

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0676187

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RECEIVED

MAR 29 1979

MAY 16 1979

DATE ENTERED

**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

The Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church

AND/OR COMMON

The Russian Church

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Petrograd Street

\_\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Berlin

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

2

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New Hampshire

33

Coos

007

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

**OWNERSHIP**

**STATUS**

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_\_DISTRICT

\_\_\_PUBLIC

X OCCUPIED

\_\_\_AGRICULTURE

\_\_\_MUSEUM

X BUILDING(S)

X PRIVATE

\_\_\_UNOCCUPIED

\_\_\_COMMERCIAL

\_\_\_PARK

\_\_\_STRUCTURE

\_\_\_BOTH

\_\_\_WORK IN PROGRESS

\_\_\_EDUCATIONAL

\_\_\_PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_\_SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

\_\_\_ENTERTAINMENT

X RELIGIOUS

\_\_\_OBJECT

\_\_\_IN PROCESS

\_\_\_YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_\_GOVERNMENT

\_\_\_SCIENTIFIC

\_\_\_BEING CONSIDERED

X YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_\_INDUSTRIAL

\_\_\_TRANSPORTATION

\_\_\_NO

\_\_\_MILITARY

\_\_\_OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Parish Council of the Orthodox Church of the Holy Resurrection

STREET & NUMBER

Petrograd Street

CITY, TOWN

Berlin

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

New Hampshire 03570

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Coos County Courthouse, Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

148 Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Lancaster

STATE

New Hampshire 03584

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

NA

DATE

\_\_\_FEDERAL \_\_\_STATE \_\_\_COUNTY \_\_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 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 Russian Church is a two-story, woodframe structure resting on a granite foundation. It measures 36 feet by 63 feet, not including the main entrance and stairway, and it is approximately 100 feet in height. The church occupies a two acre lot high on the hillside overlooking Berlin. The church not only has a spectacular view of the city but its golden domes can be seen from miles around, nestled picturesquely in the hillside.

The Russian Church is a two-story building with the church proper upstairs and a large hall suitable for religious instruction and social functions at the ground level. The roof of the church is a gable-on-hip with irregular dormer windows on three sides. The rear roof over the altar is polygonal in convex profile with crowning cupola and onion shaped dome. There are six metal onion shaped domes of the type indigenous to Eastern Europe which are painted with gold metal flake paint. On top of each dome is a gold painted metal cross. There are two additional gold crosses on the roof, one above the entrance and one above the conical roof over the altar. The roof is shingled with green asphalt shingles. The clapboards are painted white as is all trim.

The front facade of the church consists of a wide, wooden stair parallel to the wall leading to a wide landing and then continuing to a projecting gabled portico containing the vestibule. There are four wood doors at the entrance. The portico has three arched, small paned windows triptych formation above the entrance. This gable is the belfrey which contains three different toned bells made by the Meneely Bell Company of Troy, New York. On each side wall of the projecting portico are two additional small windows with single, double-hung windows on the front facade flanking the portico. On the sides of the main church building are, from front to rear, one small window, one regular sized window, one triple window, and another small window. All of these windows are double-hung. The rear exterior wall contains two small windows. There are several casement windows in each side wall of the foundation as well, and a door leading to the community room at ground level. The church is surrounded by a white picket fence with a "Russian" archway constructed in wood at the street line.

The interior of the church is plaster with wood trim, and a wood floor. There are no pews or chairs, as the congregation always stands. The walls contain exquisite murals depicting the trials of Christ. The lower quarter of the walls, defined by heavy wood trim, and the wooden supporting columns are painted to resemble marble. The altar is raised about 3 feet and approached by three semi-circular stairs. The inner altar is separated from the front altar in the typical Orthodox manner by a finely detailed wood partition consisting of two major pilasters, four minor pilasters, and four arched panels. Inside the panels are four major ikons imported from Russia. Each panel has two additional minor ikons above the baseboard. The baseboard is marbled like the wooden columns. There is a central arched doorway which opens onto the altar proper. Only Orthodox are allowed into the altar behind the panel.

(See Continuation Sheet 1)

# 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" 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                      1915                                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT                      John Bergesen

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Orthodox Church of the Holy Resurrection or the Russian Church, as it is commonly known, is an interesting and unique architectural style not indigenous to the United States. The church strongly reflects its Eastern European origins and it is quite different in form from our native churches. Its architectural uniqueness which determines its significance is of traditional Russian style. It was built in this country exactly as it would have been built in rural White Russian prior to the Russian Revolution. Although there may be a number of more ornate and sophisticated examples of Orthodox cathedrals in this country, it is doubtful there are very many good examples of the simple, dignified rural Russian Orthodox churches here. It is its pristine attitude, its vernacular associations, its quality of construction, and its limited representation in the United States, that make it an architectural anomaly significant and worthy of recognition.

The interior of the church is an enclave of valuable Russian art. The panels of the altar partition hold original Russian ikons that were sent to the United States in 1915 by Nicholas II, shortly before the fall of Czarist Russia. The other wall murals were painted in Boston by commissioned Orthodox artists and brought to Berlin in 1916. The church also possesses many fine examples of exquisitely hand-crafted religious vessels and articles made of brass and gold. It is not only the architecture of the church which is noteworthy, but also the art work contained within the structure.

The Russian Church is also important as an educational and religious resource. Instruction in the Orthodox faith and culture is an integral part of the church's role in the community. The Orthodox faith is a relatively obscure religion and cultural way of life in the North Country (defined as northern New Hampshire and northern Maine). The preservation and perpetuation of any aspect of this minority, whether it be architectural, religious, or cultural should be fostered in an attempt to insure the survival of one of this area's most interesting minorities. The Russian Church is the only Orthodox Church in the North Country, its followers being too few and too widely dispersed to support churches of their own. Thus, it is an extremely important religious center for the Orthodox faith in this area.

Finally, the Russian Church and its congregation are of certain sociological and historical value to the Berlin area and more broadly the entire country when viewed as an important part of prewar immigration and the post war migration that has so profoundly affected the fabric of American life.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- 1) SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY (1915-1975) BROCHURE FOR THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE HOLY RESURRECTION PRODUCED BY THE PARISH (available at rectory), The Reporter Press, North Conway, New Hampshire, 1975.
- 2) CENTENNIAL BOOKLET - Berlin 1829-1929, Smith & Town Publishing Co., Berlin, N.H. (1929)
- 3) Interview, Fr. Michael Westerberg, Pastor of Russian Church, 8/4/77

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 40,000 sq. ft. (1 acre)

QUADRANGLE NAME Berlin, NH QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 1 9	3 2 5 6 6 0	4 9 2 6 0 0 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

City of Berlin, NH, Assessor's Tax Maps, updated to December, 1978; Map 17, Lots 84 & 85.

## 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

Sarah R. McDonald, Preservation Consultant

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Dept. of Community Development, City of Berlin

11/10/77

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

City Hall, Main Street

752-1630

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Berlin

New Hampshire

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

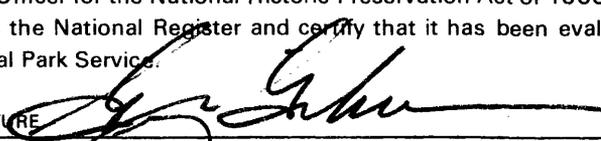
NATIONAL

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



TITLE

Commissioner, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development  
NH State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 6-20-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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



KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 5-16-79

ATTEST:



CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 5/15/79

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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ITEM NUMBER 7

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(DESCRIPTION - Continued)

The interior of the church is painted almost completely white except for the marbled section of the walls and columns, and the bright blue paint of the altar detailing. The ceiling is vaulted, with an ikon in each corner of the vault and three arched windows on two sides of the vault. There is a simple choir loft that connects to the belfrey. The community room at the street level is plaster with wood wainscoting and a wood floor.

Originally, the church looked much as it does today. Structurally, it is exactly as it was when built in 1915 (except for a later interior stair that was built in a closet space). The church has always been painted white. Two of the original metal roof crosses have been replaced and the others have been repaired. Recently, the entire church, inside and out, was repainted by the parishioners. In sum, the church has remained virtually unchanged except for ordinary maintenance since it was built in 1915.

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(SIGNIFICANCE - Continued)

The first Russian settlers arrived in Berlin around 1900. In 1915, just prior to the organization of the parish and the erection of the Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church, the Russian community consisted of approximately 300 men, only 32 of whom had families there. All of these people came originally from the Minsk, Wolensk, and Grodmensk provinces. They were all healthy young people, strong and willing to work and they immediately found employment in the industrial plants of Berlin. Separated from their families in the old country and without any church of their faith in Berlin, there was a gradual decline in their moral and spiritual life. The situation finally came to the attention of the Orthodox hierarchy in New York and it was suggested that a church be formed in Berlin. Mr. O.B. Brown, a vice president at the Brown Company, the largest industry in Berlin and the company around which the town was originally founded, agreed that the only solution to moral and morale problems of the Russian workers was to restore their Russian religious background to them. Interest in the wellbeing of its workers is one aspect of the Brown Company which has been expressed many times and in many ways throughout the history of Berlin. In this case, the company did all in its power to help the Russians establish a church of their own. They even loaned men to help clear the rocky terrain and assist the parishioners in building the edifice.

World War I was reflected in America by a wave of industrial strikes which followed a depression in 1921. One of these strikes led to the closing of the International Paper Company's Berlin Mill. Many of the workers at both International and the Brown Company, lost their jobs. The first to be laid off were the single men. All the Russians who left their families in the old country were in this category; some of them returned to Russia but many relocated in other parts of the country.

Again, at the time of World War II and the boom in ammunition plants in big cities, a considerable number of Russians moved to other localities and never returned to Berlin.

Today, there is a vital Russian community in Berlin which revolves around the Church. The Russian colony is still an important part of Berlin, just as it was in the early days. The Russian workers who left the town were typical of many other immigrant groups who, by economic necessity, spread throughout the country, beginning other colonies where they settled. The Russian Church not only has an undeniable place in the history of Berlin, New Hampshire, but in the history of the United States, as well.