

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 any 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 Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse (preferred)  
other names/site number Scituate Upper Meetinghouse

2. Location

street & number Washington Street and Schoosett Street not for publication  
city or town Pembroke vicinity  
state Massachusetts code MA county Plymouth code 023 zip code 02359

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Brona Simon July 19, 2006

Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon Date  
Massachusetts Historical Commission, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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):

for  
Signature of the Keeper  
Edouard H. Ball

Date of Action

9-6-06

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	building
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

religious facility, meetinghouse

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

museum

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Federal

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation fieldstone

walls wood clapboard and shingles

roof wood shingles

other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**Part 7 Description**

The Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse is a well-preserved example of the distinctive houses of worship built by Protestants known as the Society of Friends or Quakers. This example is one of the oldest Quaker meetinghouses in New England, established in 1706 for Scituate Friends and originally known as the Upper Meeting. Although it has experienced alterations since that time, the building's structure and interior, in particular the articulated and decorated frame and the upper gallery, are extraordinary survivals, both for their age and the quality of their execution. Much of its current appearance is the result of remodeling in 1833 and 1853, which created the familiar form of a Quaker meetinghouse, with the paired entries and divided interior that signaled the gender equality that distinguished Friends. On the exterior the roof was replaced and an entry porch was added to the south side, while on the interior new benches and a movable partition were added to the first floor. The building underwent a gentle restoration in the 1920s and stabilization in 1988; fabric removal at that time allowed for an examination of usually covered features, providing critical evidence about the building's history.

The Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse sits at an important intersection, on Washington Street (or MA Route 53), a regional thoroughfare established in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, at its intersection with Schoosett Street (MA Route 139). The earlier path of Washington Street is also part of the intersection. In addition to the meetinghouse, the small parcel includes a woodshed and a burying ground, and the lot is surrounded by a low stonewall. The meetinghouse faces south onto Schoosett Street, and the woodshed is located off its northeast corner. The woodshed was constructed in 1841 and measures about twelve feet square. In contrast to the earliest section of the meetinghouse, which is of plank construction, the shed was constructed using studs, as were the later alterations to the meetinghouse. Covered in clapboards with a shingled gable roof, the wood shed has an entry into each side of its divided interior. One door is located on the south gable end, serving the narrower woodshed on the west side, another on the east wall near the south corner, serving the wider east side which once included a privy; the only windows are two centered on the west wall near the building's eaves. **(photo #1)**

Behind the meetinghouse is the burying ground, and no wall or fence divides it from the remainder of the parcel. **(photo #3)** Although there is mention of a burying ground, Friends did not commonly mark graves. Earlier stones may not have been sufficiently durable to survive. Today most of the ca. 20 stones are arranged generally into five rows, and most are small and simple, about a foot high now above grade and about four

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inches thick. Most have a segmental-arched top, although some are angled, and are inscribed in a sans serif typeface. On each stone, the decedent is named, as is the decedent's spouse, the dates of birth and death are noted, in the Quaker mode of numbering rather than naming the months, and occasionally the age at death is included. Common surnames in the yard include Estes, Lefurgey, Shepherd, and West, with stones of Bailey, Otis, and Phillips families as well. The earliest identifiable date is 1794 while the most recent is ca. 1931, but it is likely that earlier burials occurred here.

The present form of the Pembroke Meetinghouse is the 'doubled ' shape and plan common to Friends meetinghouses since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, a form it achieved in 1833. The main block of the meetinghouse is two stories in height under a gable roof that runs parallel to the facade, and measures about 27 feet square, with its primary entries on the south side. The entries are enclosed within a gable-roofed, two-story entry porch, measuring about 17' across, 10' deep, and 18' to its ridge, with the paired entries that are emblematic of Quaker meetinghouses. The entries have a simple molded architrave surround and are fitted with six-panel doors of the second quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The meetinghouse is regularly fenestrated with primarily 6/6 sash trimmed with a simple molded cap' dating to 1853. The porch includes a single 12/12 window in the gable of the entry porch, the only surviving window from 1833, and another window on each of its east and west side walls. On the main block the windows are slightly larger, with two single-story windows flanking the entry porch on the south side, two widely-spaced windows per floor on the east and west sides, and no openings on the north. The porch is shingled and painted white, while three sides of the main block are clapboarded and painted white and the east wall, the one facing away from the streets, is shingled and unpainted. On the main block, the eaves are shallow and the raking eaves are nearly flush with the end walls. On the porch, the raking eaves overhang somewhat and terminate in returns. A brick chimney rises from the eastern end of the roof ridge; at its base, there is a bulge in the center of the shingled wall perhaps accommodating an alteration to the chimney. The building sits on fieldstone footings but has no cellar. **(photo #1)**

Of the original meetinghouse of 1706, the best-preserved portion is its frame, fully articulated and richly decorated in the manner of early New England buildings. The structure is composed of three bays, wider in the center than on each side. There are four sets of large posts on each of the front (south) and back (north) walls, with two smaller posts along each of the side walls. **(photo #3)** These posts are set into large sills and topped by plates and tie beams; only one of the original sills survives. In the garret, evidence survives to suggest that the building was originally topped by a hip roof, in the mortises that survive along the

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plates and girts, and in the whitewash line on the chimney. The gallery is supported by mid-level girts in the east and west side walls and running across the building's interior. At the plate level, the inner tie beams are slightly offset toward the center of the building from the lower inner girts. Falling braces from the posts to the girts and rails running between the posts at a height of about 3½' are used to secure the frame. The walls are plank framed, an exterior walling composed of boards 1½-2" thick and about 18" wide. The character of the finish of this frame is among the finest to survive in the Commonwealth. All of the major framing members are finished with fine quarter-round and flat chamfers, finished with coved and lamb's tongue stops, and often enriched with terminal pips, while the post heads are richly molded. The richest treatment was used on the girts, the most visible section of the frame, with progressively simpler treatment accorded to the plates and ties, then the corner posts, the story posts, door jambs, and gallery rails. Surviving reused roof fabric shows that the roof frame was chamfered as well, suggesting that it was open to view.

The original plan of the meetinghouse is not certainly known, but it was likely that an entry was centered in the south wall and the elders bench was located along the opposite north wall. Another door in the west wall is known from physical evidence, the original stair was located in the southeast corner, and the building had a chimney in the east wall by the 1740s. In addition, an exceptional amount of early material survives of the original interior in the gallery. The plaster of the gallery is still applied between the framing members rather than over them, leaving their elaborate treatment exposed to view. The truly exceptional survivals are the rails and benches in the gallery, which may be the only fittings of this age to survive in-situ. The perimeter of the gallery is screened by an open rail, composed of narrowly spaced posts, with three rails set into them and a ledge set on top. These horizontals are of various widths and are decorated with an ogee at their edges. Behind the rail, there are two sets of benches, one set higher than the other to allow a clear view. The backs of the benches match the construction of the gallery rail, without the central rail. The ends of the benches are boards cut to form a graceful downward curve terminating in a tight scroll. Originally arranged along the east, south, and west walls, the south section of benches has been cut down to accommodate the later construction of an entry and stair tower, whose doors were located here. (photo #4)

A significant portion of the building's finish and its current appearance is the result of the significant changes of 1833. At that time, the building underwent a remodeling that followed the pattern established among Friends for their meetinghouses, first in the Delaware Valley at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and in other Friends communities during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. These changes brought the building up to date with both regional taste and denominational practice that created spaces of equal size and finish for each gender. The

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hip roof was replaced, an enclosed entry and stair porch was added to the main south entry, and the interior was provided with a sliding partition and its finish updated. When the old hip roof was removed, the present king-post gable roof replaced it. The four king posts sit on the end ties and new inner ties, with four sets of principal rafters. These rafters were complemented by single principle purlins offset one from the other, by pairs of common rafters, and by struts extending from the king post to the principal rafter. In the process of making this change, the inner tie beams were replaced and one set of plates was spliced to allow an extension of the eave overhang, accompanied by the removal of the corner ties; short lengths of false plate were inserted to accept the new, longer rafters. The chimney was rebuilt to extend above the new height of the roof. The porch was constructed using studs rather than plank, as were the new gable ends of the main block. The creation of separate entries was perhaps the chief reason for this addition, and each door led to a hall which mirrored the other. Each included a stair on the partition wall, fitted with plain balusters and terminating in a turned newel, and with a closet beneath the stair, fitted with a board and batten door. With the addition of these new entries, the door on the west side of the meetinghouse was closed. New windows were also installed, of plank construction with 12/12 sash within molded surrounds. One survives in the gable end of the porch, while window surrounds survive on the side wall windows of the porch. Remnants of these windows and frames and of the roof were reused in the construction of the porch and in the support structure of the elders bench in the next round of alterations.

On the interior significant changes were made as well. Beneath the new roof, a ceiling was installed, blocking off the garret from the main rooms of the meetinghouse. Horizontal wainscot was installed on the building's exterior walls to the level of the rails. A large interior partition was also constructed, a feature common to Friends meetinghouses which allowed men and women to have separate business meetings. **(photo #2)** This one is constructed to hang from a long horizontal beam running north-south across the meeting house and framed into the plates, and with five long planks between the floor and the beam to support the walls. The verticals are composed of wide planks at the north and south ends and the center, narrower in the inner positions. Vertical beaded boards form the stationary sections of the partition, including the entire south section, the lower section of first floor wall, and the upper section at the gallery level. Three sliding sections compose the center section of the walls in the three central and northern sections of the partition. Weighted to slide up and down as needed, each of these sliding sections is constructed with four stiles and three rails that create spaces for twelve flat panels. At the gallery level, the old corner stair was closed and a length of the pews was removed, to allow circulation from the new doors from the new porch. Those doors appear to have been formerly exterior doors, perhaps the double-leafed door first used on the primary south elevation.

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In 1853 another round of repair was undertaken, continuing the process of improving the building's finish. On the exterior, three walls were covered in clapboards, the south, the north, and the west. (photo #1) New windows were also installed on the main block, of box construction, with a cap composed of a thick torus, a fillet, and a cove and bead, and plain sill and stiles. Four were installed on each of the east and west walls and two on the south front, employing larger panes of glass in a 6/6 arrangement. These window surrounds survive on the main block and their sash survive on the east wall of the main block. On the porch, the earlier plank cases were retained but fitted with new 6/6 sash; sash survives on the east wall. Blinds were added to the windows as well. On the interior, the improvement of the first floor continued. The walls at this level were furred out to cover the frame and a new floor was installed. New benches were installed, with three benches along the north wall, elevated and tiered as elders' benches, and four rows of facing benches set on the floor. It is not certain that the present configuration was established at this time, since the floor was again replaced. The simple open-back benches have the ogee arms that characterize mid-19<sup>th</sup> century work. (photo #4)

With the decline in membership and the closing of the meeting in 1876, no work is known to have been done on the meetinghouse until 1929, when the building was purchased and repaired by Gilbert H. West and Horace T. Fogg. Three sills were replaced and the post ends were repaired; some of the window sash appear to have been replaced at this time, along the east wall of the main block and the west wall of the porch. Nearly sixty years later, in 1988, similar repairs were undertaken to repair the exterior wall cover, the chimney, and the first floor boards. The Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse has been well protected by its stewards and survives as an exceptionally well-preserved example of early ecclesiastical architecture, an outstanding resource within the Commonwealth and New England.

**Archaeological Description**

While no ancient Native American sites are recorded on the meetinghouse property, sites may be present. Eleven sites are recorded in the general area (within one mile). Environmental characteristics of the property represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of Native sites. The meetinghouse is located on a well drained, level to moderately sloping ground moraine within 1,000 feet of wetlands. Soils in the area are sandy, formed in glacial till, and very stony. Stones on the surface range from one to three feet in diameter. Stony soils may adversely affect the site sensitivity for this area. Floodplain wetlands of the North River are located southwest of the property. The

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North River is part of the South Coastal drainage area. Given the above information, the small size of the nominated property (0.75 acres) and historic land use, a moderate potential exists for locating ancient Native American resources on the nominated property.

A high potential exists for locating historic archaeological resources on the meetinghouse property. Structural evidence may survive from the "little meetinghouse" built on the east side of the meetinghouse by 1725, then removed in 1779. Structural evidence may also survive from barns, horse sheds, carriage sheds, and outbuildings that may have existed on the property. At least one horse shed (date unknown) is pictured in historic views of the meetinghouse. Occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) may exist in the area surrounding the meetinghouse. The wider east side of the woodshed (1841) located off the northeast corner of the meetinghouse originally contained a privy; other privies may also exist. The area immediately surrounding the meetinghouse may also contain structural evidence and other types of archaeological features related to the original construction of the meetinghouse (1706) and remodeling that occurred in 1833 and 1853. Unmarked graves are also likely on the nominated property, especially within and around the periphery of the existing burying ground.

(end)

Name of Property Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse

County and State Plymouth, Massachusetts

**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 religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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**

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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Community Planning and Development
- Religion
- Social History
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1706-1956

**Significant Dates**

1833, 1853, 1876, 1929

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Preservation Studies Program, Boston University  
HABS

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### Part 8 Significance

The Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse is the oldest surviving Quaker meetinghouse in Massachusetts, and likely to be the fourth oldest in New England, after Newport (1699), Portsmouth (1700), and Saylesville (1704) in Rhode Island. It is further distinguished by the exceptional survival of its gallery rails and benches, probably the oldest meetinghouse fittings to survive in the entire region. The building was remodeled twice in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, bringing it into the then current form for Friends meetinghouses, with an entry porch with two entries and a divided meeting room, both representing the denominational emphasis on the equality of the genders. The meetinghouse is located in southeastern Massachusetts, one of the strongholds of Friends within the Commonwealth of Congregationalists, and testament to the regional tradition of dissent. The Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse therefore meets criteria A and C of the National Register for Historic Places at the local and state level of significance. The property retains integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, materials, design, and workmanship.

The Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse is located in Pembroke, Plymouth County, Massachusetts, in the northern section that was originally part of the town of Scituate. This section of Massachusetts was first settled in 1620 at Plymouth, and the area was a separate colony until 1685 when it was incorporated into the Massachusetts Bay as Plymouth County. During the 1630s, new towns were established in the colony, including Scituate in 1633, Duxbury in 1637, and Marshfield in 1640. As population increased and settlement moved westward from the coast, once large towns were subsequently divided into smaller ones, including the formation of Pembroke in 1712. Like other towns in southeastern Massachusetts, Pembroke's economy rested on agriculture and shipbuilding through the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, with a landscape of dispersed farmsteads and few villages. Although no railroad served the town, these pursuits were complemented by small-scale manufacturing and later focused on cranberries and poultry. More recently the town has experienced intense suburban development.

The Society of Friends is but one example of the variety of dissenters, including the Pilgrim settlers of Plymouth and the Puritans of Massachusetts, which played a role in the English Protestant Reformed tradition. These dissenters hoped to purge the established Church of England of remnants of "popish" ritual and practice, by reestablishing many of the simpler traditions of the early church and by relying more heavily on preaching and on evidence of individual conversion. With the increased availability of the English vernacular

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Bible, they used knowledge of the Word of God to revive discipline and piety in both the laity and the clergy. They downplayed the efficacy of works and made important changes in the liturgical year and the role of the sacraments in their order of worship. The Society of Friends were among the most radical of these groups and took root in the north of England during the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, its adherents known for quaking with the truth of God. Quaker theology emphasized guidance from the "inner light" and rejected hierarchy, sacraments, and paid ministers in their worship. Individuals who spoke the truth addressed public gatherings

of worshippers, and men and women took equal roles. In addition to the local weekly meeting, the Friends established a hierarchy of meetings, with neighboring groups meeting together on monthly basis, larger areas coming together on a quarterly basis, and all New England meetings coming together for the yearly meeting at Newport. In addition to worship, business meetings handled Quaker discipline, separately for men and for women. This distinctive organization of Friends meetings, a pyramid of meetings for worship and business, helped the group to grow and flourish.

Massachusetts Bay was notorious for its poor treatment of Quaker missionaries when they arrived in New England in the 1650s, but Plymouth Colony presented a more open environment and Quaker missionaries found a region ripe for "convincing." Meetings in this area began as early as 1660, and when New England Friends were first organized into meetings in 1672, one of the meetings was located in nearby Duxbury. By 1678 the first meetinghouse was built for a group of Friends in Scituate and the meeting then took that name. As the population of the area expanded, a second meetinghouse was constructed in 1706, at first known as Scituate upper meetinghouse, to distinguish it from the older lower meetinghouse, and later known as the Pembroke Meetinghouse. Robert Barker was appointed to build the meetinghouse, although it is unclear whether he did the building or acted as undertaker; Barker also donated the land for the meetinghouse. Over the next century and a half the Pembroke friends expanded their lot three times, purchasing small lots in 1753, 1814, and 1855. Although conversions were early in this section of Massachusetts, later expansion was focused further to the south along the coast of Massachusetts and particularly in Rhode Island. At the head was the New England Yearly Meeting in Newport, while at the bottom local or preparative meetings came together weekly for worship, as at these meetings in Scituate and Pembroke. Monthly and quarterly meetings were established for business and discipline, located where Friends were most numerous. Pembroke served as a monthly meeting under the Sandwich Quarterly Meeting, and remained active until the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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The Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse is an important document in the development of Quaker architecture in New England and along the Atlantic coast. Its early date makes it a rare example of the early phases of Quaker meetinghouse development, and its changing form demonstrates the mix of regional traditions and denominational requirements that characterizes early ecclesiastical architecture. Like most New England meetinghouses, those built by Quakers drew on the tradition of the auditory room plan, a design that emphasized the ability of the congregants to hear the preaching of the Word and distinguished the Protestant form of worship from the sacramental style of Roman Catholic services. Thus their buildings were more nearly square than earlier churches, consisting of a single open space within which the several denominations made adjustments to accommodate the particular requirements of their order of worship, placing greater or lesser emphases on the liturgical spaces assigned to preaching, communion, and baptism. In New England, meetinghouses were most commonly constructed of wood, within the timber-framing tradition of the region that included large articulated framing members. Research on Congregational meetinghouses of this period, by far the most numerous, shows that most were rectangular in shape under a gable roof, although few of these survive from the first century of settlement. Square buildings formed a significant group, with larger examples topped by a high hip roof. The best-known Congregational meetinghouse to survive from this period, Old Ship in Hingham (NR, NHL, 1966), takes this form.

The Pembroke Meetinghouse, like other buildings constructed by Friends, shared many of the features of regional New England meetinghouses of other denominations. Quakers opposed the superfluous ornament of other meetinghouses and "steeple houses," and they eschewed the towers and even the classical door treatments commonly employed on New England meetinghouses. The rather plain buildings were often square or nearly so, constructed of wood, and well executed. The front and rear walls were built parallel to the roof ridge, with a primary entry in the center of the front wall, usually facing south, and secondary entries on the gable ends. These buildings, like houses of the period, are further distinguished by the articulation and decoration of their frames, with smooth surfaces and fine chamfers on their posts, beams, and other framing members. Consistent with its early date, the Pembroke Meetinghouse in its original form was topped by a high hip roof, and its frame was richly decorated, making it similar in form and finish, if not in size, to the earliest configuration of the Newport Friends Meetinghouse. The primary entry was likely in the south wall, the common pattern in early meetinghouses, but later changes probably destroyed that evidence when the porch was constructed in 1833. During the repairs of 1988, evidence of a door on the west side of the building was uncovered, including two studs fitted into the sole surviving sill and a splice in the sill, commonly coinciding with wear and weather. This western door is likely to have been secondary. Physical evidence of a stair in the

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southeast corner is still visible, in the termination of the gallery benches and in the flooring. On the first floor, the frame and walls have been covered, but examination of the fabric behind these furred-out walls showed early if not original lath and plaster applied directly to the planks between the posts.

Unlike other New England denominations, in Quaker meetinghouses no particular liturgical spaces on the interior were emphasized with ornament. Friends' services excluded the familiar liturgical elements of Bible readings or sermons and Friends sat quietly and relied primarily on spontaneous speaking in their service. Elders of the meeting sat on a bench facing the rest of the congregation, a substitute for the richly decorated high pulpit found in many other meetinghouses. At Pembroke, the platform for elders' seating is likely to have been located in the traditional position on the rear or north wall and the floor may have been filled with benches. The remainder of the congregation sat on benches separated by gender, with men on one side of the meetinghouse, and women and young children on the other. Pembroke is extraordinary for the survival of benches in the gallery, as very few meetinghouse fittings survive in *situ* from before the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Only small sections of earlier fabric are known to survive, carved pulpit panels from Medfield, MA, and shadow-molded pew panels from Marblehead, MA, and Bristol, RI. The rarity of fittings of this period makes it difficult to assess their enrichment across denominations. It is, however, important to note the clearly outstanding character of the frame's chamfers, equal to any at Old Ship or within surviving houses in the region, and serving as a reminder that not all ornament was forbidden. Later 18<sup>th</sup> century Friends meetinghouses seem to have employed simpler interior fittings, avoiding the raised paneling commonly used for box pews and gallery breasts in other denominations, but it is not clear this would have been the case earlier in the colonial period.

Since Quakers used their meetinghouses for both regular worship and for business meetings, the buildings often included separate rooms or small additions for these discussions. During business meetings, men and women met separately to review their conduct and their adherence to Quaker discipline. Small additions to Friends meetinghouses were common in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, often providing space for separate women's business meetings. At Pembroke, the documentary and physical evidence of a "little meetinghouse" is an example of this trend, built by 1725 and removed in 1779. It is likely to have been located on the east side of the building where, during the 1988 repair, evidence of lath and plaster was found on the now exterior face of the plank walls. It may have been served by the chimney, where the bulge on the east side may be evidence of an earlier firebox. The presence of heat in this section of the meetinghouse is of particular interest, consistent with other meetings' construction of a "winter house" and suggesting that these spaces could serve a number of purposes during a cold New England winter. In 1811 the Pembroke meeting bought

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**Friends Meetinghouse  
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its first stove and in 1813 decided to lay boards across the open space at the level of the gallery, another accommodation to cold weather that made a smaller space easier to heat.

By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and after over a century in use, the Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse was undoubtedly in need of repair and remodeling to reflect current Quaker practice and local taste. Beginning in the Delaware Valley late in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the earlier asymmetrical arrangement of spaces was replaced by the 'doubled' plan that has come to signify the Quaker meeting. That new plan acknowledged gender equality for business meetings by providing two separate but equal-sized spaces within a single volume. This yielded the familiar form for a Quaker meetinghouse, a single building with separate doors for men and women and a simple interior divided in two by movable panels. In Pembroke, this shift was accomplished in 1833, when the old-fashioned hip roof was removed, a porch was added on the south entry, and an internal partition was installed. The present gable roof created a more common profile for the building and the alterations to windows, eaves, and walls all brought the building into line with the treatment of period buildings in the region. The porch included two entries, one for each gender, and on the interior was divided into two halls and stairs to the gallery. With the new stair location, the original single interior stair was removed, providing more space in the meeting room and gallery. Of particular importance, a partition was added from ceiling to floor, with three large paneled sections that slide up and down, separating and joining the two sides as necessary.

A variety of other projects were undertaken at the meetinghouse over the next several decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, suggesting that the Pembroke Meeting remained strong. In 1841, the meeting voted the construction of the woodhouse, a small gable-roofed building closely adjacent to the northeast corner of the meetinghouse. Covered in clapboards, the building was divided in two on the interior, including a privy and a storage place for wood. More work was completed on the meetinghouse in 1853, to repair the underpinnings that were deteriorated because of their shallow footings, and to provide new six-over-six sash for most of the windows. Although the meeting ordered eight new windows, and "to dispense with two front and two back windows," it appears that ten were added and only the back ones seem to have been closed. The main floor of the meetinghouse was further improved with new plaster on furred out walls, which covered most of its framing. New slip pews were installed, which survive today. Three rows of these pews were arranged on the north wall, with two rows on raised platforms, presumably serving as elders bench. Facing these were four rows for the main body of the congregation. The surviving stones in the burying ground also date to this period, primarily. The property also once included horse sheds, pictured in historic views of the

(continued)

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meetinghouse, but their date is not known. These images suggest that the building resembled others constructed near meetinghouses, long narrow buildings under a low shed roof, with a series of open bays with angled corners serving as stalls.

Numbers in attendance must have been falling as the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed, as the meeting was described as “very much reduced in numbers by death and removals to other meetings,” and like many religious groups, women outnumbered men. This meeting was comparatively isolated from other Friends meetings, clustered further to the south and west. In 1876, the meeting was “laid down,” and its members transferred to New Bedford or Sandwich. Meetings were held occasionally over the turn of the century, and while local historians in the area were concerned about its fate, little action was taken. Then in 1929, interest in the old meetinghouse was led by wealthy residents Horace T. Fogg and Gilbert H. West and more repairs were undertaken. In 1934, the building was recorded as part of the Historic American Buildings Survey. The Pembroke Friends Meeting Association was formed and that group held the meetinghouse until 1974. Its ownership was then transferred to the Pembroke Historical Society. The meetinghouse was occasionally used for worship by a group under the Cambridge Monthly Meeting from 1964 to 1979 and under the Sandwich Monthly Meeting from 1988 to 1992. In 1988, the Pembroke Historical Society received a grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission to stabilize the building. At that time, significant research was conducted on the meetinghouse by local citizens, summarized and expanded by architectural historian James Kyprianos. Since that time, the importance of the meetinghouse has become more generally known. The Pembroke Meetinghouse is an exceptional resource of the town and the Commonwealth, and its listing on the National Register of Historic Places is long overdue.

**Archaeological Significance**

While numerous ancient Native American sites have been recorded in the Pembroke/North River area, few have been systematically or intensively studied, limiting their level of interpretation. Many sites remain undocumented with locational information only. Collections research has contributed some information relating to cultural chronologies, tool technologies, and site type/function based on inferences from artifact tool types and location; however, these collections may reflect collector bias for locations and materials and usually lack intrasite provenance. Professional archaeological surveys and excavations conducted over the last 30 years as part of cultural resource management studies have contributed additional information, however, among over 2,000 such studies conducted statewide in Massachusetts, only 11 were in Pembroke. Given the above information, patterns of ancient Native American settlement in Pembroke remain poorly documented.

**(continued)**

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**Friends Meetinghouse  
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Any surviving sites on the meetinghouse property or in the town have the potential to contribute valuable information relating to the town's Native American history and settlement of the North River drainage.

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to the early phase of Quaker development in Massachusetts. Archaeological survey and testing may document land use of the property prior to construction of the meetinghouse and evidence of activities and structures built after 1706 that no longer survive. Structural evidence and archaeological features may exist in the area immediately surrounding the meetinghouses that identify Quaker construction techniques and earlier architectural features of the meetinghouse that no longer exist today. Archaeological remains are particularly important since they may help reconstruct the original meetinghouse as it was built in 1706. Archaeological evidence may also help document early Quaker architecture in New England and along the Atlantic coast. Similar information may also survive from barns, carriage/horse sheds, or other outbuildings that may have been present. A woodshed (1841) currently exists on the property; however, evidence of earlier and/or later structures may also exist. Detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features may contribute important social, cultural, and economic insights into early Quaker lifeways in southeastern Massachusetts. Important information may exist that documents the ways in which Quaker lifeways and religion varied from other groups of dissenters in Massachusetts and in English Protestant religion.

Unmarked graves may also contribute important information related to the evolution and layout of the meetinghouse facility. Identification and testing of unmarked graves can help define accurate boundaries for the burial ground and its period of use. Detailed analysis of skeletal remains and the contents of graves may contribute an accurate date for the initial use of the burial ground possibly before or after construction of the meetinghouse. Osteological study of skeletal remains may also contribute descriptive information relating to the physical characteristics of the Pembroke Society of Friends and the overall health and pathologies that affected that population. Information may exist that indicates how non-Quakers; buried in the burial ground, were treated by the Quaker community.

(end)

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### Part 9 Bibliography

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Kyprianos, James Z. "The [Pembroke] Friends Meeting House," typescript, 1988.

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Lounsbury, Carl R., personal communications.

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Sinnott, Edmund. *Meetinghouse and Church in Early New England*. New York: Bonanza Books, 1963.

Stattler, Richard D. compiler. *Guide to the Records of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in New England*. Rhode Island Historical Society, 1997.

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(continued)

Name of Property Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse

County and State Plymouth, Massachusetts

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

### UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 19	350760	4662760	3. 19	350860	4662700
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
2. 19	350820	4662780	4. 19	350810	4662700
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing

— 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 Claire W. Dempsey consultant, Pembroke Historical Commission with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date July 2006

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

### 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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Pembroke Historical Society

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Pembroke state MA zip code 02359

**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 the 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 Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Worrall, Arthur J.. *Quakers in the Colonial Northeast*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1980.

(end)

### Part 10

#### Boundary description:

The property boundaries are drawn on the attached assessors map of the Town of Pembroke.

#### Boundary justification:

The proposed boundaries are those historically associated with the property.

(end)

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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Friends Meetinghouse  
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**DATA SHEET**

Meetinghouse	1706, 1833, 1853	clapboard	B/C
Woodshed	1841	clapboard	B/C
Cemetery	18 <sup>th</sup> c.		S/C
Stone wall	18 <sup>th</sup> c.		ST/C

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**Photographer: Thomas Paske**

**Date: 2001**

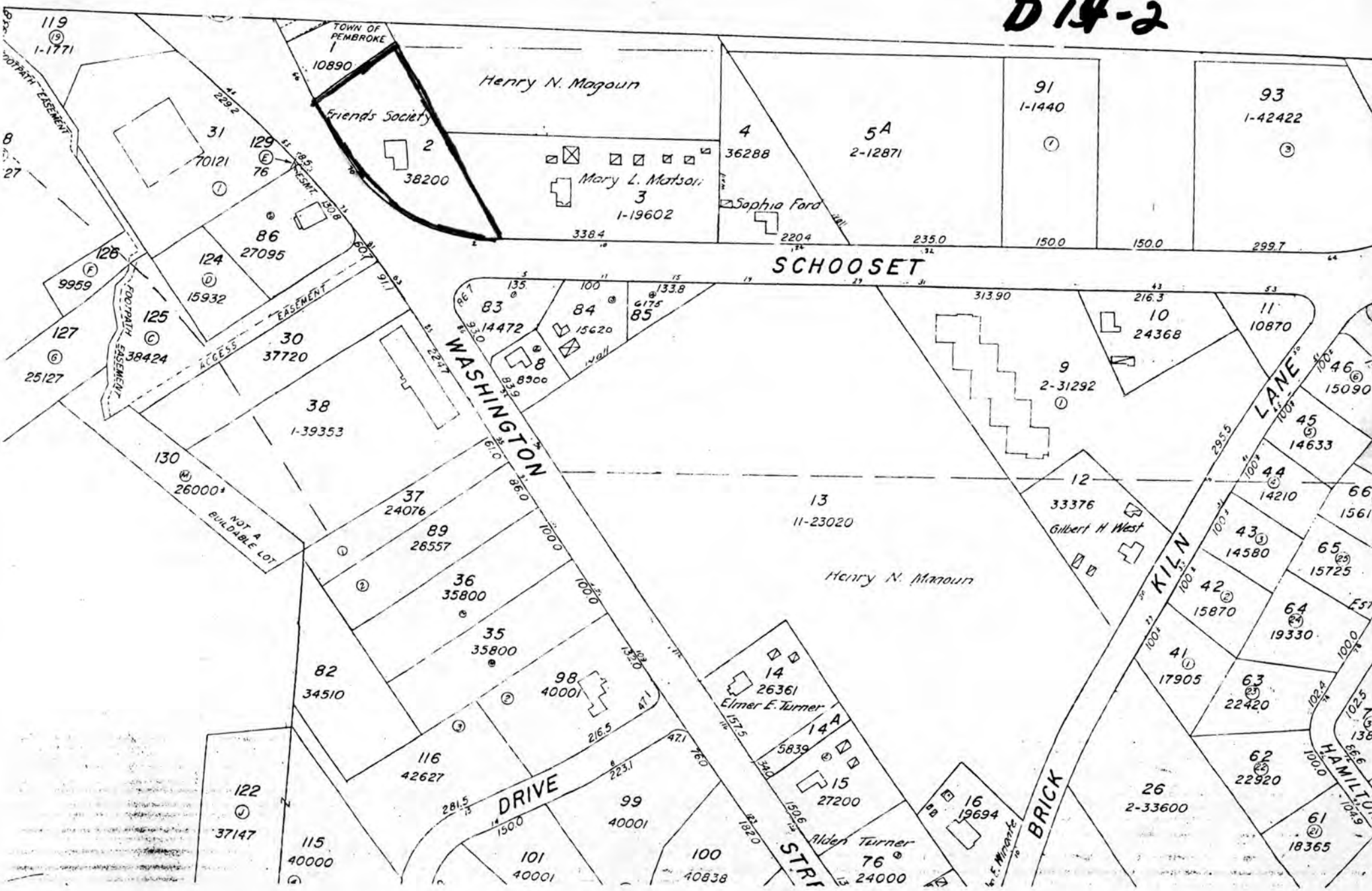
1. Exterior, view of south and east elevations, and wood shed.
2. Interior, first floor, looking north
3. Exterior, view of north and west elevations, woodshed and burying ground
4. Interior, gallery, looking northwest

(end)

Per your request regarding Quaker Meeting House in Pembroke, MA

Address: 70 Washington Street (D14-2)

D14-2



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Plymouth

DATE RECEIVED: 7/24/06 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/08/06  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/23/06 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/06/06  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 06000786

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 9-6-06 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

**Entered in the  
National Register**

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse

Pembroke, MA

View of south and east elevations and woodshed

Photograph by Thomas Paske, 2001

photo 1



Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse

Pembroke MA

First floor interior looking north

Photo by Thomas Paske, 2001

photo 2



Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse  
Pembroke, MA

View of north and west elevations,  
wood shed and burying ground

Photograph by Thomas Paske, 2001

photo 3



Pembroke Friends Meetinghouse

Pembroke MA

Gallery interior looking north west

Photograph by Thomas Paske, 2001

photo 4



Pembroke Friends meetinghouse

CONVERSION SCALES

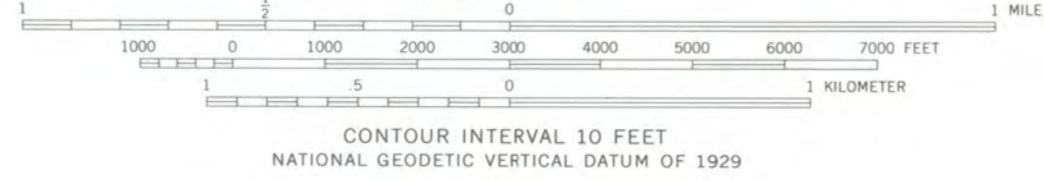
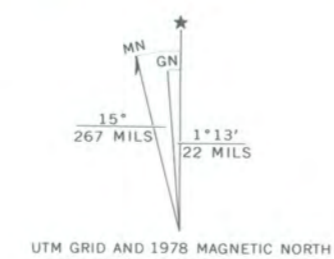
Feet	Meters
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14000	4200
13000	4000
12000	3600
11000	3300
10000	3000
9000	2700
8000	2400
7000	2100
6000	1800
5000	1500
4000	1200
3000	900
2000	600
1000	300
0	0

Feet | Meters

1	3048
2	6096
3	9144
4	12192
5	15240
6	18288
7	21336
8	24384
9	27432
10	30480

To convert feet to meters multiply by 3048  
To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey  
Topography by planetable survey 1935. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1974. Field checked 1975. Map edited 1978  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate system, mainland zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 19



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route



HANOVER, MASS.  
N4200--W7045/7.5  
1978  
AMS 6868 III SE--SERIES V814

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



USGS  
Rambold  
Friends'  
Meetinghouse



**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

July 19, 2006

Mr. John Roberts, Acting Chief  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Roberts:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Friends Meetinghouse, Pembroke (Plymouth), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Claire Dempsey, consultant  
Elizabeth Bates, Pembroke Historical Commission  
Pembroke Historical Society  
Arthur P. Boyle, Jr., Chair, Pembroke Board of Selectmen  
Joseph Mulkern, Planning Board