

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUN 19 1979
DATE ENTERED AUG 24 1979

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Upper Springfield Meetinghouse Site

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER W of Wrightstown
Corner Springfield Meeting and Springfield Wrightstown Road

CITY, TOWN Wrightstown
Springfield Township

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

4th

STATE New Jersey

CODE 34

COUNTY Burlington

CODE 005

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Upper Springfield Cemetery Association

STREET & NUMBER William Wells Law Office Park Street

CITY, TOWN Bordentown

VICINITY OF

STATE New Jersey

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Burlington County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Mount Holly

STATE New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory

DATE 1976

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Office of Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN Trenton

STATE

New Jersey

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT

DETERIORATED

UNALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE

GOOD

RUINS

ALTERED

MOVED

DATE _____

FAIR

UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Upper Springfield Meetinghouse property is located at the intersection of the Springfield-Wrightstown Road and Springfield Meeting Road, approximately one 1/4 mile east of Route 68. The plot of land on which the meetinghouse is situated is a wooded area as is the land to the west for about 300' then opening up into farmland. Directly north of the meetinghouse is the Cemetery, on a well maintained rectangular piece of land. The identified cemetery plots go back as far as the late 18th century, but interments are still encouraged.

At present the Upper Springfield Meetinghouse is in a ruinous state. A roof and 4 walls of brick laid up in a Flemish bond pattern are all that exist of this once elegant but staid meetinghouse. The standing structure measures of 40'5" by 30'3" and has a three bay front. Over the wide 5'10" entrance opening is a tombstone-like feature incorporated in the brickwork which indicates a 1727 construction date. The dating is presently highlighted by coating the original brick with a thin veneer of stucco, but a post-card of the building around the turn of the century shows the brick to be uncovered (the date can not be picked out of the picture, however).

This postcard enables a more complete description of how the meetinghouse originally appeared. The building is shown as being of two units. The first, built in 1727 is essentially still standing although the height of the walls have been shortened, and the pitch of the roof decreased. The postcard establishes a 2 1/2 story Flemish brick building with symmetrical 3 bay, center entrance format. The windows had paneled shutters on both floors. There are now no window frames in the walls and brick is being continually removed from the fenestrations, but a measurement of the window casements was possible (3'8" wide). Over the double door entrance was a simple one story portico. The roof was gable with a boxed cornice.

Attached was a smaller section, built around 1783, which followed the lines of the 1727 unit. This addition appears two-thirds the size of the original building, but also had a bay center entrance format. Other than the size the only difference between the 1727 structure and the 1783 portion was a double belt coursing between the first and second floors on the latter.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historical

Established around 1727 the Upper Springfield Meeting House site is the location of one of Burlington County's earliest Quaker meetinghouses. In addition to being a significant religious facility this site also provided educational and social facilities for members of the Society of Friends in the Springfield Township area. As a relatively undisturbed rural area the site, documented to have had a schoolhouse and stables on the premises (in addition to the meetinghouse), has a high potential for future historical archeological research into the Quaker culture.

Religion

In 1726 Joshua Shreve conveyed the Upper Springfield Meetinghouse property to the trustees of the Society of Friends. This deed was apparently never recorded, but the 1727 datestone over the doorway of the meetinghouse attests to the transaction and use of the property. This was one of the earliest Quaker meetinghouses in Burlington County. An official Monthly meeting, however, was not established by Burlington Quarterly until 1782.

As the 1726 deed to the property was never recorded the parties involved mutually agreed to have a new one drawn up in 1746, which was not recorded until 1813, long after the creation of the Upper Springfield Monthly Meeting. (Burlington County Deeds, Book 4, p. 473, 3/30/1813).

The Quakers in Upper Springfield, however, were active from 1727 to 1782 as an unofficial adjunct to the Burlington Quarterly. The Monthly Meeting of Upper Springfield was designated in 1782 by the Society of Friends and continued in operation into the early 20th century when decreasing participation and a serious fire caused the Friends to disband.

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Description (continued)

There are currently no visible traces of this unit although the small leanto outhouse (c. 1910) attached to the west wall of the 1727 unit may have incorporated some of the brick.

Several documents establish the former existence of additional structures on the property.

The Upper Springfield Meetinghouse clearly had a separate schoolhouse by at least 1788 as indicated by the Minutes of the Upper Springfield School Trustees which reads, in part, "It appeared to the meeting that the school lately opened in this place be put under the care of a standing committee..." (Upper Springfield School Trustees Minutes 20/II/1788).

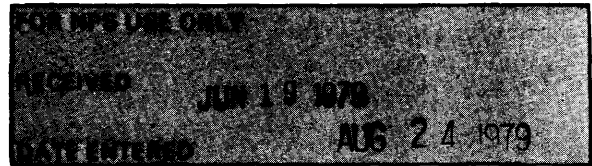
The schoolhouse and other buildings are substantiated by a 1791 deed. The deed states: "a described lot or piece of ground is the same whereon Friends Meetinghouse stands called Upper Springfield Meeting House. Together with the said meeting house, the stables, schoolhouse, inclosing (?) hereditaments." (Burlington County Deeds. Book 4, p. 475, 1791).

In 1814 the school was determined "not sufficiently roomy and convenient for hanging maps, etc., and more room having often been wanted especially in the winter season it is concluded to have an addition of about 10 feet put to the end of it." (Upper Springfield School Trustees Minutes, IIIIV, 1814).

An old photograph pictures the Upper Springfield Friends School as a 1 1/2 story frame and shingle building with gable roof. The uneven fenestration affirms the ten foot addition in 1814 as the building was otherwise a symmetrical 3 bay, center entrance plan. The photo is closely cropped around the building, but some sort of the structure (definitely not the meetinghouse) is in the near background, to the east. While the photograph does not give any indication of direction an 1876 map does not show the school as being west of the meetinghouse and near two unidentified structures.

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Description (continued)

A superficial investigation of the site did not locate any building foundations, but numerous other man-made features are in evidence—including an old roadbed east of Route 68 at the beginning of the wooded land and progressing northeast until it again comes upon the main road north of the cemetery. There are numerous dumps throughout the site.

The rectangular cemetery is enclosed by fencing on the south, east, and north. The fence has five forms with the portions northernmost and nearest the meetinghouse being modern, but the center three designs are decorative ironwork, parts perhaps dating to 1856, when a deed describes the cemetery as the "grave yard... at Upper Springfield Meeting House and fenced with iron along the road and with locust posts on their sides all new and constructed June A.D. 1856." (Burlington County Deeds, Book X5, p. 415, 6/16/1856).

The meetinghouse is protected from the road by a heavy wooden guard-rail. The entire meetinghouse site and cemetery is a relatively undisturbed area.

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Significance (continued)

Education

While public education in New Jersey was neglected by the colonial and state government, the Society of Friends in the late 17th century promulgated a policy which urged Quakers to establish schools. Minutes of the local New Jersey meetings, however, indicate that while the official Society attitude was to create schoolhouses this did not become urgent until the mid-18th century when Friends began taking an active role in educating their youth.

The Upper Springfield Schoolhouse was built around 1781, making it one of a handful of Quaker schoolhouses in the County. While the building is no longer extant, investigations of the site can provide insight into educational philosophy and practice in the late 18th-early 19th century.

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9. Bibliography (continued)

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Burlington County Library. Newspaper clippings in 1950's showing meetinghouse.

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Woodward and Hageman. History of Burlington and Mercer Counties, New Jersey. 1882 (p. 447).