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(Kev.	NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES Hillsborough			
	INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM FOR MPS USE ONLY			
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	Feterborough Onicarian Grands NATIONAL REGISTER			
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3.	CLASSIFICATION ACCESSIBLE CATEGORY OWNERSHIP STATUS TO THE PUB			
	(Check One) Yes:			
	District A Building Private In Process Unoccupied			
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	PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate). Agricultural Government Park Transportation Comments			
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Brick building, 53' wide by 67' long, slate roof. Wood pediment and clock tower at front. Brick cuter walls 12" thick on granite base and stone cellar walls. Five granite steps: across front with three doorways and windows above. In each side, three wide two-storied windows with semi-round louvred fans over, set in round head recessed panels in the brick walls

Dr. William Horgan ("Survey of Peterborough Architecture") writes that the building "has most of the chief characteristics of the Federal style: temple front with recessed arcade of niches; large doorway in each niche with semi-elliptical louvred fan; a semi-elliptical fan in the pediment; modillioned cornice; the detailing and texture throughout rather flat and two dimensional. Naturally the dominent feature o fht exterior is the four stage steeple-cum-clock tower in the Wren manner (as publichee in James Gibbs, later in Benjamin and others), complete with English baroque urn finials classical details (Doric entablature on upper belfry, etc.) topped by a gold leafed, cupola-like dome with an elaborate gold weather vane."

Charles A. Place (Charles Bulfinch, Architect and Citizen) notes that the tower is supported by the outer front wall and the inner wall separating vestibule from main room. Brick inner wall, 10" thick, carried only to gallery floor, with tower weight at ceiling lebel supported by two timber columns,

fluted, with simple molded capitals.

Exterior of the original main body of building is Two chimneys were built at north end in 1842, to accommodate first stoves. Roof slated, in 1853. First bell was installed in 1828. Paris' house attached at rear was built in 1926 (architects Little & Russell; Boston), matching church in materials and style. Yorse sheds (15 stalls now used as garages) are on back part of c'urch grounds..Although present structures were built in 1905, they replaced original sheds at same location.

Interior, vestibule 10' deep full width of building, with stairway at each end leading to gallery and three wide doors. opening into main room. Fain room, plain almost square auditorium, with gallery at back and each deep coved border. Crgan in back gallery installed in 1866, enlarges and rebuilt in 1933. Criginal white painted box pews with doors and mahogany top railing.

Criginal plain flat wall back of pulnit at front of main room was "modernized" some time before 1860 with painted "trompe DSceil" decorations depicting a central niche and Attobi side niches with figures of Saints Peter and Paul. These were removed in 1896 when alterations included the present shallow recessed arched chancel with Roman Icnic columns and milasters and high panelled pulpit with 'aning sounding board aboven 2

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) 1

New Hampshire	
Hillsborough	
FOR NPS USE ONL	Υ
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
APR	2 3 1973

(Number all entries)
6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (Continued)

Title of Survey:

"Peterborough Architectural Survey"

Date of Survey: May, 1971 Federal State County xLocal

Depository for Survey Records: Peterborough Historical Society

Street and Number:

Grove Street

City or Town: Peterborough

State: New Hampshire Code:



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) 2

FOR NPS USE ONL	Y DATE
Hillsborough	
New Hampshire	

(Number all entries)

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

Builder was a Mr. Kilburn named in a written agreement dated October 1, 1825, which specified that the meeting house was to be 53' wide and 67' long, with 86 pews on the floor and 22 in the gallery, and 4 long seats for singers. All pews to be made with mahogany top railings. Bricks were made in the "adley family brick-yards in Peterborough. Lime and cement were brought from Nashua by ox-team. Religion/Philosophy

Begun in 1825, dedicated February 22, 1826, as the third building (succeeding two wooden buildings) of the First Church in Peterborough formed in 1752. The Town Church (and the only church) until the New Yampshire Toleration Act of 1819, separating town government from

the church.

The second meeting house having become unusable and the Town being relieved, after 1819, of building a new one, the townspeople at a meeting November 13, 1824, adopted articles of association for erection of a new church building. Capital of not less than 200 shares at dollars each, to be sold to subscribers, was called for. Since the original town church membership was beginning

25 dollars each, to be sold to subscribers, was called to Since the original town church membership was beginning to divide into separate denominations, the articles of association provided for the new building to be open to any denomination, time to be apportioned on the basis of stock ownership. Pews were to be sold at public auction with the proceeds divided among the stock holders.

Original town clock was inst 11ed in church belfry in 1856, replaced by present town clock in 1947. (Clock

belongs to and is maintained by the Town.)

Through the first half of the 19th century, from 1799 to 1848, the two ministers of this church were the leading and most influential citizens of the Town. Morison observes that at that time the settled minister in a New England town dominated the civic, cultural and social affairs of the town to a degree Yardly comprehensible in the 20th century. Elijah Dunbar, a Harvard graduate and a distinguished minister from 1799 to 1827, left almost the only early town records extant, in his sketch of early town history and his handwritten diary recording baptisms, marriages and funerals for those years, of great genealogical value (now in the Peterborough Historical Society).

Social/"umanitarian

Dr. Abel Abbot, from 1827 to 1848, also a Harvard graduate, was the leader and prime mover in establishing in this church the first lyceum in New Hampshire. Crganized December 13, 1828, the Lyceum was a town forum in which the townspeople studied and discussed matters of

(Continued on "Continuation Sheet" 3)

AL ISU PECEIVEII NATIONARES

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) 3

New Hampshire	
COUNTY	
Hillsborough	
FOR NPS USE ONL	Υ
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
AND	2 3 1072

(Number all entries)

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

the widest range pertaining to the benefit of the Town or its citizens. It continued in its original form until 1856, and was revived periodically for another 40

years.

Dr. Abbot is better known as the founder of the first tax-supported, free public library in the world. In 1828, he started a juvenile library, later an incorporated library for subscribers, and on April 9, 1833, he persuaded the Peterborough Town Meeting to vote to establish a Town Library to be supported and maintained by the Town, with town funds, for the free use of the public. This was the first known instance of a free public library supported by taxation, a principle soon to be universally accepted.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet) 4

STATE			
New	Hampshi	.re	
COUNTY			
Hill	sboroug	gh	
	FOR NPS USE	E ONL	Υ.
ENT	RY NUMBER		DATE
	ABD	2 3	1973

(Number all entries)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Continued)

Edmund W. Sinnott, Meeting House and Church in Early

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Frederick L. Weis, A Brief Historical Sketch of the

First Church in Peterborough, 1752-1952 (Peterborough:

n.n., 1953)

