

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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APR 20 1982

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Mays Landing Presbyterian Church

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street and Cape May Avenue

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Mays Landing
Hamilton Township

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd

N/A VICINITY OF

STATE

New Jersey

CODE

34

COUNTY

Atlantic

CODE

001

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

___DISTRICT

___PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

___AGRICULTURE

___MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

___UNOCCUPIED

___COMMERCIAL

___PARK

___STRUCTURE

___BOTH

___WORK IN PROGRESS

___EDUCATIONAL

___PRIVATE RESIDENCE

___SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

___ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

___OBJECT

___IN PROCESS

___YES: RESTRICTED

___GOVERNMENT

___SCIENTIFIC

___BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

___INDUSTRIAL

___TRANSPORTATION

N/A

___NO

___MILITARY

___OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church, Mays Landing, New Jersey

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street and Cape May Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Mays Landing

STATE

New Jersey

N/A VICINITY OF

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Mays Landing

STATE

New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

HABS - Survey # N.J. 516

has this property been determined
eligible? _____ yes _____ no

DATE

1938

FEDERAL ___STATE ___COUNTY ___LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

DC

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built in 1841, Mays Landing Presbyterian Church is a vernacular neoclassical structure approximately 30 feet wide, 25 feet high, and 42 feet long set upon a full ground floor. It is fronted by a Roman Doric portico. The four wooden portico columns rest on a brick podium surmounted by a wooden balustrade behind which rise two transverse flights of steps leading to the central entrance. The windows are double hung sash, 8 over 8 on the ground floor, and 16 over 16 in the Sanctuary. The front facade is Flemish bond brick while the other walls are common bond. The podium is stretcher bond.

The interior is carried out in the fully developed Greek Revival manner. The details include a fine plaster ceiling decorated with classical mouldings and cornices, box pews, inside window shutters and a simulated wood grain door. The floors are made of native pine and are in excellent condition. The lighting fixtures are modern.

The original building was constructed over a period of three years on a site donated by Samuel Richards valued at one hundred dollars. The brick was carried by ship from New York by Captain Thomas Endicott. The cast-iron supports in the ground floor bear the characteristic "W" marking of the Weymouth Iron Furnace, which dates to the Revolutionary War era and was operated by the Richards Family.²

The decision to proceed with building the church was made at a congregational Meeting March 11, 1841, at which it was reported that forty-four people had subscribed \$1,087 in response to a letter of February 28.³ The cornerstone was laid April, 1841. On the completion of the ground floor, worship services were held there and a private school was conducted. The "Upper Room" was finished and the church was dedicated December 4, 1844.⁴

The Church remained virtually unaltered until 1964, when an addition to the original structure was built. One ground floor rear window was removed in order to connect that part of the building to the heater room contained in the addition, and a portion of the back wall approximately three feet by 6 1/2 feet was removed to link the structure to the hallway of the new section. The addition has not affected the integrity of the original building. It is a one story brick structure, and it is joined to the old church by an enclosed breezeway.

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	1841	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	unknown
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Used continuously since its construction in 1841, the Mays Landing Presbyterian Church is a fine regional example of vernacular Neo-Classical architecture with a simple Greek Revival interior. Well preserved on the exterior and interior, the property is historically associated with Reverend Allen H. Brown, pastor from 1846-54 and 1862-72, and a prominent figure in the growth of Presbyterianism in Southern New Jersey in the last half of the 19th century.

The church sanctuary is the oldest in Mays Landing and ranks high among those with the longest continuous use in their original form in south Jersey. Few church structures still in existence in Atlantic County pre-date it. Those that do have either been significantly altered or have had long periods of neglect or disuse.⁷ Thirteen existing Presbyterian churches in the six Southern counties of New Jersey pre-date the Mays Landing church, but only two currently used sanctuaries were built before it - Cold Spring of Cape May County and Woodbury in Gloucester County.⁸ The former, built in 1823, is largely as it was at the time of construction, while the latter has been enlarged since its erection in 1834. Consequently, the Mays Landing Church stands only in the company of the Cold Spring sanctuary as structures with the longest continuous regular use by Presbyterians without substantive alteration.

The historical significance of the church centers around the Reverend Allen H. Brown, D.D., pastor from 1846 to 1854; and 1862 to 1872. Other significant people were also related to the early days of the church. Samuel Richards, who donated the church site shortly before his death, was the primary land owner and manufacturer of his time.⁹ The land for the church cemetery and Manse were given by his heirs which included his son-in-law, Stephen Colwell, the lawyer and industrialist who was a member of the United States Revenue Commission and a founder of the Union League in Philadelphia.¹⁰ Captain Thomas Endicott,¹¹ a descendant of Governor John Endicott of Massachusetts, was influential in the construction of the church, and his ten children included Charles G., a New York City ship-owner and merchant; Allen Brown (so named for the pastor), a county judge; and Mordecai, a rear admiral who was a Navy member of the Panama Canal Commission from 1905 to 1907, and served as president of the American Society of Civil Engineers in 1911.¹²

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bassett, William B., Historic American Buildings Survey of New Jersey; Catalog of the Measured Drawings, Photographs, and Written Documents in the Survey, Newark, The New Jersey Historical Society, 1977.

(See Continuation Sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/2

QUADRANGLE NAME Mays Landing UTM NOT VERIFIED QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1 8</u>	<u>5 2 3</u>	<u>4 2 0</u>	<u>4 3 6 6</u>	<u>8 1 0</u>	B					
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		
C						D					
E						F					
G						H					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Block 754, Lot 14 - Hamilton Township Tax Map

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
<u>N/A</u>			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

Revisions by T. Karschner, Office of Cultural and Environmental Services, 10/1980

NAME / TITLE

John T. Ash, III, Pastor; Mary J. McGeary, Elder

ORGANIZATION

Mays Landing Presbyterian Church

DATE

1/1980

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street and Cape May Avenue

TELEPHONE

(609) 625-2937; 625-2571

CITY OR TOWN

Mays Landing

STATE

New Jersey

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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.

Deputy

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Lamm Schmitt

4/21/81

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Robert A. Dangel
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

4/20/82

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

**United States Department of the Interior
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7. DESCRIPTION (Continued)

The deflecting of existing lintels over the basement was corrected in 1977 by replacing these flat iron bar lintels with right angle ones. All of the original bricks were carefully removed, cleaned, and replaced so that the deflections and bulges caused by the sagging lintels were corrected without having to use any new bricks. Necessary repointing was also done at that time, and after the external surface was cleaned it was waterproofed. This work was overseen by Louis H. Goettelmann, A.I.A., an expert in the restoration of older buildings.

The exact date of the erection of the wooden fence is unknown, but it appears in a woodcut reproduction in a report of 1886⁵, and a lecture printed in 1869⁶. The exterior shutters, the parapet, the railing, and the slender windows with the finely scaled muntins also appear in this woodcut.

The church is situated in the center of Mays Landing on Main Street, which was a part of the stagecoach route from Weymouth to the Great Egg Harbor River.

¹ Gilfillan, Rev. Joel S., Historical Discourse Delivered in The Presbyterian Church, Mays Landing, N.J., April 2, 1899 on the Occasion of its Fifty-eighth Anniversary, Philadelphia, Allen Lane Scott, 1899

² Pierce, Arthur D. Iron in the Pines, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1957, pp 37-41

The Presbyterian Church, Mays Landing, N.J., Session Record Book, 1841-1915, p. 1

³ Gilfillan, OP cit., p. 12

⁴ Centennial Committee, The Presbytery of West Jersey, One Hundreth Anniversary of the Presbytery of West Jersey, 1939, p. 57

⁵ Committee on Church Extension and Home Mission, 14th Annual Report to Synod of New Jersey, Oct. 20, 1886, cover

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7. DESCRIPTION (Continued)

⁶ Brown, Allen H., An Outline History of the Presbyterian Church in West or South Jersey from 1700 to 1865, Philadelphia, Alfred Martien, 1869, p. 51

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

The historical value of the church centers on Allen H. Brown. Brown was well connected and well traveled. His journals record his frequent spending of Christmas at the Richards mansion at Batsto, his preaching at the funeral of Jesse Richards in 1854, and his trips to the Philadelphia law firm of Colwell and Bell.¹³ He was historian for Presbyterianism in New Jersey, and his writings include the Character and Employments of The Early Settlers On the Sea Coast of New Jersey, A Pioneer in South Jersey, An Outline Of The History Of The Presbyterian Church In West Or South Jersey, and An Historical Sketch Of The Synod Of New Jersey. He was a Presbyterian missionary and served the Synod of New Jersey in many capacities. He was awarded a Doctor of Divinity degree by Princeton University in 1905. The inscription on the tablet unveiled in his memory June 15, 1911 sums up his work and spirit with these words:

"Born in New York 1820 - Died Monclair, N.J. 1907 Graduate of Columbia College 1839 - of Princeton Seminary 1843. Minister of this church 1846-1854, and from 1862-1872. Presbyterial Missionary 1854-1862. Synodical Missionary 1873-1887. In 1844 he came to Southern New Jersey and found here his life work - that of Evangelist educator, and friend of the people. A wise, patient, loving counselor, he organized many Presbyterian Churches in this state which are monuments to his untiring energy and zeal. A leader in higher education a scholarly and conscientious historian. Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing, instant in prayer. He preached Christ."

It is fitting that this tablet is in the Mays Landing church because it was during his eighteen years pastoring through the congregation that he began many Presbyterian churches, initiated a variety of parochial schools, and served as an area evangelist and preached in localities that were frequently thought of as waste places along the shore. The Presbytery of West Jersey in 1900 celebrated his eightieth year (and fifty-fourth for the Presbytery) through these words, "It is not often that a man, brought up in a home of affluence and comfort, with its pleasant refinements, its elevated companionships and its social culture, a man gifted by the Lord with superior mental abilities, cultivated and strengthened by a thorough collegiate and seminary training, turns his back on refinement and culture and ease and wealth, and, catching the sound of a cry from the wilderness, goes thither and makes

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

his home there, putting up cheerfully and willingly with all deprivations to minister to the inhabitants in their spiritual destitution and endeavor by his preaching and influence to develop them into a higher life. You came to The Pines, a terra incognita at that time to the people of North Jersey, to whom the very name was suggestive of terror and peril and degradation. You carried to the people the blessed word of God, the great refiner of human life; you used your influence and your money until that money was swept away from you during the period of the Civil War for their betterment; you brought teachers of culture and refinement to the little school houses scattered through the Pines; you visited the people in their homes and talked with them and read from the sacred Scriptures to them and prayed with them; you stood by them in their hours of sorrow, ministering to them the comforts of the blessed gospel..."¹⁴

No other person has had a greater impact in the last one hundred forty years on Presbyterianism in South Jersey than Allen H. Brown, and it is fortunate that the church building so central to his ministry still stands in such fine and essentially unaltered condition.

⁷ Boucher, Jack E., Absegami Yesteryear, Atlantic County Historical Society, Somers Point, N.J., 1963, pp 56-86

⁸ Centennial Committee, op. cit., pp 30-33, 37

⁹ Pierce, op. cit., pp 36-42

¹⁰ Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography, James G. Wilson and John Fiske, eds., D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1887, Vol. 2, p. 700; Dictionary of American Biography, Charles Scribners Sons, New York, 1930, vol. 4, p. 327; The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography James T. White & Co., New York, 1897, vol. IV, p. 524; Who Was Who in America: Historical Volume, 1607-1896, Marquis, Chicago, 1963, p. 117

¹¹ Gilfillan, op. cit., p. 24; Hall, John F., The Daily Union History of Atlantic City and County, Daily Union Printing Co., Atlantic City, N.J., 1900, pp. 394, 395

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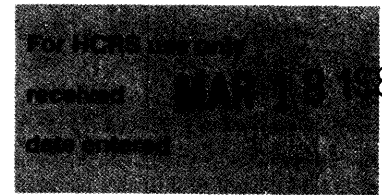
Page 3

8. SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

- ¹² Dictionary of American Biography Op cit., p. 157, 158; The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, Op cit., Vol. IX, p. 44; Who's Who in America 1920-21, A. N. Marquis Co., Chicago, p. 885
- ¹³ Allen H. Brown, Journals (in possession of Atlantic County Historical Society; Somers Point, N.J.) entries for June 2, 16, 20, 1854; December 25, 1854; December 26, 1847; March 8, 1848; December 8, 8, 24, 25, 26, 27, 1846; February 20, 1847
- ¹⁴ Brace, Frederic R., In Memory of Allen H. Brown, (Delivered at his funeral, November, 1907), p. 13

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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Works Progress Administration, Official Project No. 665 .22 .2 .3 .43, Mays Landing Presbyterian Church, Survey No. J. J. 516, 12 sheets Historic American Buildings Survey

Wallace, Philip B., Colonial Churches and Meeting Houses Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, Architectural Book Publishing Co., Inc., 1931, pp 242-43

Mays Landing Presbyterian Church
Hamilton Township (Mays Landing)
Atlantic County,
New Jersey

