



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Harmony Hall
other names/site number Universalist Chapel, Universalist Church, Village Improvement Society Hall

2. Location

street & number 24 Kennebec Road N/A not for publication
city or town Hampden N/A vicinity
state Maine code ME county Penobscot code 019 zip code 04444

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility 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 does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 5/14/07
Signature of certifying official/Title SHPD Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

[Signature] 6-27-07
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Edson H. Beall

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HARMONY HALL

PENOBSCOT COUNTY, MAINE

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DESCRIPTION

Harmony Hall was constructed in 1828 as the Universalist Church at Hampden Corners in the Penobscot County town of Hampden, Maine. The building is located on the north side of Kennebec Road less than 2/10 of a mile west of this road's intersection with Route 1A (Main Road) which runs along the Penobscot River between Bangor and Winterport. Several small 19th and 20th century commercial structures are located at this intersection, but Kennebec Road is primarily lined with single family nineteenth-century houses on regularly spaced lots interspersed with a few post World War II era homes. Across the street is the McKinley School, a two story frame building erected in 1852, and three doors west of the Hall is the United Methodist Church built in 1833 and extensively remodeled in 1873. Harmony Hall faces south and is situated at the center of a .15 acre flat parcel of land which is too small to provide off street parking or even a driveway for the 36 x 44 foot building. A small raised garden bed is situated on a small grassy lawn located between the brick paths that lead to the two front doors.

The design of the Universalist Church remains evident although the structure was significantly altered in 1895 with the removal of the original belfry and the installation of a three story tower centered on the south facade. The roughly square tower protrudes approximately eight feet from the facade of the main mass. Vertically it is divided into three unequal stages by two cornices. The lowest stage is clad in flushboard siding and features an open, pointed arch bay on the front and side elevations. The second, taller stage is clad in shaped shingles. This section contains a two-over-two sash window topped with a fixed, three-light tracery-style sash on each of the three elevations; these windows are set just above the first cornice. The third stage, or belfry, rises above the ridge of the main building's roof and has an open pointed bay on all four sides of the tower. This level is clad with flush board sheathing and the corners are marked with narrow corner boards. Within the belfry is a massive wheel and bell, the latter of which is marked "341" and "REVERE BOSTON".¹ Finally, the tower has a low pyramidal roof topped by a handsome weathervane. Early twentieth century postcards indicate that the tower was painted in contrasting polychrome colors, which highlighted the Queen Anne style patterned shingles.

In contrast to the Queen Anne and Gothic Revival details found on the tower, the facade of the main building exhibits restrained, transitional Federal to Greek Revival stylistic elements. On either side of the tower the tripartite facade contains paired three-panel doors set in plain surrounds topped with a narrow moulded entablature. The clapboarded wall also contains four Tuscan pilasters (two on each corner and two flanking the tower), which support a wide frieze board under a thickly moulded, fully returned and pedimented cornice. A low, painted wooden deck, with a single step in front of each of the doors, spans the front of the Hall and obscures the foundation.

¹ As per Reed, this bell was manufactured in 1827 and purchased for use in the Universalist Chapel by Hampden resident Martin Kinsley.

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The east and west elevations each contain three equally distributed window bays containing fifteen-over-fifteen light wooden sash topped with a pointed arch tracery light divided into 15 panes by curved muntins. Neither of the side walls feature the predominant frieze seen on the facade. Indeed the front corner pilasters do not wrap around to the side walls, rather the corners of the walls are marked with narrow corner boards. The north elevation is devoid of fenestration, and the clapboard siding continues unabated into the attic story: thus there is no pediment. The roof is clad with asphalt shingles and a thin brick chimney pierces the west plane of the roof in the front third of the building just above the eaves. Built without a full foundation, the Hall rests on granite capstones.

The interior of Harmony Hall exhibits a mixture of the original church and its later modifications. On the first floor it is dominated by the nearly square meeting room or auditorium at the center and a stage set under a square proscenium located in the north quarter of the building. On the second level, a gently curving u-shaped gallery extends alongside the west wall, spans the south wall and continues along the east wall. The gallery is accessed by a tight winder stair located in the eastern of the two entry vestibules. The western vestibule originally contained a matching staircase but this was removed in 1895 when the building was remodeled. In its place a small kitchen workspace has been established. Six panel doors lead from the vestibules to the main hall. Directly under the south wall of the gallery, and between the two vestibules is a wide alcove with a low platform and low ceiling. This alcove is open to the auditorium and a small serving window is located in the wall shared with the kitchen. Between the alcove and the vestibule doorways, and under the front edge of the gallery, are two engaged Tuscan columns.

The side walls of the auditorium have matchboard wainscot with painted rails and plaster walls above. Solid cherry paneled interior shutters fit over the portion of the lower window sash which are exposed below the gallery. Wide pine boards laid longitudinally provide the flooring in the main part of the auditorium. Two sets of dutchmen, running roughly parallel in lines that stretch from the stage towards the alcove, show the location of earlier pew supports. Another pair of scars in the floor, consisting of very narrow filler boards, run in parallel lines from the engaged columns to the stage and indicate the interior edges of the original aisles. (The filler board is the width of the earlier box pew walls.) Directly under the side galleries the auditorium floor rises six inches to platforms that reach to the exterior walls. Here the pine flooring is laid transversely. Additional lines of dutchmen, in the middle of the floor and along the interior edges of the platform, again demarcate the location of pew walls.

The stage protrudes into the hall past the sides of the proscenium arch. The front of the stage is finished with a series of panels which had previously been the doors to the box pews. Each door has two panels and a top rail. Two lecterns on the stage also feature a similar motif (but with beveled, grain-painted panels rather than flat panels) and they also may have been a feature dating to the church era. The rear wall of the stage has a painted backdrop depicting a romantic view of a small Greek temple. Painted c. 1915, close examination of this wall reveals the frame of an arched opening (window?) that was plastered over before the mural was painted. No sign of this opening is visible on the exterior north wall. The proscenium arch is formed by a simple entablature

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topped with a moulded cornice, and supported by pilasters set over moulded plinths. The pilasters are decorated at the top with wooden, scroll saw-cut Ionic volutes applied to the face of the shaft in place of capitals. To either side of the stage are three-panel doors with glass upper lights which have been painted and decorated on the auditorium side. Behind these doors two stairs access side chambers adjacent to the stage. Some of the pine flooring in the east side chamber has traces of very old and elegant stenciling. In the exterior corner of each chamber is a steep staircase that leads to similarly sized upper chambers at the balcony level.

The gallery is paneled on the front and hangs from roof trusses by cast iron rods which run through the plaster of the coved ceiling. It has one tier of raised seating with high backed pews which follow the curve of the balcony. Several built-in benches and old, free-standing pew benches are positioned against the exterior walls of the balcony. In the middle of the south wall a door opens to the second level of the tower and provides access to the hanging rope for the bell wheel and a ladder to the belfry. Narrow four-panel doors lead from the ends of the balcony to the upper side chambers. These doors contain mirror glass which has been painted over on both sides in their upper panels. In these rooms the two-level gallery floor has been raised to a uniform height. Additional pieces of the original pews, some still containing door hardware, have been attached to studs and form the upper side stage walls. Paint shadows against the north wall of these upper chambers indicate that originally the gallery seating continued unabated around the entire balcony, and that the end rows were removed when the chambers were enclosed and the staircases constructed.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- 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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1895 - 1957

Significant Dates

1896

1898

C. 1915-20

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Stubbs, Lemuel K., builder (1895/6 remodeling)

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Located in the Penobscot County town of Hampden, Maine, Harmony Hall is a facility that since 1896 has served as a public venue for civic groups associated with public advancement and education, as well as a venue for entertainment. The eclectic building, which exhibits elements of Federal, Greek Revival, Gothic Revival and Queen Anne architectural styles was originally built as the Universalist Chapel in 1829 and substantially renovated for use as a social meeting hall by the Village Improvement Society in 1895/6. The Village Improvement Society was the first of several, female-centered organizations associated with the Hall that focused on a progressive agenda during the early 20th century and the last years of the 19th century. Designated as a local landmark by the Hampden Historic Preservation Commission in 1993 for its association with local womens' organizations, the building derives National Register of Historic Places significance under Criterion A, for social history, from its association with the Village Improvement Society, the Dorothea Dix Memorial Association, the Hampden Garden Club, and its use by local Suffragists. By virtue of the fact that the building was originally constructed as a church, although it did not function as one during its period of significance, criterion consideration A also applies.

The building now known as Harmony Hall was erected in 1828 and sold to the Proprietors of the Universalist Chapel in July 1829. The church was the second house of worship constructed in the town of Hampden, whose Methodist, Congregationalist, Universalists and Baptists had been meeting in the Union Church since 1794. Less than a decade after the Universalist Chapel was built each of the other denominations also erected houses of worship: the Methodist Church on Kennebec Road in 1833; the First Baptist Church in 1834; and the Congregational Church in 1835. It is worth noting that each of these buildings followed a common pattern: gable front facades, three bay long side elevations and low belfries straddling the ridge just behind the facade. According to local sources, as originally constructed the Universalist Chapel had "a belfry a little taller than the one on the Methodist Church with a domed top and the weather cock. There was a bit of trim, like a low fence, round the top with a pinnacle at each corner". (Reed, p. 1). Based on this description, and visible alterations in the attic story, it is probable that the belfry sat over the entry vestibules in the first quarter of the building. While the precise configuration of the interior space is unknown, it was outfitted with three sections of box pews separated by two aisles. Additional seating space was installed in the three sided gallery. Box stoves at the back of the room connected to a pair of chimneys in the north wall of the building. Little is known about the trajectory of the Universalist Society in Hampden, but by 1885 services ceased to be held at the Chapel and the building was closed.

Ten years later the Village Improvement Society obtained the Chapel and undertook extensive alterations to the building. Despite the interesting and clear evidence for the building's early religious function, the period of significance for this nomination begins with its rededication as Harmony Hall. The following account, excerpted from Historical Sketches [of] Hampden, Maine (1976) relates the

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transformation of the building from religious structure to community venue.

In 1895, the Village Improvement Society was organized and, after much discussion, the Society was given permission to use the building. The conditions were that no changes be made to the building which would make it unsuitable for use if the church society should decide to become active again. Therefore, a new chimney was built, the pews removed from the main floor, and one entry made into a small kitchen. When the belfry was examined it was found that the base had decayed so badly there was danger of the bell falling down, so a tower was built on the front of the building instead of replacing the belfry. All this work was done by local men, volunteering their time. The money for materials not donated was raised by various entertainments held in the hall. When all was completed, a dedication ceremony was held with speakers, and a poem, entitled "Harmony Hall", written by Reverend Arthur J. Lockhart, the pastor of the Methodist Church, was read. Dancing parties were banned as the ladies thought them not exhibiting proper respect for what had been a church and might be again. (Hamden Historical Society, p. 103).

According to the *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier* Harmony Hall was dedicated in February 1896, although the tower was not completed until November of that year. The Village Improvement Society was organized by twenty-nine people in November of 1895, and they leased the former chapel for twenty-five years. The association was one of a loose group of similar organizations that focused on a progressive agenda of social uplift through beautification and improvement of the built environment of cities, towns, and villages. Historian Linda E. Smeins explains the context in which these groups flourished during the 19th century.

Life in an ideal American community proposed detached houses with well-tended lawns, closely knit nuclear families, belonging to a community of like-minded individuals, social status associated with middle-class hegemony, and civic pride and based on economic and geographic growth. Among all of the active organizations joined by nineteenth-century community members, none so cogently united these suppositions as village improvement associations. Organized village improvement began in a few New England towns before the Civil War, but the impetus came during the years leading to the Centennial...Birdsey Grant Northrup, a secretary of the Connecticut State Board of Education, was one of the most ardent supporters of the movement. From his 1869 tract "How to Beautify and Build Up Our County Town" until 1880 he helped organize approximately one hundred societies in New England and the Middle Atlantic states. A decade later, the *New York Tribune* spread the word of beautification by republishing his tract "Rural Improvement Associations." The newspaper sold it for the small sum of three dollars per one hundred, which made it possible for communities to spread his goals to improve civic, domestic and individual lives. The tract encouraged residents "to cultivate public spirit, and foster town pride, quicken intellectual life, promote good fellowship, public health, improvement of roads, roadsides, and sidewalks, street lights, public parks, improvement of home and home life, ornamental and economic

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tree-planting, improvement of railroad-stations, rustic roadside seats for pedestrians, [and] betterment of factory surroundings." (Smeins, p. 86-7).

Smeins further notes that it was largely the women in the communities who led village improvement activities, stating that "completion of the work depended on philanthropic support from the community, and women plied their social networks to solicit membership, participation and impressive amounts of money". (Smeins, p. 88). This appears to have been the case in Hampden, as related in two of the verses of Reverend A. J. Lockhart's poem, 'Harmony Hall':

But the Ladies in council began to convene,
And a different order of things has been seen;
For Village Improvement is now in the air,
And we will not demolish but shortly repair.

The joiners and painters and masons combine
To straighten the crooked and make the dull shine.
They cut down expenses and made the things go,
For men will work cheap for the women you know.²

Indeed, from 1895 through to the present Harmony Hall has been largely associated with women's groups involved with civic beautification and social uplift. No record has been found to date that reflects the mission of the Hampden Village Improvement Society, nor is it known whether they undertook any public improvements other than repairing the old Unitarian Chapel. However, the progressive use of the building was foretold in another of Lockhart's verses:

The brother and sisters who work for reform
Shall find the lamps lighted, and feel the house warm;
The singer and speaker may hither repair;
These walls shall re-echo the sermon and prayer.

According to the poem, Harmony Hall was dedicated on the anniversary of the birth of Susan B. Anthony, February 15, 1896. Two years later, Anthony came to Hampden for the annual convention of the Maine Woman Suffrage Association and the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the first woman's right convention. Susan Brownell Anthony (1820-1906) was one of the two most effective and influential leaders of the woman's suffrage movement; the other was Elizabeth Cady Stanton, with whom she worked beginning in 1851. An important abolitionist before the Civil War, Anthony worked with single minded intensity for woman's civil and political rights all her life. At the time of her

²Rev. A. J. Lockhart. 'Harmony Hall'. February 15, 1896. Reprinted in Historical Sketches Hampden Maine, p. 124.

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visit to Hampden, she was president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association and had been prominent in the movement, having even endured imprisonment, for nearly fifty years. Her visit to Hampden was extensively noted in the local papers, and that she addressed the Maine convention at Harmony Hall continues to be a mark of enduring pride for local citizens.

Another of the local women's groups that utilized Harmony Hall was the National Dorothea Dix Memorial Association. Dix, who was born in Hampden in 1802, was another figure of seminal importance in women's history. A noted social reformer, Dix was first an educator who then spent more than two decades advocating for improved care for the mentally ill and the prison population. During the Civil War she headed the Union's nursing division and is credited with helping to establish nursing as a women's profession. In Hampden, the Dorothea Dix Memorial Association designed and built a memorial park in Dix's honor, established local recognition of Dix's birthplace, and lobbied the US Congress to establish a monument in her name. The local association, which was dedicated to preserving Dix's philanthropic spirit and memory, counted among their numbers "the ladies of Hampden [who] control Harmony Hall" and they used the building for many of their events including fund raising fairs. (*Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*, November 21, 1899). Not all of the "improvement" activities at Harmony Hall were of a serious nature however. In 1901 the 'Ladies of Hampden, Under the Auspices of the Village Improvement Society' presented a show entitled the 'Old Maid's Convention' at the Hall, during which, according to a surviving hand bill, "Madam Pinkerton will present with her Electric Transform[h]er. She will transform Spinsters into Charming Maidens, change Blondes into Brunettes, etc."³ Other small lectures and entertainments were held there, as well as occasional school events for the McKinley school across the street. In addition, a little activity by mens fraternal societies is part of the record in the first decade of this century, and at about this time, basketball was introduced to Hampden, and the hall was used for two or three years as an indoor court in the winter.

According to an account by Nathan W. Cole written in 1951, in about 1915 or 1920, a local theatrical group took over the hall. The members of the group straightened the granite underpinnings, rewired the building, widened the stage, added the doors to the dressing rooms (upper stage chambers) and installed stage curtains. They were also responsible for painting the Grecian temple backdrop. The men worked in secret, behind darkened windows and closed doors hoping to stage a surprise performance and recoup their investment, but according to Cole, someone "put a crimp in the works when she let someone have the key and put on some kind of a show before the job was completed." (Cole, in Reed, p. 9). The modifications to the stage, however, enabled a greater use of the building for entertainment functions.

³A portion of this handbill is reprinted in Historical Sketches Hampden Maine, p. 128. A copy of a longer version of the advertisement for the same show is on file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine.

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After a short-lived revival in the early 1930s the Village Improvement Society evolved into the Hampden Highlands Garden Club. Formed in 1936, the Hampden Highlands Garden Club joined the Garden Club Federation of Maine, an organization which encouraged not just flower design and gardening but civic and environmental responsibility. Reflecting in part the progressive agenda of the Village Improvement organizations of the earlier era, the state's garden clubs during their early years lobbied for beautification of the roadsides, restricting billboards, and conservation of native flora and fauna. In more recent years their "civic work consists of placing window boxes and planting flower beds around town each summer, planting trees and shrubs, and donating books and terrariums to the schools" as well as sponsoring children's enrollment at a local conservation camp. (Historical Sketches, p. 120). The Hampden Garden Club took title to the building in 1967 and they continue to hold their meetings there during the warmer months. In addition they make the Hall available for the use of civic groups and special events. Despite the minor interruption in the use of the building by fraternal and theatrical groups, Harmony Hall is a building that for over 100 years has been associated with women's progressive political and social activities in the community of Hampden.

Note: This nomination is based in part on a draft National Register of Historic Places Registration form for Harmony Hall prepared by Deborah Thompson, Ph.D. of Bangor, Maine in 1994.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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"Woman's Suffrage Convention" in *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier*. September 29, 1898. (Bangor, Maine). See also similar articles published in the *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier* on August 27, September 26 and 26, 1898. Copies on file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, Maine.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .15 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 9	5 1 2 3 1 2	4 9 5 3 0 2 8
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	1 9		

3	1 9		
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	1 9		

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Deborah Thompson, Ph.d., Consultant, (Draft, 1994) and Christi A. Mitchell, Architectural Historian
 organization MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION date 26 February 2007
 street & number 55 CAPITOL STREET, STATION 65 telephone (207) 287-2132
 city or town AUGUSTA state ME zip code 04333 -0065

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
 street & number _____ telephone _____
 city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries of the nominated property are depicted on the Town of Hampden tax map # 43, lot 31.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The above described boundaries reflect the current limits of all the property associated with Harmony Hall, as deeded from Franklin R. Tolman to the Hampden Garden Club and recorded in the Penobscot County Registry of Deeds, October 25, 1966, book 2077, page 348.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1 of 4
Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
12 February 2007
South facade; facing northwest.

Photograph 2 of 4
Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
12 February 2007
Tracery window, east elevation; facing west.

Photograph 3 of 4
Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
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Interior of hall; facing north.

Photograph 4 of 4
Christi A. Mitchell
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
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Interior of hall; facing south.