

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

For HCRS use only

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

received JUN 17 1980

date entered 15 1980

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

1. Name

historic Dorchester Community Church

and/or common

2. Location

NH 118

street & number

___ not for publication

city, town Dorchester ___ vicinity of ___ congressional district second

state New Hampshire code 33 county Grafton code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted (int.)	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted (ext.)	<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 Community Church Corporation

street & number

city, town Dorchester ___ vicinity of ___ state New Hampshire

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number P0 Box 208

city, town Woodsville state New Hampshire

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

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 church as it stands today retains, for the most part, its original appearance as a simple white clapboard structure, rectangular in plan, with a steeply-pitched roof. The entrance door, in the south wall, is flanked by windows, with a round window in the pediment; there is one row of windows on the side walls. Cornices project over the windows and the door and, like the pilasters flanking the door, and the corner posts, are plain. The square tower with open belfry surmounted by a dome and weather-vane is now set well back over the roof. This is a remnant of the square tower that stood at the entrance front prior to the time that the church was moved to its present site.

The original church, called the South Meeting House, was built in 1828 in the Thompson Hill area of Dorchester, and the foundation is still visible there. The church was built on a subscription basis, and its charter is preserved in the Dorchester Historical Museum.

By 1883 most of the families living near the church had moved away and it was decided to move the building to a site near the Town Hall and rebuild it on a somewhat smaller scale. The timbers were cut down at a nearby mill. Although the church went through a period of neglect early in this century, about 1940 funds were contributed locally for the restoration of the church and the installation of electricity. Since then others have become interested in the project and the structure is maintained in good condition not only as a significant landmark of Dorchester but for religious services during much of the year.

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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input 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 1828, moved 1883

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The significance of the church lies in the fact that it is a well-preserved example of a structure which was central to life in a New England village in the early 19th century. Unpretentious in design and execution, it illustrates the work of a country builder and his use of a simplified version of the contemporary design vocabulary.

In its present location on the Village Common, the Dorchester Church is one of a group of three 19th-century public buildings. To the east of the church is the Dorchester Town House, where town meetings were first held in 1844 upon completion of the building. Further east is the School House, which now serves as the Dorchester Historical Museum. This structure is the only one remaining of four school houses which were built in 1808. Representing as they do church, town government and schools, these three buildings symbolize the essential characteristics of the New England village in general and of Dorchester in particular.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Edmund W. Sinnott, Meetinghouse and Church in Early New England, New York, 1963.

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property approx 2 acres

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle name Wentworth, NH

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	9	2	6	2	4	9	0	4	8	4	8	9	1	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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 Trustees of Community Church

organization date July 26, 1974

street & number telephone

city or town Dorchester state New Hampshire

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

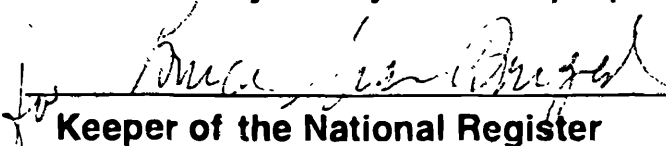


Commissioner, NH Dept. of Resources & Economic Development
title NH State Historic Preservation Officer

date March 7, 1980

For HCERS use only

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


Keeper of the National Register

date 11/25/80

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

To No. Dorchester and/or Cummings Pond

1001 3 3 1111

T. & D. Linn
4 A.
88

P. B. Melody
90A

S. Halluck and J. Grovicchia
9 A.
35

Church
Town Hall
Cemetery
Museum

H. & D. Emerson
5 A.
89

P. B. Melody
90B

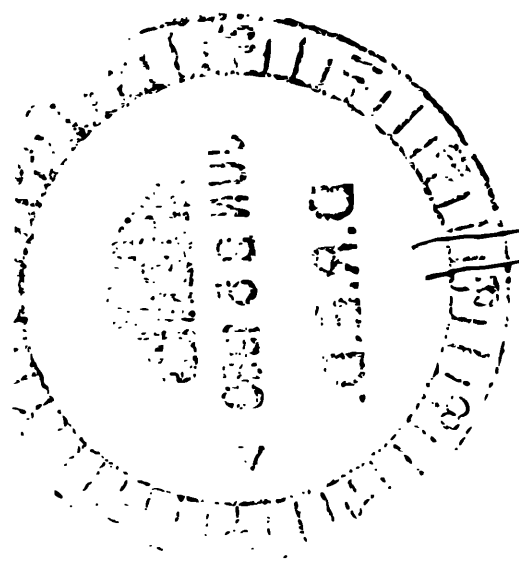
Town Common
Town Property
Approx. 2 A.

M. & E. Lach
3 A.
84

D. & P. Weigel
2.5 A
83

F. & E. Bergmann
80

Rt. 118



Dorchester N.H. Town Property.

Adjacent owners lot numbers - 83
Shown thus -