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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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 an 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 Cliffwood Hall  
other names/site number Town Hall, Clifton Town Hall Museum

2. Location

street & number 15 Rebel Hill Road N/A not for publication  
city or town Clifton N/A vicinity  
state Maine code ME county Penobscot code 019 zip code 04428

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Janet S. [Signature] SHPO 6/3/08  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission  
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): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] Edson H. Beall 7-16-08  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2		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**

None

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL / Meeting Hall

GOVERNMENT / City Hall

RECREATION AND CULTURE / Auditorium

RECREATION AND CULTURE / Sports facility

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE / Museum

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation GRANITE

walls WOOD / Weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CLIFFWOOD HALL

PENOBSCOT COUNTY, MAINE

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## DESCRIPTION

Cliffwood Hall is a two story, Italianate style wood frame building erected in 1892. The north facing edifice is located on a half acre lot shared with the Harold Allan School (nomination pending), to the west.<sup>1</sup> The building is located towards the southern edge of the lot, and is surrounded by lawn. A small freestanding outhouse is located to the south of the Hall. A dirt parking area serves both buildings and is situated between them and Rebel Hill Road (Route 180), in the Penobscot County town of Clifton. A few homes are clustered around the intersection of Route 180 and Route 9 just to the west, and comprise a section of the village known as Clifton Corners.

Cliffwood Hall measures thirty by forty-eight feet in dimension and has a front gable roof. It sits on a granite foundation with a wooden water table, and the exterior is sided with clapboards. Narrow corner boards mark the edges of the building, and the broadly overhanging roof features a frieze under the eaves and thin cornice returns. A brick chimney pierces the east side of the asphalt roof near the external wall towards the rear of the building.

The Hall is well proportioned and symmetrical in design. Both the east and west elevations are four bays wide and contain six-over-six single-hung wood windows on the first floor and tall nine-over-nine single-hung wood windows above. The front façade is three bays wide. Centered on the first floor is a two-leaf, four-panel door with a scroll-cut bracketed hood. To either side of the door are six-over-six wood sash above which are corresponding nine-over-nine windows. At the center of the second floor are a pair of nine-over-nine sash set in one frame. In the attic level are a similarly conjoined pair of six-over-six sash. All of the windows on the east, west, and north elevations are framed with plain trim but are surmounted with projecting hoods. Attached to the hood of the topmost window is the base of a wooden flag pole that no longer pierces the peak of the roof. The south elevation contains a wood batten door flanked on either side by six-over-six single-hung wood windows.

On the interior, the first floor of Cliffwood Hall is divided into three primary spaces: the entry in the north quarter, the kitchen in the south quarter, and the hall at the center. At the west end of the entry an enclosed, two-run staircase ascends the exterior walls. Just east of the front doors is a partition wall that extends halfway into the entry. As first constructed this wall then angled southwest and intersected the wall between the entry and the hall, however the lower seven feet of this wall has been removed. (The corner room created by this partition previously served as a Selectmen's Office for the Town. The wall was partially de-constructed to allow the Town Hearse to be put on display in the Hall.) A wide doorway leads to the main hall. Both the hall and entry have painted hardwood floors and the walls and ceilings are covered with board and batten panels. Two cased carrying beams run north to south at ceiling level and each is supported by a cased post under the center of the beam.

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<sup>1</sup> The building actually faces northwest, but for ease of description, will be referred to in this nomination as if facing north.

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The walls and ceilings of the kitchen are also finished with board and batten panels. The floors are painted random-width pine, much of which is covered by a 1940s era linoleum 'rug'. A wooden counter and steel dry sink run along the south wall east of the door, and adjacent to the chimney stack in the northeast corner of the room is a circa 1920s kerosene stove. Another wide panel of linoleum is attached to the wall over the sink as a back splash.

Surprisingly, the second floor of Cliffwood Hall is unfinished, with the exception of the pine floor. Thus the upper framing of the building is exposed in this large space, and reveals a mixture of platform framed studs interspersed with braced hewn posts. The roof has common rafters interspersed with three bents of hewn primary rafters. Each of the bents feature a set of secondary trusses from which the girts are suspended with tie rods. Basketball nets are centered on the north and south exterior walls, and on the south wall horizontal boards have been fastened to the studs under the basket to provide a solid wall. (Boards are also so positioned under the front windows.) Fading lines on the floor and screening attached to the interior of the windows are additional concessions to the use of this room as a gymnasium. Prior to the introduction of basketball to Cliffwood Hall a small wooden platform had been positioned at the south end of the second floor to serve as a stage. The location of the stage is still evident in scars on the floor. When it was dismantled, the stage flooring was repositioned as boarding under the nets.

In 1999 the Clifton Historical Society obtained Cliffwood Hall. Since that time the building has served as the Society's museum. In order to display their collections the Society has installed waist high removable partitions in the hall in line with the carrying beams. It is important to note that in the kitchen the original Hoosier-style cupboard, cabinets, tables and wood stove had long past been removed from the building. The current examples are period appropriate items from the Society's collections. However, the original low wooden benches used during the town's annual meeting are stored on the second floor.

**Outhouse.**

Immediately south of Cliffwood Hall is a small, roughly square-shaped outhouse. This frame structure has a flat roof, clapboard siding, narrow corner boards, and sits on piles of field stones. A north-to-south partition wall separates the structure into two rooms. Both the 'mens' and the 'ladies' rooms are outfitted with two-hole privies and batten doors.

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

**Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT / RECREATION

POLITICS / GOVERNMENT

**Period of Significance**

1892 - 1958

**Significant Dates**

1892

1899

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Campbell, Calvin Winfield (attributed)

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CLIFFWOOD HALL

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Cliffwood Hall is a structure that has served as a community building, entertainment and recreation venue, and as the location of the Town of Clifton's governmental functions since 1892. It was originally built by a group of local residents, the Band of Willing Workers, as a hall for socials, entertainment and meetings. Seven years later, the Town of Clifton purchased the Hall, and for the next nine decades it continued to serve its original function while also providing offices for town officials and space for the Town's annual public meetings. Since 1999 the building has been run as a museum by the Clifton Historical Society. Cliffwood Hall is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as a building that embodies broad patterns of history at the local level, in the areas of entertainment and recreation, and government and politics.

Portions of Clifton, Maine were cleared in 1812 and the first settled families appeared four years later. Originally known as Jarvis Gore, when it achieved incorporation in 1848 it did so under the name 'Maine'. According to *The History of Penobscot County*, the name was soon changed to Clifton, in reference to the hills and cliffs in the area "as a more musical and appropriate designation". The town is characterized by numerous lakes, hills, and rocky ground, but historically agricultural pursuits were gainful along the stagecoach route to Bangor, which ran southwest to northeast through town, and is now designated State Route 9. By 1884 this corridor had the thickest residential settlement, and the area around Clifton Corners, at the intersection of Route 9 and the Rebel Hill Road, was the site of the town's only post office, store and a hotel. Further description in the *History of Penobscot County* summarizes the economy of the town: "The people of Clifton are engaged to some extent in lumbering and the manufacture of long and short lumber; but the chief industry is still agriculture. The farms produce hay, grain, potatoes, and other crops in considerable quantities." (Both quotes page 291.) Never a large town, Clifton's nineteenth century population peaked at 350 in 1880 and did not crest this threshold again until 1980. The population of 743 recorded in 2000 reflects the town's growth as a bedroom community for Bangor, ten miles to the east.

Very little is known about the history, goals or longevity of the Band of Willing Workers. According to *The Reflections of the Past*, published by the Clifton Historical Society in 1998, the group decided to build the Hall in January of 1892. Within four months they had purchased a half acre lot from Edward Penney and broken ground. The design of the building is traditionally ascribed to a young local resident, Calvin Winfield Campbell. Whether Campbell was trained as an architect is not known, as biographical information about him is sparse. He appeared in the 1880 Federal population census as an eleven year old child and never again appears in the census records in Maine, although he did live long enough to father eight children who remained in town. The historical account further reveals that local residents constructed the building, which was partially finished and dedicated on June 6, 1892.

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Throughout the rural communities of Maine, especially those isolated by distance or poor roads from larger urban areas, town or community halls were often the only sites for social events or performances. A similar building, the East Eddington Public Hall, was erected in nearby East Eddington in 1879, (NR:03001503) under the auspices of the local farmer's club, which financed the building through stock subscription. Other such halls were owned by towns or fraternal organizations, but were also made available for community functions. In Clifton, the 1875 *Southern Penobscot County* atlas indicates that the Independent Order of Good Templars had erected a meeting hall not far south of where Cliffwood Hall is located. However, this group disbanded in 1890. Whether their hall was lost or sold, the demise of this local institution may have provided the impetus for the Willing Worker to construct the current building.

A poem composed by Clifton resident Luther Penney for the dedication of Cliffwood Hall ends with the lines "...And may the day hasten & I know 'twill come, when they'll finish this building, and be an honor to the town." Whether finishing the hall referred to the completion of the second floor, or to other aspects of the building process is unknown. Certainly the large second floor windows and provisions for a high ceiling suggest that the building was intended to have a second floor auditorium, or some other finished space. Nonetheless, the first floor was apparently put to use by the community. In 1899, when the Town of Clifton purchased the Hall from the Willing Workers the building came with "stoves, chairs, oil lamps, piano and linens, silverware, dishes and tables to seat 100 people." (Clifton Historical Society, p. 9).

The Town Reports for the years 1899 to 1910 are unavailable and as a result any alterations to the building made during those years are unknown. The 1910 warrant for the Town's annual meeting indicated that the site for the session was Cliffwood Hall: presumably this practice started in 1899. At these annual meetings the residents of the town gather to elect town officials, approve the town and school budget and vote on issues of administration and policy. Often the day-long meeting was broken into several sessions with a noontime dinner prepared in the hall's kitchen. After the close of business, and possibly another meal, entertainment or a dance might occur. For the residents of rural Maine communities 'going to meeting' was not just a civic responsibility - it was an annual social event that both connected neighbors and exercised an important local form of American democratic process. Cliffwood Hall continued to serve as the site of Town Meeting until a new municipal building was under construction in 1997.

In 1915, and again in 1918, the warrant for the Town Meeting asked "if the town will vote to raise a sum of money to finish the second story of Cliffwood Hall". (Town Report, 1914/15). Although this article was apparently either never passed or never funded, over the years the town did make improvements to the building. In 1912 they constructed voting booths of some fashion but nine years later appropriated \$200.00 to "finish off a room in the lower part of the hall for an office and polling place." (Town Report 1918/19) The acceptance of this proposal resulted in the construction of the small office in the northeast corner of the foyer. In 1920 they voted to re-glaze some of the windows and install screens or blinds.

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Fewer records have survived regarding the non-governmental uses of the building. Current members of the Clifton Historical Society recall seeing plays and vaudeville-type performances there in the 1940s. Another Clifton resident recalled seeing a movie at the hall as a child.

In the summer of 1910 or 1911, the people of Clifton had the opportunity of watching a moving picture in the Town Hall. Some enterprising showman ventured his time and equipment for whatever money he could collect from admission fees. Being only eight or nine years old, I was too young to note how much my mother had to pay or how many members of our family attended. I do recollect that we walked the two miles from our house to the town hall and back after the show....As I recall the projector was mounted on a tripod and had to be operated by turning a crank. The source of its light must have been some kind of a gas flame, certainly not electricity for electric power did not come to Clifton until the Rural Electrification Program under F. D. R. In the 1930's....Flickering kerosene lamps with wicks, often poorly trimmed, were the normal sources of light, although sometime in the 1920's the wicks had been provided with mantles which greatly intensified the light. As for the subject of the movie, all I can recall was a horse attached to a carriage which was given a feeding of oats in a bag fastened under his muzzle. The horse became so energized by the oats he promptly started running away with the carriage. Was the movie worth the dime or quarter paid for admission and the four mile walk to attend? I do not recall any critical comments by my elders. (Clifton Historical Society, 1998, p. 36).

Aside from providing information about the social use of Cliffwood hall, this recollection also illustrates two other points about the event: the entertainment was offered by an itinerant 'showman', and it attracted families on foot from considerable distances. In rural, sparsely populated communities, the draw of events at venues like Cliffwood Hall was strong.

The stage platform erected early in the Hall's history was dismantled in the first years of the 1950s. At this time the second floor became a basketball court for local schoolchildren and ad hoc teams of residents. The adoption of basketball as a subject of physical education made its way into Maine by the turn of the twentieth century. Originally invented in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1891 by Dr. James Naismith, the game spread quickly under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. and was adopted by several of the Massachusetts female colleges, including Smith and Mt. Holyoke. As graduates from these institutions took up teaching positions around the country they introduced the game to their pupils. Designed to be played indoors, the game did not require a special court (although some were built). Instead, any large hall or room with a solid floor and end walls could be adapted for the game. In Clifton, which maintained two one-room school houses until 1966, there were no other indoor recreation facilities in which the students could exercise. Thus, although the residents never endorsed completing the second floor of the Hall in the early part of the century the unfinished space later served an important function as a recreation facility for the town.

Cliffwood Hall was utilized by the Town of Clifton as its municipal building through the year 1996, when a new municipal building was constructed. (Additional town offices were built next door at

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the school in 1985.) Twenty years earlier the local schools disbanded, thus minimizing the use of the second story as a gymnasium. In 1999 the Town sold the Hall to the Clifton Historical Society, and the building is now maintained as a museum of local history, as is the adjacent school. Although the Historical Society had to alter the configuration of the partition wall to the Selectmen's office and remove the vestibule doors in order to move the Town's 1907 Hearse into the display space, the overall design, function and significance of the property remains sufficiently intact to qualify for listing in the National Register.

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Annual Report of the municipal officers of the town of Clifton, Maine. (Clifton, Maine). 1910 - 2000. Copies of these reports are on file at the Maine State Library, Augusta, Maine.

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The Old Maps of Penobscot County, Maine in 1875. (Fryeburg, Maine: The Write Stuff), 2006.

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# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

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## **VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The nominated property occupies the eastern half of the lot depicted on the town of Clifton tax map 17, lot 70.

## **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

A half acre parcel of land (map 17, lot 70) was purchased specifically for the construction of Cliffwood Hall in 1892. In 1912, while the Hall was owned by the town, the Harold Allen School was moved to the western half of the lot. The western boundary of this nomination is thus meant to run between the two buildings.

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**PHOTOGRAPHS**

Photograph 1 of 4

ME\_PenobscotCounty\_Cliffwood Hall\_001.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

21 June 2008

North and west elevations; facing southeast.

Photograph 2 of 4

ME\_PenobscotCounty\_Cliffwood Hall\_002.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

21 June 2008

Interior, first floor hall; facing northeast.

Photograph 3 of 4

ME\_PenobscotCounty\_Cliffwood Hall\_003.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

21 June 2008

Interior, unfinished second floor; facing south.

Photograph 4 of 4

ME\_PenobscotCounty\_Cliffwood Hall\_004.tif

Christi A. Mitchell

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

21 June 2008

Cliffwood Hall (left) and Harold Allan School (right), facing southeast.