

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Belfast Keller Road
city, town Keller () vicinity of
county Bryan code 029
state Georgia code GA zip code 31324

() not for publication

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property:

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property:	Contributing	Noncontributing
buildings	2	0
sites	1	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	3	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Rilleen C. Cloves 2-1-00
Signature of certifying official Date

for W. Ray Luce
Director, Historic Preservation Division,
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

In my opinion, the property () meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

Edson H. Beall 3/15/00

() determined eligible for the National Register _____

() determined not eligible for the National Register _____

() removed from the National Register _____

() other, explain: _____

() see continuation sheet

for _____
Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

Religion: religious facility, church school

Funerary: cemetery

Current Functions:

Religion: religious facility, church school

Funerary: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements: Craftsman.

Late 19th and Early 20th Century Revivals: Colonial Revival.

Materials:

foundation	Concrete
walls	Wood: weatherboard
roof	Metal: tin
other	N/A

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church is located on a two-acre tract on Bryan Neck near the Tivoli River in the town of Keller. The church is eight miles south of Richmond Hill in Bryan County, Georgia. The historic district includes a church, built in 1885, a manse, and a cemetery on a level, sandy lot with mature live oak, pine, and palm trees. The resources are set in a row along the south side of Belfast Keller Road with the church in the middle flanked by the manse to the east and the cemetery to the west.

The small, frame church is a one-story, cruciform-plan building set on concrete-block piers. The exterior is clad in weatherboard and the roof is covered with sheet metal. The gable ends feature full returns. The double-leaf main entrance is composed of two wood-paneled doors. Windows throughout the building are six-over-six-light sashes.

The interior church plan features a nave with center aisle flanked at the crossing by two classrooms. These square-shaped classrooms may be closed off from the sanctuary by folding wood-and-glass doors. An apse at the front is lit by two side windows. More than the plan, the interior of the church is striking for its varnished, tongue-and-groove wood paneling applied vertically, horizontally, and diagonally to form decorative patterns. In the apse the paneling forms a diamond pattern. Nearly every surface in the sanctuary features the dark, brown paneling. The side classrooms are also paneled. The exposed roof trusses are decoratively chamfered. In the apse, the paneling forms a

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Section 7--Description

diamond pattern. Much of the interior furnishings, pews, lectern, and organ, are original to the building.

The manse, built in 1939, is located adjacent to the church. It is a one-story, cruciform-shaped, frame building. Designed in the Colonial Revival style, the manse features a shallow-pitched, cross-gable roof with full returns. The building rest on brick piers and is clad in weatherboard. The six-over-six-light sash windows are paired across the front and framed by plain surrounds. Hip-roofed entrance porches are located on the main and rear facades. Like the church, the much of the interior of the manse is paneled. The living room/social hall at the front of the house features a wood floor and paneled walls and ceiling with a Colonial Revival-style mantel. The dining room is also paneled and features a built-in book case. The other rooms in the house serve as the kitchen, bedrooms, and bathroom.

The Bryan Neck Cemetery adjacent to the church is fenced and includes over 200 burials. The oldest congregation members are buried at the Burnt Church Cemetery two miles north near the location of the congregation's first church buildings. The Burnt Church Cemetery includes burials from the middle of the nineteenth century. The Bryan Neck Cemetery contains burials from the beginning of the 20th century. These are organized in long rows with few ornamental plantings. The Cory family plot is the only plot surrounded by a brick wall with an iron gate. The Corys were teachers and officers in the church. The cemetery has remained active, although new interments are only added to existing family plots.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture

Period of Significance:

1885 - 1939.

Significant Dates:

1830 - Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church organized.

1885 - Congregation builds Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church on Belfast Keller Road, the congregation's third church building.

c.1900 - Congregation established Bryan Neck Cemetery.

1939 - Henry Ford builds church manse in exchange for land owned by the church.

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

N/A

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)

The Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church is significant in the area of architecture because it is an outstanding example of a plain rural church with elaborate Craftsman-style interior woodwork. The church, which has little stylistic ornamentation on the exterior, is important because few rural church survive in Georgia with the high level of historic integrity found in Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church. Moreover, the cruciform-plan of the building is unusual for such a small building anywhere in the state. Despite its size, the building features a nave with a center aisle, transept arms that contain classrooms, a chancel, and an apse.

The church retains its original interior woodwork throughout the building. Dark wood paneling is applied horizontally, vertically, and diagonally to create rich surface patterns. On the front wall of the apse, a diamond pattern is formed drawing the eyes of worshipers to the front the church. The rear wall and classrooms are also fully paneled. In addition, two sets of chamfered scissor-brace trusses support the roof.

A large number of rural church buildings which survive in Georgia have undergone some alterations. Common alterations include artificial siding, interior paneling, replacement windows and doors, the addition of a fancy portico and/or steeple, and large additions. Because the Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church building has escaped all of these frequent alterations, the church is additionally important for its high level of historic integrity and survives as an outstanding example of a rural community landmark building.

The manse, built in 1939, is significant because it reflects the continued use of the site but also because it represents the increased ability of the congregation to fund, through Henry Ford, additional construction at the site. (Ford, a noted industrialist and philanthropist, established a rural retreat nearby called Richmond Hill plantation and was active in the local community.) The Colonial Revival style of the manse represents the desire of the congregation to build in a manner that reflects the most fashionable architectural styles of the period. The Bryan Neck Cemetery demonstrates the function of the church property as a burial site, a common land use for rural churches. The Bryan Neck congregation had established a cemetery on the property of their first two church buildings on Bryan Neck Road. Together, the church, manse, and cemetery comprise an important historic landscape that reflect not only important architectural trends in Georgia history but also the historic land-use practices of rural churches in Georgia.

National Register Criteria

The Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C under the theme of architecture because it is an outstanding example of a plain rural church with Craftsman-style interior woodwork.

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1885 when the Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church congregation built its third church buildings and ends in 1939 when Henry Ford built the church manse in exchange for land owned by the church.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The church and manse are the only contributing building associated with the nomination. The cemetery is the only contributing site associated with the nomination. There are no noncontributing resources with this nomination

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

In November 1830, the Presbytery of Georgia met at Midway and organized the Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church. The church named John J. Maxwell, Thomas Clay, Richard J. Arnold, Edward Footman, and George W. McAllister as trustees. These were early plantation owners in the Ogeechee Neck area of Bryan County. Richard Arnold owned Whitehall and Cherry Hill plantations, Thomas Clay owned Richmond Hill Plantation, and the McAllister family owned land containing Fort McAllister, a Civil War historic site that is currently owned and interpreted by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

The church, which was incorporated on December 27, 1831, made use of a former Episcopal church building located on Bryan Neck Road. This church served until a new church building was dedicated in 1841. This second church building was wood-framed and featured a belfry and two entrances on the gable end. This church accommodated 40 (planter) families and in an upper gallery their slaves. On February 23, 1882, the second church building was destroyed by fire.

The church cemetery, known as Burnt Church Cemetery, is the only resource associated with the first two church buildings on Bryan Neck Road. The cemetery includes the family plots of early church leaders, such as the McAllisters and Clays, surrounded by brick walls and wrought-iron fences. Some of the more elaborate markers include obelisks and large stone slabs on raised crypts.

After the second church was destroyed by fire, services ceased to be held until two church leaders, Habersham Clay and C. C. Maxwell, began conducting services. These men eventually purchased

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

the land for the current church building and provided funds for its construction. In 1885, the current church building was completed on the Belfast Keller Road approximately two miles south of the congregation's first church buildings. The church has been in continuous use since its construction and has sustained very few changes to the historic fabric of the building. During the 1990s, the Bryan Neck congregation merged with the nearby Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church. A trust fund has been established for the maintenance of the Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church, which is currently used for special functions and religious services.

During the 1930s, when auto-maker Henry Ford was developing his experimental agricultural and industrial operations in the Richmond Hill area of Bryan County (see Richmond Hill Plantation, Bryan County, listed January 30, 1978), Ford determined that he needed additional land that was owned by the Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church. Ford received the church parcel, which was not contiguous with the church property, in exchange for his building a manse for the church. In 1939, Mr. Hodges, an assistant to Henry Ford, supervised the construction of the manse. (Hodges is buried in the Bryan Neck Cemetery.)

The Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church established the Bryan Neck Cemetery in c.1900. Graves of the older congregation members are located in Burnt Church Cemetery two miles north on Bryan Neck Road. The cemetery is still active, although graves are only added to existing family plots. During the 1970s, an independent cemetery association was formed to maintain the grave sites and landscaping.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Schlemmer, Kirk. "Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church." Historic Property Information Form. On file at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): () N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**
date issued: June 27, 1995
- previously listed in the National Register**
- previously determined eligible by the National Register**
- designated a National Historic Landmark**
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #**
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #**

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office**
- Other State Agency**
- Federal agency**
- Local government**
- University**
- Other, Specify Repository:**

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Approximately 2 acres

UTM References

A) Zone 17 Easting 475300 Northing 3522720

Verbal Boundary Description

The property boundary is indicated by a heavy black line on the attached map, drawn to scale.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes all resources historically associated with the Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church and follows the legal boundaries of the parcel. The nominated property retains a high level of historic integrity.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Steven H. Moffson, Architectural Historian

organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

street & number 500 The Healey Building, 57 Forsyth Street

city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303

telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** January 15, 2000

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable) (x) not applicable

(HPD form version 02-24-97)

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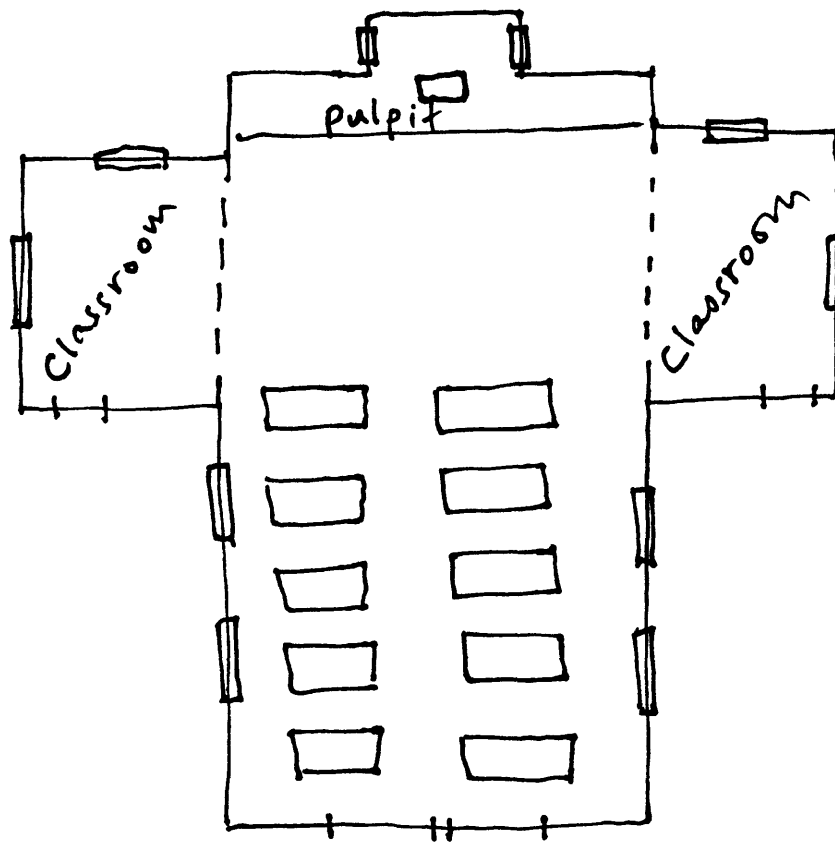
**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**


Photographs

Name of Property: Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church
City or Vicinity: Keller
County: Bryan
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: October 1997

Description of Photograph(s):

1. Church (foreground) and manse (background), photographer facing east.
2. Manse (foreground) and church (background), photographer facing west.
3. Church (rear) and manse, photographer facing east.
4. Church, photographer facing southwest.
5. Church, photographer facing northwest.
6. Church, interior, photographer facing south.
7. Church, interior, photographer facing north.
8. Manse, photographer facing southeast.
9. Manse, photographer facing north.
10. Manse, interior, living room/social hall, photographer facing south.
11. Manse, interior, dining room, photographer facing north.
12. Cemetery, photographer facing north.
13. Cemetery, photographer facing west.



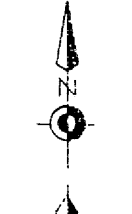
Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church
Keller, Bryan County, Georgia
Floor Plan
No Scale
North: 



Bryan Neck Presbyterian Church
 Keller, Bryan County, Georgia
 Sketch Map
 National Register Boundary
 Scale: 1"=200"
 North: ↑

LEGEND	
---	(55) SUBDIVISION LOT NUMBER
---	2 TAX PARCEL NUMBER
---	6" BLOCK NUMBER
---	SCHOOL OR COLLEGE
---	CHURCH AND CEMETERY

Aerial photography was flown January 23, 1993 for the
 Bryan County Tax Assessors Office.
 Furnished by RILEY, PARK, HAYDEN & ASSOCIATES, INC
 Atlanta, Georgia.
 The County assumes no responsibility for the legal accur-



DATE	REVISION	BY	DA