

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

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

received **JUL 25 1986**
date entered

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

1. Name

historic South Harwich Methodist Church

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number 270 Chatham Road

N/A not for publication

city, town Harwich

N/A vicinity of

state MA

code 025

county Barnstable

code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>N/A</u> process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name South Harwich Methodist Church

street & number 270 Chatham Road

city, town Harwich

N/A vicinity of

state MA

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number Barstable Village

city, town Barnstable

state MA

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Inventory of the Historic Assets of
title the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 Inv. #314 federal state county local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission, 80 Boylston Street

city, town Boston

state Massachusetts

7. Description

South Harwich Methodist Church, Harwich Massachusetts

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 South Harwich Methodist Church, built in 1836, occupies a prominent site at the intersection of Chatham, Deep Hole, and Old County Roads in the resort and residential community of Harwich on the south side of the Cape Cod peninsula. The church is set back about 100 feet from the road and faces south on a level lot. Fronting the church is a broad lawn, while to the east, west, and north is a graveyard whose first burials predate the church's construction by seven years. A granite-paved walkway leads from a roadside cattle blind of cut stone to the church. Residences (some of them of 19th century construction) and 20th century motels and commercial buildings are located in the church's immediate neighborhood.

The clapboard-sheathed church is a simple, gable-roofed structure, thirty-seven feet wide and forty-five feet long. It is sited with its gable end facing the street. The building rises one story from a brick foundation. There is no tower.

The church's exterior displays a mix of Greek Revival and Gothic Revival elements. The broad facade is framed by delicate panelled pilasters, which support the building's entablature and cornice with returns. Vented windows and doors are set within lancet-headed openings. The three-bay main facade features a central window with paired 6/6 sash, flanked by entryways. Two granite steps lead to each entryway. Both the east and west facades each contain three lancet-headed window openings containing paired 6/6 sash surmounted by vents. On the rear, northern facade are located two 6/6 sash windows, also within lancet-headed windows.

Interior

The building's interior is remarkably intact. In plan, it is essentially rectangular, with two vestibules on either side of the central window. The altar is set in front of a small, round-arched bay projecting to the rear of the building. A balcony was removed in the late 19th century.

Most notable are the church's decorative features, including trompe l'oeil wall coverings: Corinthian columns flank rectangular panels, which appear to be set beneath bracketed lintels; above them is a half-round ornamental panel within a rounded, classically molded arch, also trompe l'oeil. Nineteenth century bracket oil lamps and chandelier (in use until 1968, but now electrified) and original pews and pulpit also survive.

Burying Ground

The burying ground surrounding the church contains approximately 400 gravestones dating from 1829 to the present. Gravestones are in excellent

Continued

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National Park Service**

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South Harwich Methodist Church

Continuation sheet South Harwich, Massachusetts Item number 7

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condition, and are maintained by the town of Harwich. Their ornamentation includes willows and winged angels; one stone, marking the grave of a two-month-old baby, depicts a small puppy. Twelve monuments and a single family tomb are present. Most of those buried in the graveyard are Harwich natives, but the burying ground also includes the unmarked graves of a half dozen European sailors, who died in a shipwreck off South Harwich in the 1920s.

Archaeology

While no prehistoric sites are currently recorded on the property, it is possible that sites are present, especially given the large lot size. Any surviving sites would be significant since the patterns of prehistoric occupation in Harwich are not well understood.

There is also a potential for historical archaeological features. Archaeological testing may reveal the presence of buildings no longer extant, such as carriage houses or outbuildings. Occupation-related features, particularly privies and trash pits, are also likely to be present. Careful sampling and analysis of these features would help to document the social, cultural, and economic patterns associated with the emergence of Methodism and how these changed over a century of the buildings use.

8. Significance

South Harwich, Methodist Church, Harwich, Massachusetts

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)	

Specific dates 1836

Builder/Architect Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The South Harwich Methodist Church, built in 1836, holds historical associations with the growth of Methodism in the central Cape Cod town of Harwich and was in daily use until the mid 20th century. Architecturally, the church is a well-preserved representative of the simply ornamented, rectangular-plan churches buildings erected on the Cape during the first half of the 19th century, a period of unprecedented ecclesiastical construction. The church's use of both Greek Revival and Gothic Revival features distinguishes it, as does its particularly intact interior. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, feeling, and workmanship, the South Harwich Methodist Church thus fulfils Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places on the local level.

While Methodist societies had been formed in America prior to the Revolution, Methodism was not promulgated on the Cape Cod peninsula until ca. 1790, when itinerant minister Jesse Lee, disciple of southern evangelical Devereux Jarratt, visited a number of towns in the region. With the help of other circuit riders, Methodism's spread thereafter was rapid, coupled with the construction of a number of Methodist meetinghouses. In the Harwich area, Methodist converts built a meetinghouse on Queen Anne Road on the Chatham border in East Harwich in 1799. (This was replaced in 1811 with a structure that was apparently similar to the nominated property, with gable front and framing pilasters; it was substantially altered in 1905.) The nominated property, the town's second Methodist seat of worship, was erected in 1836 on land deeded to the church by John Paine Eldredge. The first burials took place prior to the church's construction in 1829. Other societies followed shortly thereafter, in North Harwich in 1842 and near the Chatham line at Bethel in 1853 (neither survive).

When built, the nominated property housed a congregation calling itself Reformed Methodist (or anti-episcopal). The simple meetinghouse was an appropriate place of worship for a denomination which in its early years adhered strictly to the virtues of plainness and modesty (such virtues would become less widely held by the mid 19th century).

In 1845, the congregation became Wesleyan--and abolitionist--in its orientation. Wesleyan doctrine was rooted in a demand for moral perfection on the issue of slavery. After two Wesleyan ministers served brief tenures with the congregation, Rev. Davis Lothrop, a Baptist, arrived amidst some controversy. Dissatisfaction among some members regarding Rev. Lothrop's liberal views, and a desire on their part for a more evangelical worship service, eventually led to a schism within the congregation. In 1857, church leaders agreed that the most peaceful way to settle the disagreements was to auction the church building to the highest bidder, who would thereafter set the tone for future worship services. Amasa Nickerson, one of the church's

Continued

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2.39

Quadrangle name Harwich

Quadrangle scale 1:25000

UTM References

A

1	9	4	1	2	8	6	0	4	6	1	4	3	1	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H

Zone			Easting					Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property nominated includes the church, its adjoining burial ground, and the plot on which they sit. See attached assessor's map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Betsy Friedberg, Preservation Planner, Massachusetts Historical Commission with Rufus Walker and Charles H Detwiler

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date June 1986

street & number 80 Boylston Street telephone (517) 727-8470

city or town Boston state MA 02210

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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Valerie A Talmage
title State Historic Preservation Officer, Massachusetts Historical Commission date July 21, 1986

For NPS use only

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

entered in the
National Register

date 8/21/86

for Arthur Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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South Harwich Methodist Church

Continuation sheet South Harwich, Massachusetts Item number 8

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received
date entered

founding members, bid \$1500 for the church. Together with five other members, he was instrumental in returning the South Harwich congregation to the less liberal, more traditional arm of the church, the Methodist Episcopal Conference. The schism left the congregation with only about 20 members, as dissenting Wesleyans departed. Nickerson and his sons acted as lay preachers until 1878, when the congregation joined with the East Harwich Methodist Church to share the services of a minister (a relationship that continued until 1886). The congregation has remained Methodist Episcopal, celebrating its last service in 1984. While the size of the congregation has risen and fallen over the past decades, at present fewer than a dozen members are known to survive.

Between 1820 and 1840, Harwich was among the fastest growing communities on Cape Cod. Development in the Federal period concentrated in Harwich Center, to the west of the nominated property, with smaller nodes near industrial sites at North Harwich, and at East Harwich and Harwich Port. Dispersed settlement after the Revolution was located along main highways, including Chatham Road and Main Street. While never a major settlement, South Harwich developed during the 1830s, along Chatham and County Roads and Main Street. Stimulating this minor growth was the presence of the Methodist meetinghouse. Development also extended south along Deep Hole Road (opposite the church), less than a mile to a wharf on Nantucket Sound.

Like other Harwich villages, South Harwich maintained associations with the sea. The church's history, too, demonstrates this connection. Among its congregants were a number of Harwich sea captains. A large wooden model of a ship, built by members of the congregation, was used for many years as the altar during the Christmas season.

Today, the church stands as one of the oldest surviving Methodist churches on the Cape Cod peninsula, constructed during the denomination's period of greatest expansion. Between 1825 and 1836, reflecting the strength and prosperity of Methodism, three early Methodist societies rebuilt preexisting meetinghouses (Edgartown, Truro, and Chatham--only Edgartown's Greek Revival-style house, built ca. 1827, remains; listed in the National Register in 1983, it now serves as Town Hall). Nine new societies, including South Harwich, built meetinghouses during the same period. The South Harwich church is significant architecturally and is among the best preserved. It is one of a small group of meetinghouses on the Cape reflecting both Greek Revival and Gothic Revival influences. The building's orientation of gable-end main facade and corner pilasters are clearly derived from the Greek Revival. In its most significant exterior feature, however, the nominated property departs from tradition with its Gothic Revival lancet-headed windows and door openings. The absence of a tower further differentiates this structure from others of the period. The church's well-preserved interior, retaining its original trompe l'oeil wall coverings, pews, pulpit, and light fixtures, are particularly significant.

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National Park Service**

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date entered

South Harwich Methodist Church
Continuation sheet South Harwich, Massachusetts Item number 9

Page 1

9. Major Bibliographic References

Freeman, Frederick, The History of Cape Cod, Annals of the Thirteen Towns of Barnstable County. Boston, 1869.

Harwich, Mass., 275th Committee, 275th Anniversary, Harwich, Massachusetts, A Sketch of the Years 1694-1969 in Text and Pictures. Harwich, 1969.

Harwich, Town of the Century, 1776-1976. Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Nickerson, Obed, "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in South Harwich, Mass." Harwich, 1886.

1858 Map of Barnstable, Dukes, Nantucket. Boston, 1858.

86001887

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

South Harwich Methodist Church
Barnstable County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. JUL 25 1986

Fed. Reg. Date: 2/3/87

Date Due: 8/21/86 - 9/8/86

Entered in the National Register Action: ACCEPT 8-21-86
 RETURN
 REJECT

Federal Agency: _____

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
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4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	
	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	
	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

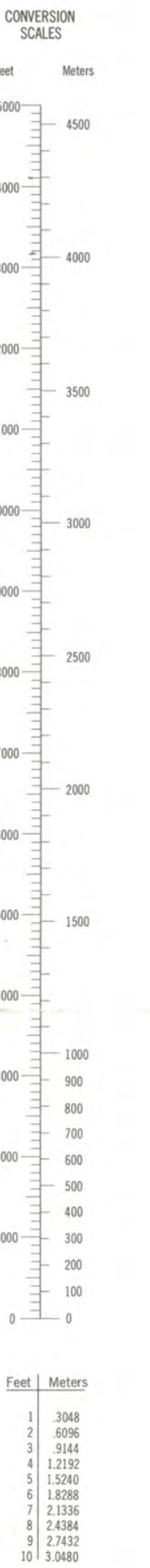
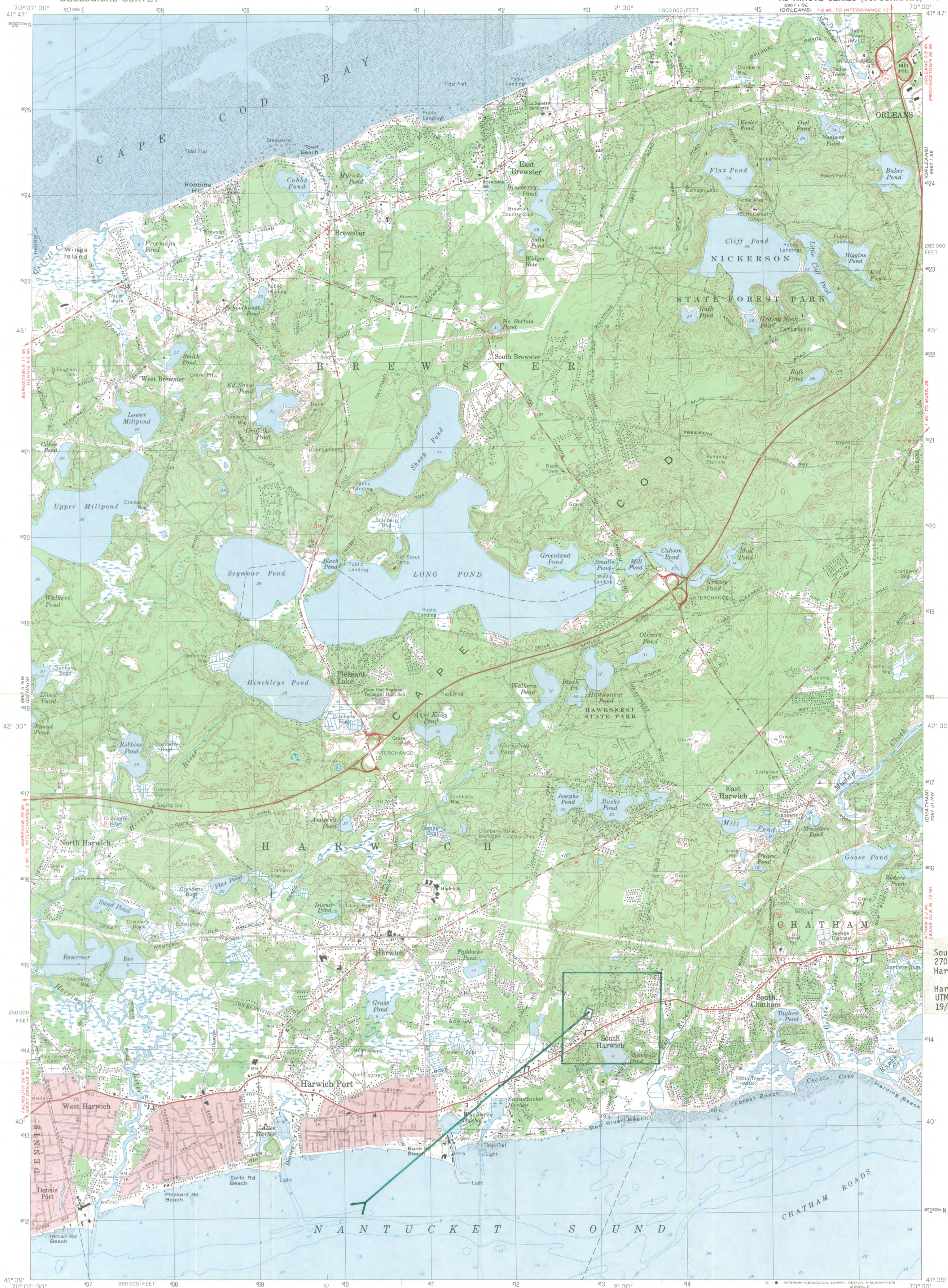


South Harwich Methodist Church
270 Chatham Road
Harwich, MA
Photographer: Rufus Walker
Photo 1 of 2 View of main(north)
facade.

By Rufus F. Walker



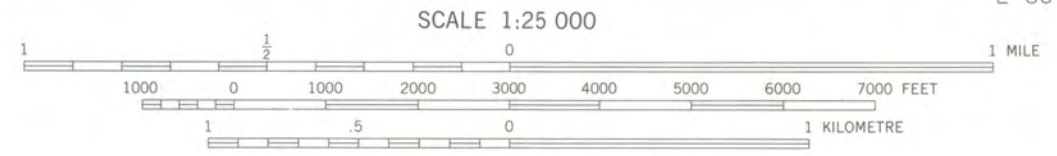
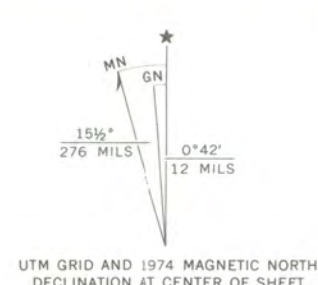
South Harwich Methodist Church
270 Chatham Road
Harwich, MA
Photographer unknown
Photo 2 of 2
View of Main(north) facade.
1924



South Harwich Methodist Church
270 Chatham Road
Harwich, MA

Harwich Quad 1:25,000
UTM reference
19/412860/4614310

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1939. Topography by planetable surveys 1940
Revised from aerial photographs taken 1973
Field checked 1974
Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS 257 (1972) and
581 (1971). This information is not intended for navigational
purposes
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid,
zone 19
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



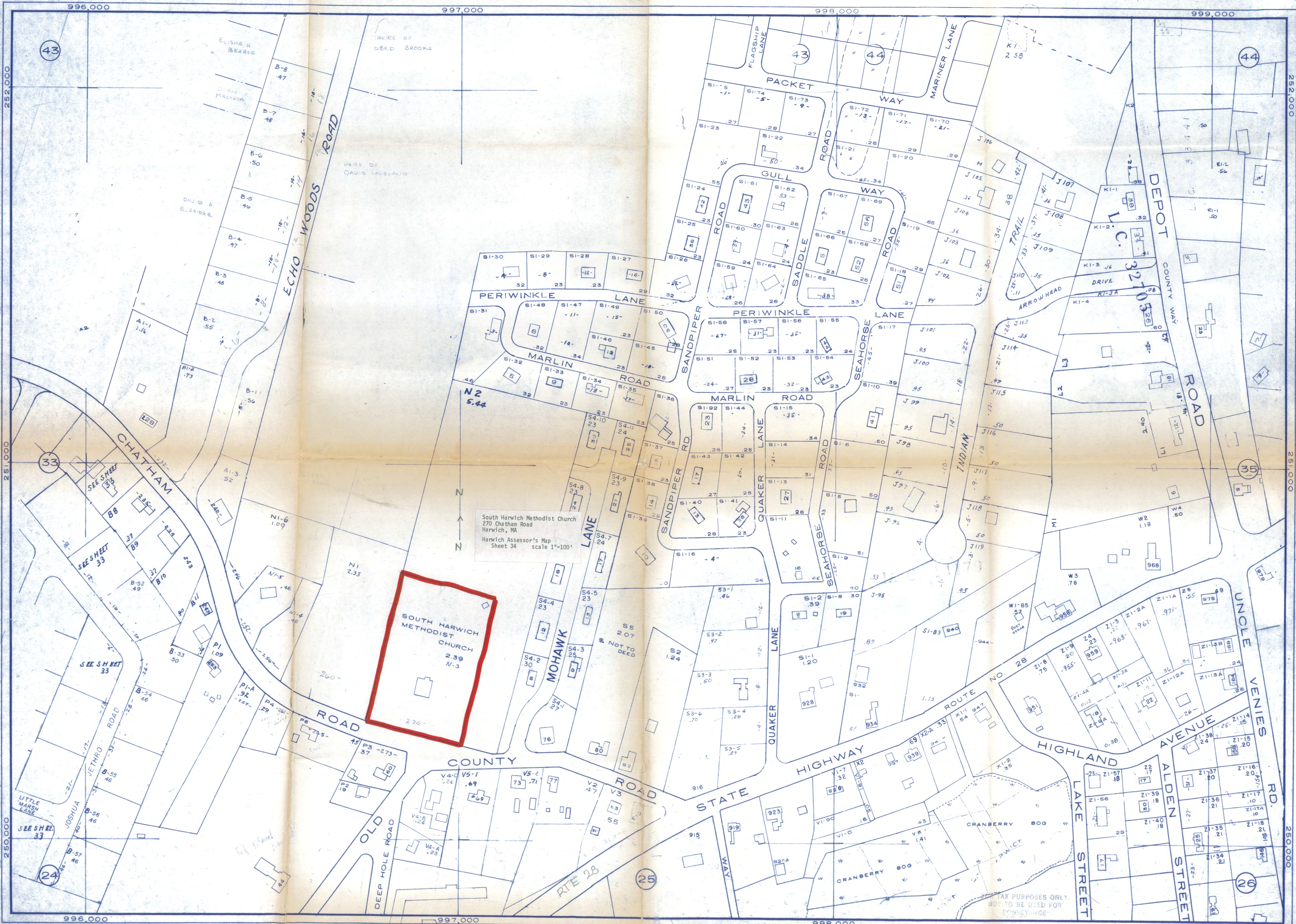
SCALE 1:25 000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 9.5 FEET
IN CAPE COD BAY AND 3.4 FEET IN NANTUCKET SOUND



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

HARWICH, MASS.
N4139—W7000/8 X 7.5
1974
AMS 6967 II NE—SERIES V814



South Harwich Methodist Church
270 Chatham Road
Harwich, MA
Harwich Assessor's Map
Sheet 34 scale 1"=100'

**SOUTH HARWICH
METHODIST
CHURCH**
2.39
N-3

FOR TAX PURPOSES ONLY,
NOT TO BE USED FOR
CONVEYANCE



TOWN OF HARWICH

732 MAIN STREET
P.O. BOX 993
HARWICH, MA 02645

Office of
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
(617) 432-0145

May 12, 1986

Carol Shull, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
18th and C Streets, N. W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

The Harwich Board of Selectmen recognizes that the following property will be considered for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places by the Massachusetts State Review Board at its meeting on June 11, 1986:

South Harwich Methodist Episcopal Church
270 Chatham Road
South Harwich, MA 02661

The Board is aware of both the incentives and disincentives of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 and other consequences of National Register listing and hereby waives by right the 30 day commenting period.

We will all be honored to have this historical landmark included in the National Register.

Very truly yours,

Freeman H. Allison
Juliana Peterson
Roman G. Goshup
SELECTMEN OF HARWICH

FHA/b





P 093 546 421

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of the Secretary of State
Michael Joseph Connolly, Secretary

Massachusetts Historical Commission

Valerie A. Talmage

Executive Director

State Historic Preservation Officer

July 21, 1986

Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of Interior
National Park Service
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, DC 20013-7127

Dear Ms. Shull,

Enclosed you will find the following nomination forms:

Duxbury, OLD SHIPBUILDER'S HISTORIC DISTRICT, located on both sides of Washington Street from Rowden Avenue to just north of South Duxbury.

Harwich, BERRY, CAPTAIN JAMES HOUSE, 37 Main Street,

Harwich, SOUTH METHODIST CHURCH, 270 Chatham Road,

Needham, SMITH, JAMES HOUSE, 706 Great Plain Avenue.

All have been voted eligible by the State Review Board and have been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. Owners were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30-75 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment. Comments received to date are attached to the nomination forms.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah J. Zimmerman".

Sarah J. Zimmerman
Director, Preservation Planning
Massachusetts Historical Commission

SJZ/dr