who become builders and proprietors should peaceably enjoy their share of said house."

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Carlisle, Lillian Baker, editor, Look Around Richmond, Bolton and Huntington, Vermont, Burlington, Vermont: Chittenden County Historical Society, 1974, pp. 10-11. (Text on Round Church prepared by Harriet W. Riggs.)

Excerpts from Town records prepared by Harriet W. Riggs, available at the Vermont Division of Historic Sites.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

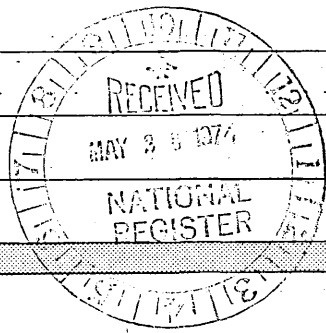
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES							
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE	
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	0	'	"	0	'	"	44	23	57	72	59	58
NE	0	'	"	0	'	"						
SE	0	'	"	0	'	"						
SW	0	'	"	0	'	"						

UTM  
18/659320  
4917920  
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than ten acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Chester H. Liebs, Supervisor

ORGANIZATION: Vermont Division of Historic Sites DATE: 5/22/74

STREET AND NUMBER: Pavilion Building

CITY OR TOWN: Montpelier STATE: Vermont CODE: 50

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

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: William B. Prineas  
 Title: Director of Historic Sites  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
 Date: 5/23/74

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

Ernest A. Connally  
~~Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation~~  
 Associate Director  
 Professional Services

Date: JUN 20 1974

ATTEST:  
Charles A. Herring  
 Acting Keeper of The National Register  
 Date: 6/17/74

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Section 8

(Number all entries)

The gift of land ended the controversy and brought the town together in the community project. William Rhodes, blacksmith and holder of many town offices, served as head carpenter for 300 days without pay. His hand-written worksheet records that the frame was "raised, boarded and shingled before Nov. 12th, 1812." He lists names of 17 other men who worked 622½ days on the project. Total cost of the church amounted to \$2,305.42, which included 18,000 shingles purchased for \$36. Money to pay for the building was raised in advance by the sale or "public vendu" of the pews by five denominations. Five Baptists, 21 Universalists, one Methodist, five Christian and 29 Congregationalists (who became proprietors of the Richmond Meeting House, as it sometimes was called) subscribed \$3,079.82.

In 1880 the Round Church reverted to the town. It has continued in use for town meetings to the present.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Lillian Baker Carlisle, editor, Look Around Richmond, Bolton and Huntington, Vermont, Burlington, Vermont: Chittenden County Historical Society, 1974, pp. 10-11. (Text on Round Church prepared by Harriet W. Riggs.)