

FOR NPS USE ONLY
 RECEIVED MAY 4 1976
 DATE ENTERED APR 11 1977

**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

Mission Church (AHRS SITE NO. ARC-056)

AND/OR COMMON

Old Missionary Church; Old Log Church

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Not Applicable

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Arctic Village

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Alaska

CODE

02

COUNTY CODE

Arctic Village 250

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Village Council of Arctic Village

No Telephones

STREET & NUMBER

Not Applicable

CITY, TOWN

Arctic Village

VICINITY OF

STATE

Alaska 99722

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
 REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bureau of Land Management (907) 277-1561

STREET & NUMBER

1028 Aurora Drive

CITY, TOWN

Fairbanks

STATE

Alaska 99701

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Alaska Heritage Resource Survey (AHRS)

(907) 272-4401

DATE

February 25, 1976

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
 SURVEY RECORDS

Alaska Division of Parks, 323 E. 4 Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Anchorage

STATE

Alaska 99501

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT

GOOD

FAIR

DETERIORATED

RUINS

UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED

ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE

MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Mission Church at Arctic Village was originally constructed by the men and women of the community in 1916 or 1917. All the materials were of local origin, and all the labor was donated.

The wood was cut from trees within a ten mile radius and hauled to the spot by dog teams or floated down the streams and tributaries of the Chandalar River. The altar, altar rail, altar throne and pews, and other fittings for the house of worship were all the products of the village people, donated to the church.

The original building was of logs, approximately 17 by 17 feet square. During the first years of its existence Albert Tritt read the services from a table in the center of the room. The room served also as a community hall and meeting place. The diary of Albert Tritt, written about 1931, and preserved in the Archives of the University of Alaska, describes the church as being "rebuilt" three times between 1917 and 1931. The precise description appears to be that due to the primitive nature of the original structure and the need for more space, the original square-shaped log cabin was enlarged to its present rectangular shape, measuring approximately 17 feet in width by 26 feet in depth. At a later stage a bell tower was erected at the front door, over an entry vestibule. As is customary in Arctic cabin construction, there probably was an original vestibule to protect the interior from the harsh outside winter weather. This original vestibule was, essentially, extended upward to a bell tower, approximately 25 feet in height. It was capped by a symbolic free form figure, carved by Albert Tritt, with arrow pointing to the four cardinal points of the compass. Local folklore states that the design was to ward off evil spirits. The carving is unique and appears from ground level to represent a rare folk art artifact of this area of Alaskan native culture. The combination entry-vestibule and bell tower measures approximately seven feet wide and six feet deep at its base, tapering to a pyramidal pinnacle surmounted by Albert Tritt's carving, designed for a bell to be hung within the cap of the pyramid, the upper segment of which is open framework separated from the lower vestibule by a truncating partition.

At an early period in the use of the church building, when it was extended to its present length, the additional segment was elevated several inches to provide a raised altar. Albert Tritt then built an altar rail separating the altar section from the section intended for the parishoners' pews or benches. At a later date a doorway was cut into the far back corner of the far wall, near the left end of the back wall at the rear of the altar, and an additional room constructed. The added room measures approximately 12 feet wide by 8 feet deep. It has an exit door facing to the left as one enters it from the altar space.

The entire roof of the building is of sod on logs. The logs are bowed inward under obvious great stress from the weight of the accumulated snow over and above the constant weight of the insulating sod. The roof of the added rear room is almost 25% gone, leaving the room open to the elements. In the center of the main room a log has been spread laterally midway across

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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" 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 1916-1917

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Rev. Albert E. Tritt

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Significance

The old Episcopal Church at Arctic Village is a home-built log structure representative of the type, style, materials, and methods used in this area of the Arctic in constructing a building for communal use. It is a fast becoming extinct type (now being replaced by prefabricated buildings of modern construction materials) of regional structure, representative of a broad band of such log and sod construction across a range of the Arctic and sub-Arctic.

As such, it joins with similar style buildings in Arctic Village to contribute to the visual integrity of the community.

It is also associated with the Reverend Albert E. Tritt, a locally important figure during the first half of the twentieth century.

Historical Background

Early in the second decade of this century, Albert E. Tritt, a native of Arctic Village, one of the northernmost Athapaskan communities in Alaska, accepted the gospel preachings of Episcopal missionaries. He came into contact with these churchmen during visits to Fort Yukon, approximately 100 miles to the south of this village. He brought back to his village the Takudh dialect Bible, and with the zeal of an evangelist, sought to convert his people to the Episcopal creed. At first he held services in his home, just his immediate family and friends. In 1916 or 1917 he and his followers built this log church, of local materials, with their own labor. He wrote in details of his conversion to the Christian faith and the building of this church in his diary, which he wrote down in 1931, and is preserved in the manuscript collections of the University of Alaska.

Albert E. Tritt was ordained a Deacon in the Episcopal Church in 1925. He joined in the building of the newer church in 1939, and there one of his sons, Reverend Isaac Tritt, continues to serve his Arctic Village congregation to this day.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Rev. A. Tritt Collection", University of Alaska Archives, Elmer E. Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one acre.

UTM REFERENCES

A	0,6	56,13213	7,557,506	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The log church (steeple) is located approximately six hundred twenty five feet away and along an aximuth of 292° from a point 19 feet southerly of the teacher's quarters (measured from the southwest exterior corner) and 37.47 feet from the most southerly of the two southeasterly corners of the teacher's quarters (nearest rear stairs).

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

Bernard W. Poirier, Director

ORGANIZATION

Iroquois Research Institute

DATE

October 14, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

6201 Leesburg Pike, Suite 215

TELEPHONE

(703) 534-8200

CITY OR TOWN

Falls Church

STATE

Virginia 22044

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

William K. ...

TITLE

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

April 27, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

CHIEF *[Signature]*
DIRECTOR OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

4/11/77

ATTEST

[Signature]
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3.18.77

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Mission Church (AHRS SITE NO. ARC-056)

CONTINUATION SHEET

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the room from eve to eve, with a pair of shorter logs rising from its center to a "V" to provide support for the two surfaces of the medium gable roof. This supporting log is not weathering well. It has developed lengthwise and spiraling cracks, as have the badly bowed main supporting logs for the roof. The building is stable in its structural members. However, the deteriorated condition of these structural members supporting and providing additional support for the roof evidence that the future life of the roof, and, hence, of the structure itself, is problematic. In essence, the structure is in danger, and at some time in the future its roof will collapse or be blown off, and then complete deterioration will follow rapidly.

The church was used both as the house of worship and as the main community social hall until about 1960, when a new church was built about 400 yards to the south, where the group of newer houses were constructed. The interior fittings and furnishings of the church were transferred to the new church. The new church is only slightly larger in dimensions, perhaps 50% larger in interior space, than the old church. It contains the altar, altar rail and altar throne built by Albert Tritt. The carved wood pinnacle for the belfry in the new church was carved to copy the one created on the old church belfry by Albert Tritt, and the original still surmounts the bell tower of the old church. The altar cloth made for the old church by the women of the village has been put away and saved for the day when the old church is restored and reopened as a memorial to Albert Tritt, who is the honored and revered patron saint of the villagers living today. This altar cloth is a superb example of Alaskan Native beadwork embroidery of this area, of the highest order of museum quality. It is a symbol second only to the old mission church itself of the depth of feelings held for the old church by the people who built it and their second generation descendants to whom this valley has been home for eons of time.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

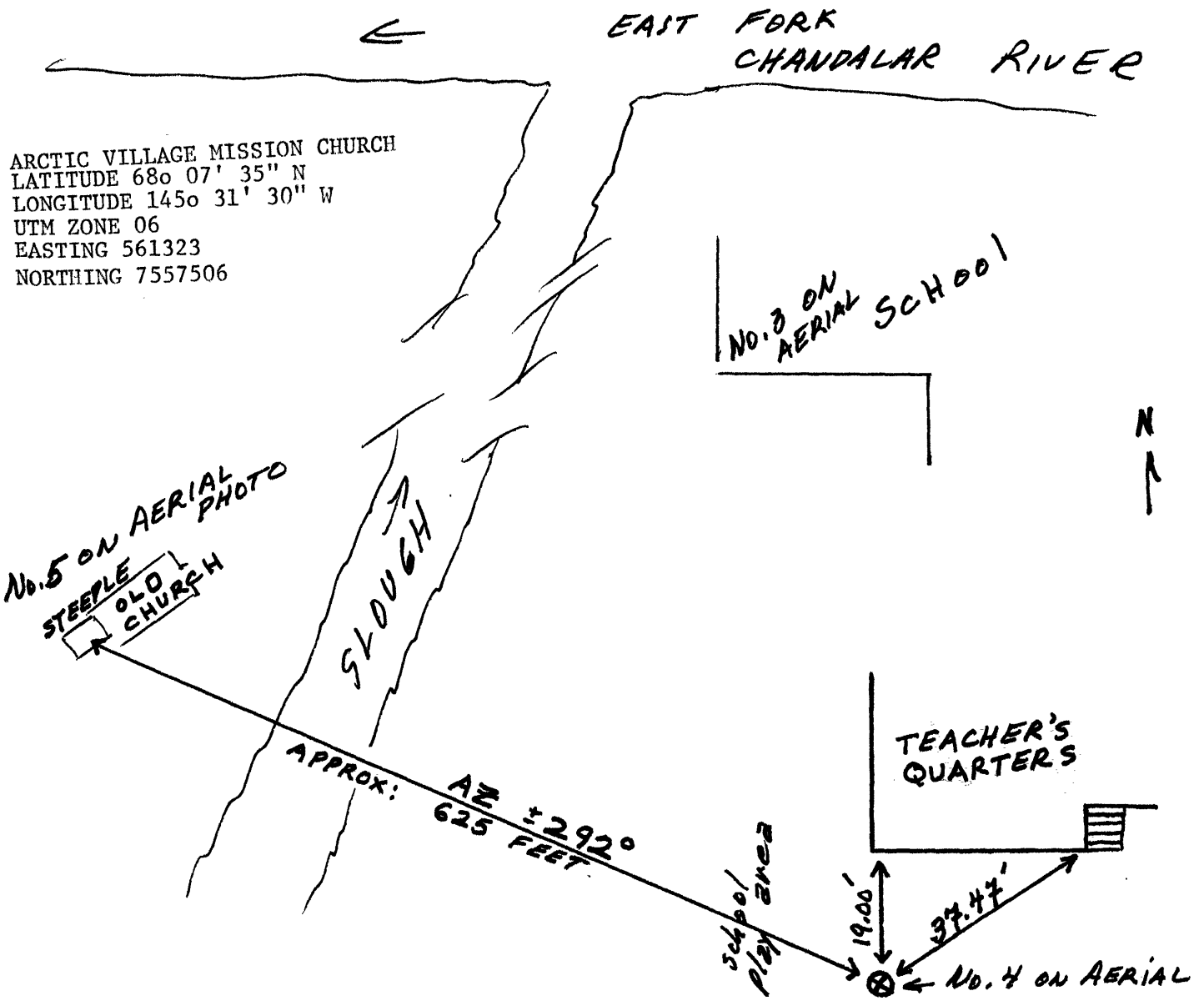
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Mission Church (AHRIS SITE NO. ARC-056)

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE



NOT TO SCALE

IROQUOIS RESEARCH INSTITUTE
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6201 LEESBURG PIKE
FALLS CHURCH, VA. 22044

ARCTIC VILLAGE, AK.
14 OCT 75
IROQUOIS RESEARCH