

PH0354392

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 12 1976

DATE ENTERED AUG 2 1976

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

\*\*

NA

Gehring Clinic

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

off ME5

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Bethel

VICINITY OF

1st Hom David Emery

STATE

Maine

CODE

23

COUNTY

Oxford

CODE

017

3 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

\_\_\_NO

\_\_\_MILITARY

\_\_\_OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

National Training Laboratory

STREET & NUMBER

1815 N. Ft. Myer Drive

CITY, TOWN

Arlington

VICINITY OF

STATE

Virginia

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Oxford County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

South Paris,

STATE

Maine

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

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

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 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

Dr. Gehring's home and clinic occupied a large, rambling frame house. Built in 1896, it is of the Queen Anne style mixed with elements of Colonial Revival. The house stands two stories at the cornice level with dormers in the roof to light a third floor. Numerous windows flanked with shutters pierce the walls on all sides. The main part of the house is rectangular with two ells projecting from the rear corners at an angle. The three sections together embrace the southeast lawn which leads to the beautifully landscaped yard and woods. The east ell is the service wing, while the one story west ell was used as the doctor's study. It is a handsome house, sheathed in yellow clapboards with white trim and dark green shutters beneath a high pitched roof. Interestingly, this same color scheme is seen throughout the town of Bethel.

142 A wide balustraded porch wraps around the front half of the house. Wooden steps lead to a portico which shelters the main entrance on the northwest facade. The portico extends the width of the porch and is supported by Ionic columns. The door is enframed by sidelights and a wide fanlight of frosted glass. To the left of the door are two double-hung windows. A three part window decorated with a window box is on the second story. A bay window overlooks the railed roof of the portico. The bayed projection extends into the cornice. Centered over this bay is a wide gabled dormer. The vertical face displays a Palladian window protected by a turned rail. Two double hung windows occupy the right bay of the facade, one on each story. In the west corner is a round turret capped with a conical roof. Shutterless sash windows curve around the turret on both stories.

Following the tower around to the west side of the house leads to a one story vestibule. Above, on the second floor, is a double-hung window with a three part window to the right. Centered in the roof is a dormer bearing a single sash window.

✓ Projecting from this wall and continuing the roof line of the vestibule in a southwestern direction is the one story ell. A three sectioned picture window is centered on the wall to the right of a small Palladian window of stained glass. A fireplace chimney is situated in a small projection at the end of the ell flanked by two small corner windows. The back wall facing southeast contains another picture window centrally located on the wall.

The rear elevation of the main part of the building is transformed into a ribbon of glass panes grouped within a three bay windowed gable projection on the first floor. Pilasters divide the ribbon into five windows complimented by a glass-paned door at the left side. Two double hung windows flank the chimney on the second floor. To the right is a round-arched window made of stained glass. Aligned with this is a roof dormer at the third story level.

The service ell projects from the right side to complete the angled enclosure of the southeast lawn. The inner bay displays a three part picture window in a small projection. The end wall of the projection is pierced by an oval window. Two small, narrow windows complete the wall on the first story. Above on the second story are two double-hung windows next (see continuation sheets)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 12 1976  
DATE ENTERED AUG 2 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

to a pair of side-by-side double-hung windows over the picture window.

The end wall of the ell is designed for service use. A door is centered on the first story under an unusual overhang. Two double-hung windows on the second story were placed at each end but avoid the side chimney. The northeast wall of the service ell is divided into three bays marked by three double-hung windows on the first story. The second story has similar windows in each bay, except for the right bay which contains two small narrow windows and an oval stair window. A single dormer is centered on the roof.

The front porch wraps around the north corner of the house to reach the wall of the service ell, where the side stairs are to be found. A second portico supported by Ionic columns shelters a side door and sash window. Overlooking the railed portico roof are double-hung windows.

The clinic building owes its irregular plan and round turret to its Queen Anne design. The style featured these elements as well as the use of a variety of window forms such as straight-topped and rounded-headed windows with clear, frosted, or stained glass panes. The house combines these elements beautifully, adding a Colonial simplicity to make it a well integrated house design.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

Changes made  
after phone call  
7-9-76

mjl

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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Medicine mjl
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1896 mjl

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The National Training Laboratory Conference Center in Bethel was once the home and clinic of Dr. John George Gehring. Here Dr. Gehring used the methods of suggestion and auto-suggestion in psycho-therapy to treat people with nervous disorders early in the twentieth century.

John Gehring was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1857. He obtained a graduate degree in medicine from Western Reserve University in 1885, and then became a professor at Wooster University in Ohio. He continued his studies in Berlin, Germany. Later he returned to the United States to become a practicing surgeon in Cleveland. This career was cut short however, due to ill health caused by a nervous condition.

At the age of thirty he and his wife moved to Bethel. Mrs. Gehring was the daughter of Dr. Nathaniel Tuckerman True of that town. Dr. True was the principal of Gould Academy and the founder of the Farmer's Club Movement in Maine. While in Bethel Dr. Gehring learned of the work of Dr. Frederick Gerrish, the pioneer psychologist in the treatment of nervous disorders by suggestion and auto-suggestion. Gehring had always been interested in nervous disorders and went to Portland to study with Dr. Gerrish. Later he went to Europe as a patient to have the new treatment tried out on him. The cure worked, and Gehring was restored to good health.

He returned to Bethel and began using the new methods. Success brought many patients, mostly of a high level of intelligence. At the suggestion of his wife, he opened their home to the patients as a rest-home. Between twelve and fourteen of the patients lived at the house, the rest staying in town. Bethel became an intellectual center, once referred to as "the resting place of Harvard University".

The treatment they received included sessions with the soft spoken, calm yet vigorous doctor; physical activity such as outdoor work in the garden or chopping wood; all to be ended by a formal dinner every night with the doctor and his wife.

An outlet for Gehring's own tensions was his love for botany and landscape gardening. The house was surrounded by extensive lawns, flower beds and rare shrubs worked by the doctor and his patients. The maples

(see continuation sheet)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bethel News, Jan. 6, 1904

Discoll, Charles, The Miracle Man of Bethel, 1929

Prudden, T. Mitchell, M.D., Dr. Gehring's Work at Bethel, Maine

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 19 357635 4917585  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Architectural Historian  
Patricia Brown, Student Assistant

ORGANIZATION Maine Historic Preservation Commission DATE April 2, 1976

STREET & NUMBER 31 Western Avenue TELEPHONE 207-289-2133

CITY OR TOWN Augusta STATE Maine

# 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 Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.  
 TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE April 8, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Acting Wm J. Amet DATE 8/2/76  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: Charles W. ... DATE 8.2.76  
 ACT. KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 12 1976

DATE ENTERED APR 2 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

---

lining the drive were planted by Dr. True's students at Gould Academy. Gehring did the planting for his father-in-law's school, the Bethel Inn, and the connecting street. The Inn was built by some of the doctor's patients and dedicated to him.

Dr. Gehring's Clinic was run with the help of Mrs. Gehring. She was a woman with musical and literary interests, as well as being devoted to the uplift of the young people of the town and the welfare of her husband's patients.

The famous psycho-therapist retired from active practice around 1925. He remained in Bethel until his death in 1932.