

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Copperopolis Congregational Church
other names/site number Copperopolis Community Center

2. Location

street & number 411 Main Street N/A not for publication
city or town Copperopolis N/A vicinity
state California code CA county Calaveras code 009 zip code 95228

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.)

[Signature] 11/18/97
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State Historic Preservation Officer
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 commenting 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] Date of Action
Edson B. Beall 12/30/97

Copperopolis Congregational Church
Name of Property

Calaveras County, California
County and State

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	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

Religious facility
Social, Clubhouse

Current Functions

(enter categories from instructions)

Social, Clubhouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Gothic Revival

Materials

(enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone and brick
walls brick

roof sheet metal

other wood frame Gothic windows, choir loft

Narrative Description

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

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.)a

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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 continuous sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Social History
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

- 1866-1895
- 1903-1939
- _____

Significant Dates

- 1866
- _____
- _____

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

- N/A

Cultural Affiliation

- N/A
- _____
- _____

Architect/Builder

- Unknown/Angell & Chaloner, woodwork
- _____

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

- _____

Copperopolis Congregational Church
Name of Property

Calaveras County, California
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property. Approximately one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	10-707485-4206000	3
2		4

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

APN No. 54-012-25; lot 24, block 1 of original Copperopolis Townsite

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

This property includes the city lot that has historically been associated with the property except for a small lot, measuring 100 feet east/west by 50 feet north/south located in the southwest corner of the property, and deeded to the California Division of Forestry.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Judith Marvin, Principal Investigator

organization Foothill Resources, Ltd.

date

street & number P.O. Box 2040

telephone (209) 728-1408

city or town Murphys

state CA

zip code 95247

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name

street & number

telephone

city or town

state

zip code

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Copperopolis Congregational Church
Calaveras County, California

Section number 7 Page 5

SUMMARY

The Congregational Church is located on the east side of Main Street in Copperopolis, on a west-facing slope below Bear Mountain, which rises behind the town and forms a geographic barrier extending the length of Calaveras County. It is one of four remaining brick buildings in the town, all constructed in the boom following the discovery of copper in 1860. A one-story, Gothic Revival, rectilinear brick building with front gable roof, it has a central primary entrance flanked by Gothic windows, Gothic windows along the three bays on each side, and a projecting central front bell tower with pyramidal roof. The church retains its integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to a remarkable degree, altered only by the construction of modern California Division of Forestry buildings on a lot between the church and street. The only exterior alterations to the structure consist of the removal of the top of the bell tower and the construction of a pyramidal roof in 1905, the replacement of the original shingle roof with corrugated metal, replacement of the stairs, addition of exterior lighting, and the installation of a door in the northwest rear window in recent years.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The building measures 60 feet by 30 feet and is supported by a stone foundation, with walls of brick laid in a common bond pattern. It has a front gable roof with wooden bargeboard trim and a projecting entry topped by a bell tower. A broad wood staircase and small porch provides access to the primary entrance doors, located in the central front facade. The original double doors have recessed wood panels and were put together with 24 wooden pegs. Located beneath a Gothic window arch, they are flanked by frame Gothic windows. A central Gothic window is located on the bell tower above the entry. There are three Gothic windows in each bay along both sides of the building; a rear entry door has replaced the window on the northwest side. Doors and windows were recently repaired and reglazed.

The original shingle roof was replaced with sheet metal and exterior gutters were added in the 1980s. When first constructed, the bell tower was several feet higher, but the top was removed in 1905 because of weathering and water leakage. The present bell tower has a pyramidal roof, replacing the Gothic square tower.

Primary access to the church/hall has always been through the front double doors, originally reached by a wooden stairway with a single pitch. When the stairway was rebuilt in recent years, the county building code required that a landing be constructed mid-way on the stairs, thus altering the pitch.

Interior walls of the building are clad in lath and plaster above vertical board wainscoting. An arched alcove in the rear wall once held the altar. The original choir loft is located above the primary front entrance and is accessed via a staircase on its north side.

When first completed, the building had only one room, the main body of the church, with a choir loft above the entry. This interior was altered in 1903 when the building was acquired by the Odd Fellows Lodge. At that time a wall was constructed beneath the choir loft to separate the entry from the main room and a toilet facility was installed south of the entry. The walls in the main room were covered with baroque wallpaper and a raised dais was constructed around the perimeter for lodge purposes. A Wilton carpet covered the tongue and groove wood floor and dais. The dais and carpet were recently removed and the interior returned to original condition, except for the restoration of the back altar. A small frame board and batten rectory, located in front and southwest of the church, was removed in the mid-1900s due to its deteriorated condition.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Copperopolis Congregational Church
Calaveras County, California

Section number 7 Page 6

During the tenure of the Copperopolis Community Center, from 1939 to the present, other changes have been made. The roof was recovered, a sheet rock ceiling installed, a kitchen built in the original entry, and a new entry door installed in the northwest rear window. A metal bar, which prevents the upper story windows from opening, was installed at this time also, as well as an exterior light on the north side of the building. During the 1950s the California Division of Forestry purchased a 50-by-100-foot portion of the original lot and constructed a garage on its southwest corner, and a dormitory in front of the church, on a lot leased from the Community Center.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7

SUMMARY

The Copperopolis Congregational Church, built in Gothic Revival style in 1866, appears to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register under Criterion A, for its association with the social history of Copperopolis, first as a church from 1866 to 1895, and later, from 1903 to 1939, as the location of the Odd Fellows Lodge. It also appears to be eligible under Criterion C, as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the brick Gothic Revival style popular in California in the 1860s. It is one of only two Gothic Revival churches in Calaveras County, and the only one in Copperopolis. It is one of only four extant brick buildings in Copperopolis, all constructed during the height of the copper boom: the Honigsberger and Reed stores, both listed on the NRHP, and the armory. The use of brick, with Gothic arched windows and central entry, gable roof with bargeboard trim, and projecting bell tower, reflect a period in history when simple well-constructed brick churches expressed the religious foundations of America. It is, and was, the only Gothic Revival building in the community. The Copperopolis Church meets Criterion Consideration A: Religious Properties because the property is significant for its architectural qualities and historical associations, not for religious doctrine.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

From its beginnings in 1860 to the end of World War II, Copperopolis has been directly related to and affected by the extraction and production of copper ore. Copper ore was first discovered locally in May 1860, and shortly thereafter by W. K. Reed and Thomas McCarty in the Copper Cañon mining district. A year later the town that had rapidly developed at the strike was named Copperopolis, and was second only to the Lake Superior area in copper production during the 1860s. From rolling hills of ranch land, the area was transformed almost overnight into a booming community due to the extraordinary need for copper for munitions and shell casings in the Civil War. The strike came at a time when the Mother Lode gold mines were almost dormant and, although the copper excitement promised more than it ultimately delivered, for seven years copper was "king" in Calaveras County.

SOCIAL HISTORY

Only two churches ever served Copperopolis: three generations of the frame Catholic St. Ignatius Church, first constructed in 1861, and the brick Congregational Church, later used by the Presbyterians. The first Protestant services and Sunday School in Copperopolis were held in Cardinell's Hall and the brick Armory, at the south end of Main (Union) Street. Realizing a need for a permanent place of worship, the Congregational Society purchased a lot opposite the Union Mining claim in 1865. Mine owner C. T. Meader decided that a better location should be obtained and purchased, for \$1200, the large lot on the east side of Main Street for the Society, with construction completed the following year. Although its architect is unknown, the June 1866 *Copperopolis Courier* noted that J. M. Angell and T. W. Chaloner were completing the woodwork. Both men were listed in local advertisements as builders and cabinet makers and built the frame two-story public school and other buildings in town. It appears possible that the church may have been designed by the same architect as St. Anne's Catholic Church in Columbia, in neighboring Tuolumne County, as it is architecturally akin to that structure. The lime for the Copperopolis Church was purchased in Columbia, and many of Columbia's citizens moved to Copperopolis during the boom.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

As a result of a decline in membership when the copper boom ended, the Congregational Church was leased to the Presbyterian Church for several years. From 1874 to 1895, however, it was again used by the Congregational Church.

In 1903, during a small boom in copper mining, the Copperopolis Church was purchased by the Mineral Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, for \$800. The interior was redecorated as a lodge room and used as such until sold to the Copperopolis Community Center in 1939. The Odd Fellows, one of four fraternal lodges to be established in Copperopolis (others were Masonic, Good Templars, and the Emmet Circle of Fenians), met monthly in their facility and were responsible for holding many of the local balls, civic celebrations, and funerals. Immensely popular in the early days, the lodges contributed stability and social order in the normally rough and tumble life of the mines. Numerous accounts in the *Copperopolis Courier* during the 1860s and other local newspapers during the early 1900s attest to the importance of the lodge in providing a gathering place for dances, civic events, and social interaction.

In early days the Odd Fellows and Masons often cooperated in presenting grand balls and other social events, but with the removal of the Keystone Masonic Lodge to Milton in 1881, the I.O.O.F. was the only remaining fraternal organization in Copperopolis. As the only fraternal lodge in town for almost sixty years, the Odd Fellows maintained a major presence in the social and fraternal life of the community and its townspeople.

With the decline of copper production and the town's population, the lodge sold the building to the Copperopolis Community Center in 1939. Since that time the building has been in use as a community meeting hall, for local meetings of county government, and for weddings and family gatherings.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Although the designer and builder of the Congregational Church are unknown, those who completed the interior work and the frame windows, doors, and trim were local carpenters J. M. Angell and T. W. Chaloner. Constructed in a simple Gothic Revival style popular in the California Mother Lode during the 1860s, the building is the only Gothic Revival structure in Copperopolis and one of only two brick Gothic Revival churches in Calaveras County. A similar structure, St. Anne's Catholic Church in Columbia, in neighboring Tuolumne County, may have been designed by the same builder, as may St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Murphys, both completed in the early 1860s. It is also possible that the church was built to a standard design by local builders.

As one of a handful of brick Gothic Revival churches in the Southern Mother Lode, the Copperopolis Congregational Church is a fine example of that style in the California foothills. The building today retains its integrity to a great degree, reflecting both the early 1860s period of the first copper boom and the pre-World War I era when copper was once again "king" in Calaveras. Alterations to its historic fabric, except for the removal of the top of the bell tower in 1905, appear minimal and required by local government codes. These include the replacement of the shingle roof with corrugated metal, the reconstruction of the front stairway with a landing, and the use of a rear window for an exit doorway.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Copperopolis Congregational Church
Calaveras County, California

Section number 9 Page 9

Calaveras, County of
var. Assessment Tax Rolls
var. Deed Books

California Department of Parks and Recreation
1976 *California Inventory of Historic Resources*. Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento.
1981 *California Historical Landmarks*. Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento.

Clark, W. B., and P. A. Lydon
1962 *Mines and Mineral Resources of Calaveras County, California, County Report 2*. California Division of Mines and Geology, San Francisco.

Copperopolis Courier
1865 through 1867. Various articles.

Cunningham (Marvin), Judith
1984 National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Copperopolis National Register District.

Elliott, W. W.
1885 *Calaveras County Illustrated and Described*. W. W. Elliott, Oakland.

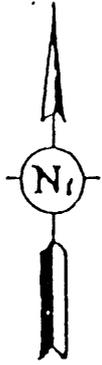
Hoover, M. B., H. E. Rensch, and W. N. Abeloe
1966 *Historic Spots in California*. Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Jenkins, O. P.
1948 *Geologic Guidebook Along Highway 49 - Sierran Gold Belt, The Mother Lode Country*. California Division of Mines and Geology, San Francisco.

Lewis, L. Helen
1960 *A History of Copperopolis*. Calaveras County Office of Education.

Limbaugh, R. H., and W. P. Fuller, Jr.
1980 *Calaveras County Mining, Logging, and Railroading*. Manuscript prepared for the Calaveras Heritage Council, San Andreas. Funding provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Stone, Rhoda, and Charles Stone
1991 *The Tools are on the Bar. The History of Copperopolis, Calaveras County, California*. Charles and Rhoda Stone, Copperopolis.



MAIN

Copperopolis
Congregational
Church

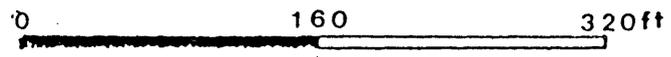
411

CDF

STREET

SPRING LANE

LEGEND	
Property boundary	— — —
Building	— — —



COPPEROPOLIS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
Copperopolis, Calaveras County, CA

(From 1873 Townsite Map)