

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received MAY 14 1987
date entered JUN 25 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic South Bridgton Congregational Church

and or common

2. Location

street & number Fosterville Road not for publication

city, town South Bridgton vicinity of

state Maine code 23 county Cumberland code 005

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name South Bridgton Congregational Church

street & number Fosterville Road

city, town Bridgton vicinity of state Maine 04009

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cumberland County Registry of Deeds

street & number 142 Federal Street

city, town Portland state Maine 04101

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" 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

The South Bridgton Congregational Church is a handsome, and well-proportioned wooden frame building featuring a combination of Italianate and Gothic details. It is composed of a tall gable roofed nave, shed roofed aisles and an impressive corner tower with a broach spire. The building is sheathed in clapboards, and it rests on a granite foundation.

The church's picturesque front (south) elevation is separated into three unequal bays, at the center of which is the nave. Its paneled two-leaf door rests within a round arch framed by a wide curved hood molding. The character of the molding profile employed here is repeated throughout the building. A molded stringcourse, which forms a pointed arch above the door, extends from the tower to a pilaster separating the nave from the aisle. A pair of round arched double-hung sash windows are located above the stringcourse. These windows, and those used throughout the church, feature four large central panes bordered by long narrow panes of colored glass. The upper sash also contains a trio of segmental panes beneath the arch. Below the denticulated raking cornice is a bulls-eye window framing a Star of David. The cornice line is broken by the shaft of the pilaster as it rises above the roof. A documentary photograph of the building shows that this was originally crowned by a spirelet.

Joined to the east corner of the nave, and in front of the aisle, is the two-stage tower. Its lower stage features corner pilasters rising to the cornice and a two-leaf round arched door surmounted by an arched double-hung sash window. A pyramidal roof punctuated by a single gablet on each of its three exposed sides rises to the rectangular belfry. Here, pairs of louvered round arched openings are embraced by a molding and tympanum in a typical Italianate style fashion. Thin corner pilasters rise to a denticulated cornice that is broken by a gablet at the base of the spire. This pattern is repeated on each face of the belfry. The spire is crowned by an ornate wooden base supporting the weathervane. Wood shingles cover the roof surfaces of the tower.

To the west of the nave is the single bay aisle. Its shed roof extends to a point just below the unarticulated cornice of the nave. The aisle has a round arched window similar to those described above as well as a bulls-eye window. In like fashion to the nave the aisle has a wide corner pilaster which rises above the roof (and which formerly carried a spirelet).

The east side elevation features four round arched windows in the aisle and two, one above the other, in the first stage of the tower. Many of the windows retain their panes of colored glass. The cornice extends below the eaves to a corner pilaster. Below the building's wooden water table is a full basement level with rusticated wood sheathing. There are three six-over-six windows and a door on the east elevation, each of which is located on axis with the nave windows. This fenestration pattern, with a fourth window in place of the door, is repeated on the west elevation.

At the rear of the nave is a rectangular gable roofed chancel. Supported by thin granite posts, it features corner pilasters rising to the cornice, round arched windows on both the east and west facades and a basement level window in each of its three sides.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet South Bridgton Congregational Church Item number 7

Page 2

The interior of the church is as impressive as the exterior. A vestibule extends across the rear of the nave and aisle into the base of the tower. Four doors open off of the vestibule; the large principal entrance, two doors to the right and one to the left. Immediately above the central door is the former organ balcony with its paneled parapet and a round two-leaf arched door opening into the tower. The walls and ceiling of the spacious rectangular nave are covered in narrow diagonally placed sheathing with a dark wood stain. Ten wooden transverse ribs, which stop short of meeting in the center of the ceiling, have pendants and brackets. The nave ceiling is articulated by the diamond shaped pattern of the sheathing and thin ribs. Of further note is the large ornate chandelier whose former oil lamps have been converted to electrical sockets. The lamp features a reflective glass surface above the lights.

The sanctuary is framed by a broad round arched opening. A curved dias projects into the nave, and the organ (moved here in 1892) is located behind the altar.

In the basement below the nave is an open meeting space containing wooden benches and simple support columns. A raised stage is located below the chancel and plain wainscot carries around the room.

8. Significance

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1870-71 **Builder/Architect** Francis H. Fassett, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Built in 1870-71, the South Bridgton Congregational Church is an impressive and virtually intact frame building whose construction in this small rural community testifies to the economic prosperity enjoyed by the congregation's members. It was designed by Francis Henry Fassett (1823-1908), Maine's most prolific architect of the mid to late nineteenth century.

The Congregational Church is the most impressive architectural landmark in the village of South Bridgton. Built at a cost of \$10,517.04 the present edifice is the second building occupied by the congregation. It stands diagonally across the road from the site of the first meeting house.

Church records show that the lot on which the present building stands was purchased on August 27, 1870.¹ Local masons S.P. and Cyrus Chaplin were engaged to lay the foundation and carpenters Joash and George Knapp received the contract to build the church. Prior to its dedication on July 13, 1871, an organ built by Edwin L. Holbrook of Millis, Massachusetts was installed in the new church building. This organ remains in use after a 1984 restoration.

The church's handsome proportions and the quality of its interior finish attests to the skill of its designer, Francis H. Fassett. Born in Bath, Maine, Fassett had removed to Portland by 1863 where, following the city's disastrous fire of 1866, he found great demand for his design skills.² During the ensuing years his statewide practice encompassed a broad range of building types including residential, governmental, institutional, and religious structures. It was in this office that John Calvin Stevens, another of Maine's noted architects, began his career under Fassett's watchful eye.

Fassett obtained numerous commissions for church buildings in Maine. Among them at least two bear a striking resemblance to the Congregational Church in South Bridgton. Documentary photographs of the former Congregational Church in Cherryfield (1871) and the former Woodford Congregational Church in Falmouth (1872), both of which have been pulled down, show designs which are nearly identical to each other and to the South Bridgton Church.³ As perhaps the last remaining example of this particular Fassett design, therefore, the South Bridgton Congregational Church assumes increased architectural significance.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Francis H. Fassett File, Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta.
Church records.

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 1 acre

Quadrangle name North Sebago, Maine

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	9	3	6	3	1	7	0	4	8	7	1	8	1	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property of 1 acre is contained within the boundary as drawn on the Town of Bridgton Tax Map 3, Lot 32.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohny, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date April 14, 1987

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station #65 telephone (207) 289-2132

city or town Augusta state Maine 04333

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 *Carol S. Felt*

title S.H.P.O. date 5/8/87

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Patrick Ardus

date 6/25/87

Keeper of the National Register

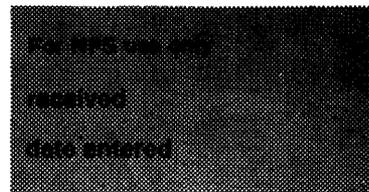
Attest: *Beth L. Savage*

date 6/25/87

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet South Bridgton Congregational Church Item number 8

Page 2

ENDNOTES

1. The documentation pertaining to the construction of the church is found in the minute records of the trustee meetings filed in the church vault.
2. Information pertaining to Fassett's career is on file at the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Augusta, hereinafter cited as Fassett File.
3. Fassett File.