

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

APR 1 1975

DATE ENTERED

APR 21 1975

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

UPPER FREEHOLD BAPTIST MEETING

AND/OR COMMON

YE OLDE YELLOW MEETING HOUSE

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

~~YELLOW MEETING HOUSE~~ RED VALLEY ROAD

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

IMLAYSTOWN *U.S.* VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

4

STATE

NEW JERSEY 08526

CODE

34

COUNTY

MONMOUTH

CODE

025

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

UPPER FREEHOLD BAPTIST CHURCH

STREET & NUMBER

DAVIS STATION ROAD

CITY, TOWN

IMLAYSTOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

NEW JERSEY

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

COUNTY CLERKS OFFICE - HALL OF RECORDS

STREET & NUMBER

COURT STREET

CITY, TOWN

FREEHOLD

STATE

NEW JERSEY

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

NEW JERSEY HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY #3124.17

DATE

1960

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

HISTORIC SITES SECTION, N.J. DEPARTMENT OF ENV. PROTECTION

CITY, TOWN

BOX 1420, TRENTON

STATE

NEW JERSEY

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Olde Yellow Meeting House is located on the eastern edge of Upper Freehold Township, Monmouth County, New Jersey. It is a rural agricultural land, sparsely developed. The area immediately surrounding the historic property is wooded with a road forming one border.

The property itself, approximately 25 acres in size, is about one-third cemetery and buildings, and two-thirds wooded or tree covered. The east side of the property, along the road, is bordered by a wrought iron fence, erected in the late 19th century for security and esthetic purposes. The fence has one major entrance gate with two brick pylons, one on either side, and one center entrance with similar brick pylons bordering it.

The cemetery, containing about two-hundred graves dating from 1723 to the present day, comprises about five acres. It is located on the eastern edge of the property and is the first part visible to the visitor from the road.

The Yellow Meeting House is located at the rear of the cemetery. Beyond it are located a covered shed area, used by the Baptist congregation as a location for their annual meeting family-style picnic. Finally, a dwelling or parsonage, late 18th to early 19th century in construction, is located at the edge of the woods. A dirt driveway leads from the entrance gate to the meeting house and dwelling.

The cemetery contains the graves of veterans of almost every war from the pre-Revolutionary colonial militia to World War II. Different styles and periods of stones and markers can be found, including two early stone markers dated 1740 and 1761 that exhibit interesting vernacular mortuary folk art. (See photos)

THE YELLOW MEETING HOUSE

The meeting house was built on an exact compass setting with the two gable ends facing east and west, the two long sides south and north. In this manner, the full effect of the sun could be achieved on the south elevation for heat and light.

Mid-18th century in construction, the building is on its original site location. The rectangular building is 26' by 46' with a height of about 32 feet. A 10 foot long, one bay addition was placed on the west end, but has been incorporated into the structure in such a manner as to make the building appear to be one unit. (See photo of north elevation).

(See Continuation Sheet)

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1720, c1766

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

INTRODUCTION

The Upper Freehold Baptist Meeting complex is significant to the religious history of Upper Freehold Township, Monmouth County, New Jersey. It also is an example of the area's vernacular religious architecture and the township's geographic settlement patterns.

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT and RELIGION

Generally, the Upper Freehold Township area was settled in the late 17th and early 18th centuries from two directions. From the west or Delaware River area, settlers, mainly Quaker in faith, came via Philadelphia, Burlington and Crosswicks. Western portions of Upper Freehold Township, especially around Allentown, were referred to as the Crosswicks area in early years. Quaker influence in the township and some no-longer extant Quaker meeting houses attest to this pattern.

From the east, or Atlantic coast area, pioneers and yeomen farmers moved inland. Many were Baptist by faith and had belonged to the Middletown Baptist Congregation, the first to be established in New Jersey. This congregation is currently located in an early 19th century building within the Kings Highway National Register Historic District in Middletown, Monmouth County, New Jersey. The Upper Freehold Baptist Meeting (congregation) was a branch, therefore, of the Church at Middletown, "... so that 'tis but one Church. The articles of faith which this church holds to, is that which was published by the Joint consent of about one hundred Congregations in England and Wales and was adopted by ye Baptist Association met in Philadelphia in September anno. 1742 and reprinted in Philadelphia in ye year 1749." (Church record book). The first minister was Mr. John Burrows from Middletown. He was assisted at times by Mr. Thomas Griffiths of the Welch tract and Mr. Abel Morgan of Philadelphia. After Mr. Burrows death they were visited by Mr. George Eglesfield once a month. Their next minister was Mr. John Coward, son of Capt. Hugh Coward, who had been brought up in the Church of England but later became a Baptist. "He continued to supply this Branch till April 1755: at which time some difference arose between him and
(See Continuation Sheet)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- The Church Book: Upper Freehold Baptist Church, 1766 - 1841.
Original Manuscript copy in possession of the Upper Freehold Baptist Church. Handwritten copy (1910) in New Jersey Historical Society archives. Microfilmed copy (1963) in Rutgers University Special Collections.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Meetinghouse 18 5 ⁴⁴ 800
18 4 46 540

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 25

UTM REFERENCES

8. UTM OK CD 4

A	18	5	44	900	44	46	540	B	18	5	44	800	44	46	340
	ZONE		EASTING		NORTHING				ZONE		EASTING		NORTHING		
C	18	5	44	680	44	46	330	D	18	5	44	540	44	46	520
	ZONE		EASTING		NORTHING				ZONE		EASTING		NORTHING		

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at the N.E. property line of the cemetery (point A) at the bend in the Yellow Meeting House Rd. and the unpaved farm road proceed S.S.W. along Yellow Meeting House Rd. 800' (Point B). Thence, proceed West along an abandoned roadway 550' (point C). Thence, proceed NW 800' to a small stream (point D). Thence proceed E.N.E. along that stream bed 750' (point E). Thence proceed East to the point of beginning (point A). E. 5 - ⁴⁴ ~~45~~ - ⁷⁴⁰ ~~260~~ 44 - 46 - 600

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

David N. Poinsett, Supervisor, Historic Sites Section

ORGANIZATION

New Jersey Department of Env. Protection

DATE

March 20, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

Box 1420

TELEPHONE

(609) 292-2023

CITY OR TOWN

Trenton

STATE

New Jersey

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

David N. Poinsett

TITLE

Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

DATE March 25, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Arthur M. Workman

DATE 4/21/75

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

Charles A. Herring

DATE 4-17-75

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

acting

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NEW JERSEY: UPPER FREEHOLD BAPTIST MEETING

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 3&7 PAGE #1

Item #3 - Present Use: Not in regular use as a religious area -
One service a year. Some burials.

Item #7 - Description:

The two-story mortise and tenon framed building has 4 bays on each main elevation and two bays on each gable end. There is no basement under the structure; the foundation is mainly field-stone laid up dry with some later brick fill on the south elevation.

The meeting house exterior walls are covered with clapboards, some beaded, some plain. There is brick nogging within the walls and the interior is lath and plaster. The roof is a medium gable with mortise, tenon and pegged rafters. The original roof covering was probably wood shingles. The original minutes of the meeting have the following entry: "March ye: 2d, 1772. At a quarterly church meeting, ye church being convened, concluded to new Shingle ye meeting-house that Brother Tapscott procure ye Shingles for ye purpose." And on June 19, 1775, the following: "...whereas our Brother William Tapscott hath procured Shingles to new cover ye meeting house and has got ye meeting house new Shingled: and has this day brought in his account for which he consent to balance for 36 Shillings, which was then paid...." A slate roof was added later, probably at the time a wood burning stove was added for heating the building. There is evidence of such a heating arrangement, with a hole in the balcony floor for a stove pipe, a brick chimney in the attic, and a pottery stack on the roof. The slate roof was possibly a latter precaution against the danger of fire from a spark from the stove chimney. The current roof is still slate in fair condition.

The roof cornice is boxed, plain, with a simple return at each gable end. The main window structural openings are flat in shape with a plain moulding and window surround and a wood slipsill. The windows are double-hung sash with 9/6 lites on the first floor and 6/6 lites on the second.

There are two main doors on the west gable end with a large millstone cut in half as a step-stone at each door. Another door is located on the south elevation, near the east end. All

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE #2

Item #7 - Description:

three doors have a small slate-roofed gable hood, and plain wood door surrounds. Each has 24" wrought iron strap hinges. Each door has six recessed, beveled panels on the exterior. The interior of each door has flush battens for strengthening.

Inside the meeting house there are thirteen rows of pews on each side and nine rows in the center. There is a large balcony, twenty-one feet deep, supported by posts. An unusual T-shaped, paneled center stairway leads from the first floor to the balcony.

DWELLING OR PARSONAGE

This late 18th or early 19th century residence, unoccupied at the present time, was built for the use of the pastor serving the Yellow Meeting House congregation. A rectangular frame and rough clapboard building, presently covered with cedar shingles (over the original siding) there is one small lean-to addition on the west gable end.

The two story building has four bays on the first floor main facade, and three bays on the second. A careful examination of the building indicates that the original structure ended at the door, since the full basement (irregular Jersey ironstone) ends here. The attic floor joists also indicate an exterior wall at this point. The east one-bay section was a later addition. There are two fireplaces on the first floor, one at each end. The fireplace on the west end in what was originally the kitchen appears, from the size of the wood fireplace lintel beam, to be a large one, although presently it is closed up. There is a fireplace foundation in the basement and a small fireplace in the second floor bedroom above the kitchen.

A medium gable roof with mortise, tenon and pegged vertically sawn rafters is currently covered with tin. Underneath the metal and visible from the attic are some earlier wood shingles. The single-stack brick chimneys are located on the east and west gable ends at the center ridge line of the roof. The wood roof trim has close eaves and verges.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 & 8 PAGE #3

Item #7 - Description:

The double-hung window sash, not original, has 2/2 lites. One rear window, possibly original, has 6/6 lites.

A rather primitive dwelling originally. A side-hall plan with two rooms, one on each floor. Both rooms had fireplaces, giving the building a measure of comfort. There is also some original or at least early baseboard trim with a beaded edge, and a chair rail in the kitchen.

Item #8 - Statement of Significance:

another Brother and he from thence took occasion to Decline Preaching and so continued to the end of his life, which was in the year 1760. In the year 1761, Mr. David Jones removed from the Welch Tract in New Castle County on Delaware and came to Middletown and being called to the work of the ministry some time before, he continued to exercise his gifts at Middletown & elsewhere. In 1762 he removed to Lower Freehold and began to supply this branch one in three weeks, and continued til the beginning of the year 1766, at which time it was thought expedient to be constituted a Church in gospel order and a letter was sent to Middletown for dismissal from them, which was granted April 5th, 1766." (Information from early church records and minute books in possession of current Baptist Congregation)

The earliest recorded deed for the Upper Freehold Baptist Meeting property is dated June 29, 1720 for 25 acres, two rodds and 15 perches, English measure, from a tract of land owned by Thomas and Rachel Saltar. The land was then entrusted to the Congregation and has remained in that groups hands without change or deletion for over 250 years.

The earliest structure used by the Upper Freehold Baptist Congregation was built in 1720. Although no longer extant, a marker now indicates the site, located a few feet from the present structure. The extant building was probably built in the early to mid-18th century with some modifications to the interior and roof at a later time. This church is the third oldest in the state and possibly the earliest remaining Baptist Church building.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE #4

Item #8 - Statement of Significance:

The congregation served the religious needs of the rural area in that, while it was basically Baptist in service and theology, others could worship there. The congregation was, however, fundamentalist in theology and serious about its religion. Numerous references are made in the minutes of the meeting about checking on members who seemed to have been "backsliders". Various members were removed from membership for apostasy or for various forms of anti-social behavior such as profanity, intemperance or simply theological unorthodoxy.

Examples: December ye: 5th 1768 "Whereas it is reported that our Brother Able Edwards has lately absconded for debt, our Brethern David Jones & Safety Maegee are appointed to inquire into his conduct respecting that matter, & make a report of it at our next quarterly meeting." (Sept. 1770, he was found guilty and suspended from the communion of the church).

June ye: 16th 1777 "At a quarterly meeting, the Church being meet whereas Candace a black woman was accused of being disguised (?) with liqure, she was suspended from communion with this Church."

September ye: 5th 1778 "Whereas our Sister Elizabeth Mason being charged with taking money out of a Desk, but upon inquiry found the Charge groundless, but she on ye: occation shewed warmth of temper & made use of irritating Language, for which She is suspend from communion with this Church."

An interesting social and ethnic factor of the Upper Freehold Baptist Meeting was the presence of blacks at the worship service. Several were admitted to membership. Although the status of blacks in the area as slaves is not known for a fact, they are referred to only by their first names, giving at least a partial insight into the relationship between blacks and whites at that time in this rural area.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE #5

Item #8 - Statement of Significance:

Examples: "April 4, 1790 - John Meclen & Isbel - B - woman
join'd church."

"1790 3rd Oct'rWm. Black-man, Sarah
Clayton & Hannah Johnston were rec'd members
of ye church."

"August 5th 1827 After worship on Lords day
Tamer (a woman of colour) came before the
Church and related her christian experiance
(sic) - the Church agreed to receive her after
Baptism."

(Previous taken from Church meeting minutes.)

SUMMARY

The Upper Freehold Baptist Meeting (Ye Olde Yellow Meeting House) of Upper Freehold Township, Monmouth County, New Jersey, is significant as an example of an early religious settlement pattern. It is an example of the movement in a westerly fashion across the state by early settlers who were agrarian-farm economy based. As the congregation increased, it gradually outgrew the usefulness of a minister being sent out from some distance away to serve the religious needs of the community. The people therefore established their own religious congregation and meeting functions, and hired their own minister.

The meeting house building and the congregational records give an excellent insight into the social, religious structure of an early rural society in central New Jersey in the 18th century. The complex of buildings and the area itself is significant in that it retains its rural atmosphere and characteristics in almost pristine condition and in that it retains a mid-18th century religious structure in relatively good condition.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

8&11PAGE

#6

Item #8 - Statement of Significance:

SUMMARY (cont')

The architecture of the meeting house shows a conservative yet attractive functional structure with such interesting decorative features as beaded clapboards, paneled doors and wainscoting and stairway enclosure, and a high center pulpit area that may indicate Anglican influence. Generally speaking, however, the meeting house is modest and exhibits the frugal life style of a yeoman people. The alterations to the building are slight and do not detract from its religious or architectural significance.

The cemetery is still used for occasional burials and the site itself is used at least once a year for religious purposes.

Perhaps its main significance, therefore, is that it shows an extant example of early religious life in rural New Jersey that is still functioning, in a limited manner, for the community more than 200 years after its initial establishment.

Item #9 - Major Bibliographical References:

2. Brown, James S. Remember Old Monmouth. Published by the Monmouth County Board of Freeholders. 1973
3. Gordon, Thomas F. A Gazetteer of the State of New Jersey. Trenton: Daniel Fenton, Publ. 1834.

Item #11 - Form Prepared By:

Mrs. Helen S. Polhemus, a member of the Upper Freehold Baptist Church, aided with the research and drafting of the Statement of Significance - Section #8. Her address is 41 Waker Ave. Allentown, New Jersey 08501.