

PH0021431

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Delaware	
COUNTY: New Castle	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
71.12.10.0020	12/16/71

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Center Meeting and School House

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Center Meeting of Religious Society of Friends

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Centermeeting Road

CITY OR TOWN:  
Centerville

STATE Delaware	CODE 10	COUNTY: New Castle	CODE 003
-------------------	------------	-----------------------	-------------

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Trustees of Hockessin Monthly Meeting

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Hockessin

STATE:  
Delaware

CODE:  
10

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
New Castle County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Rodney Square

CITY OR TOWN:  
Wilmington

STATE:  
Delaware

CODE:  
10

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1941  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington, D.C.

STATE:

CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

71.12.10.0020 12/16/71

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed	
(Check One)			(Check One)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Center Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends is one mile east of Centerville on a knoll where Adam's Dam Road meets Center Meeting Road. It was called Center because it was between New Ark Union (now Carrcroft) and Old Kennett Meeting. The brick building, built in 1796, is rectangular in plan, with pitched roof and brick chimney at either end. Sheds are attached to the East and West sides. These open on the front to shelter horses with carriages. Six stalls with staggered posts, supporting trussed roof construction and slot windows, look through the stone retaining wall towards the graveyard on the North side of the Meeting. The East sheds are similar, but several end bays are enclosed for a storeroom.

The Meeting House itself is 41' across the front and 32' wide. The front and back elevations are similar with a window on either side of a bifolding paneled door in each quadrant. Shutters are paneled in front and flush on the backs, supported on strap hinges and pintles. The four South windows are three panes longer than those on the North. The ends are bare except for access doors to the attic, one on each end. A wood porch on the South front was added in the 1870's. It is brick paned, edged with stone.

On the interior, the Meeting is divided in half by a wood single board partition with panels that move, but now stand open. Two aisles run South to North connecting the doors. Seven rows of benches face three which are raised on the North side. There are three risers with one row of benches on each. At each end of the building is a stone and wood bin. The iron stove on the East end is a plate stove marked Charles Brooke, Jr., and Co., Rock Furnace. Around the room is beaded sheathing to chair-rail height. The East side remains in its original state with simple benches brought from the log meeting house which preceded this building. The wood trim, sheathing, and flooring all remain as they were in this end.

On the North side, the graveyard slopes gently across the hill with low stone markers and large old box bushes. It is enclosed by a double pitched stone rubble wall with a cement poured cap.

Across the road is a school house built by the Friends for their children and those of the community. It is square with a pitched roof and a lunette in the gable to the West. The Meeting House remains original except where minor repairs have been made or a porch added; however, the school house has suffered many changes and is now being used as a house. Apparently repairs are about to be undertaken. Restoration would be a rather simple matter at this time.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1796

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Center Meeting was the first Quaker Meeting on the West Bank of the Brandywine in Delaware. It started before Old Swedes Church in Wilmington began, and it is still in use. Although it passed moments of small activity, it has never been "laid down" since its inception in 1690. For its purity of style, for its long and representative history it is most significant. It is recorded as a "Delaware Heritage Building" and has been documented in the Historical Buildings of America Survey.

After the arrival of William Penn, the Brandywine was settled largely by Quakers. Those living in Christiana Hundred on the West Bank went regularly until 1687 to the otherside of the Brandywine for meeting at New Ark Union (now Carrcroft) in Brandywine Hundred. However, in winter, it was not easy to cross the river and in 1687 George Harlan petitioned for a meeting on the West Bank due to the "dangerousness of the ford." In 1690, the Meeting became permanent, taking place in nearby Quaker homes. Alphonus Kirk gave six acres of land in 1700. A log building that is now gone, was erected in 1711 near where now stands the present brick meeting house built in 1796. Members united to help build this larger church. The list of their names exemplify the wealth and industry of that time on the rural banks of the Delaware Brandywine: Caleb Kirk, Samuel Gregg, Thomas Hollingsworth, Rumford Dawes, Thomas Wilson--to name a few. Names indicative of the wealth of the Brandywine that was able to construct a building of their faith that stands and is used today.

Across the road is an example of the Friends early interest in education, an innovating program of public education that was begun in 1780. This school was built in 1800. Later it was helped by Antoine Biderman who was closely associated with the du Pont family and Company and was interested in the better education for the community. The school was state run from 1854 until twenty-five years ago. It is now a family house, but still belongs to the Friends.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Primary Sources

Records of Center Meeting are in the Swarthmore College Library, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.

Secondary Sources

Scharf, J. Thomas, History of Delaware, 1609-1888, 2 Vols., Richards and Co., Philadelphia, Pa., 1888.  
 Zebley, Frank R., Along the Brandywine, Wilmington, Delaware, 1940.  
 Interview with Mr. John V. Hollingsworth, Fairville, Pa., Chairman of Records of the Western Quarterly for the Religious Society of Friends.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 0 0	0 0 0		39° 49' 08"	75° 36' 00"	
NE	0 0 0	0 0 0				
SE	0 0 0	0 0 0				
SW	0 0 0	0 0 0				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 6

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Eleanor M. Webster, Consultant**

ORGANIZATION: **Tri-County Conservancy of the Brandywine** DATE: **August, 1970**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Box 141**

CITY OR TOWN: **Chadds Ford** STATE: **Pennsylvania** CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

**12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: *Rea Milkin*  
 Title: Historic Registrar, State Liaison Officer  
 Date: July 1, 1971

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

*Ernest A. Connally*  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

**DEC 16 1971**  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:  
*William J. Mumley*  
 Keeper of The National Register  
 Date **DEC 14 1971**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Begin. at a Corner Post  
in line of Alphonsus Kink's land

Corner. Christm.  
in line of Alphonsus  
Kink's land.

N. 81 W.  
34 P.

Center. Meeting Plot.  
Containing 6 Acres.

N. 90 E.  
29 P.

Center. Meeting Road.

Adams. Dam. 120.

34 P.

Corner. Hickory Sapling -  
on side of a hill.



Scale. 3/16 = 1 P.

Corner. Spanish.  
DAK.

39 P.