

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED JUL 14 1980  
DATE ENTERED 8 1980

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Park Hill Meeting House

AND/OR COMMON

Park Hill Meeting House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Park Hill

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Westmoreland

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First Second

STATE

New Hampshire

CODE

33

COUNTY

Cheshire

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 type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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: public meeting

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

The Westmoreland Congregational Society of the Park Hill Church, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER

Park Hill

CITY, TOWN

Westmoreland

VICINITY OF

STATE

New Hampshire, 03467

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Cheshire County Court House

STREET & NUMBER

Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Keene

STATE

New Hampshire, 03431

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## **7** DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE <u>1824</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Park Hill Meeting House is a two-story rectangular wooden building with a gable roof, a square tower on the front (south) elevation, and a shallow entrance portico. The facade of the building is five bays wide, and the middle three bays are embraced by the portico. Supported on two pairs of attenuated and unfluted columns set at the right and left extremities of the entablature, this portico has a Doric frieze, a delicately moulded cornice, and a triangular pediment with a pitch equal to that of the roof of the main building. Each triglyph in the portico frieze has a row of drilled holes along its upper edge, just above the glyphs, in addition to the usual guttae along the bottom. The raking cornices of both the pediment and the main building have narrow friezes enriched with an applied guilloche. The flush-boarded tympanum has an elliptical window with radiating tracery, embellished with an enframing of applied wooden foliage.

Beneath the portico on the first story are three matched doors, each flanked by attenuated Tuscan pilasters which support a common entablature. The cornice of this entablature is enriched by rope mouldings of two different sizes, and by bed mouldings composed of fillets and turned beads. Above the doors, on the second story, are three windows. The two pairs of portico columns are reflected on the face of the main building by similar pairs of attenuated pilasters; each of the outer corners of the facade is emphasized by another pair of pilasters supporting paired architrave blocks. Between the ends of the portico and the corners of the building is a single window on each floor.

The square tower of the meeting house is supported partly on the roof of the main building and partly on the roof of the portico. Its first stage is unornamented except for a Palladian window on the south (front) elevation. The second stage of the tower is a belfry with arched openings in each elevation; these are flanked by paired Tuscan pilasters at each corner of each elevation, and above the pilasters is a frieze and moulded cornice. In the spandrels above the archivolt of the belfry openings are radiating fans of carved wood. Above the cornice of the belfry stage is a balustrade with turned balusters and urn finials at each corner. The third stage is an octagonal lantern with a single arched opening on each face, flanked by Tuscan pilasters at the angles. These openings are closed by louvered blinds. The pilasters support a simple entablature which is crowned by a lattice balustrade bearing an urn finial at each angle. The lantern is topped by an ogee dome having a pineapple-shaped finial and a banneret weathervane.

The side elevations of the building are divided into two stories of five bays each, all windows having 12/12 sash. Windows on the second floor were enlarged when the meeting house was divided into two stories in 1853, and have larger panes of glass than those on the first floor. Clapboards on the rear of the meeting house bear traces of the many remodellings that the structure has undergone over the years.

The meeting house was given its present exterior form in 1824, when a bay of twenty feet was added to one end of a simple rectangular structure to accommodate the tower and provide a new facade. This remodelling transformed the interior of the old building into a single auditorium with galleries on three sides, a pulpit on the north wall, and stairs in the added bay on the south. Few traces of the interior woodwork of this remodelling remain. In 1853 the building was divided into two stories, the first floor being subdivided into two large rooms and several smaller ones, and the second being transformed into an auditorium with slip pews. Stairways

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

7. DESCRIPTION, continued:

in the southeast and southwest corners of the entrance bay, originally rising to the galleries, now give access to the second-floor auditorium. The original gallery posts on the first floor were left in place to support the new flooring above. Today the first-floor rooms are used for meetings and exhibitions, while the second floor continues its use for church services and is characterized by door and window casings and other woodwork in the Greek Revival style, added in 1853. The auditorium has raised platforms at front and rear for preaching and choral use, and is furnished with portable church furniture of the mid-nineteenth century.

Original appearance: The Park Hill Meeting House was constructed in 1764 in the north part of Westmoreland as a steepleless structure 50 feet long, 40 feet wide, and 20 feet from sill to plate. In 1779 it was moved to Park Hill and placed on a site about 90 feet south of its present location. Porches were added on the east and west ends, with the entrance on the south. Records indicate that at this period the structure had broad aisles between box pews, galleries on three sides of the auditorium, and a pulpit with a sounding board topped by a carved wooden dove. During the move to its present location in 1824 the porches were removed from the ends of the structure, a twenty-foot addition was made on the south, and the exterior assumed an appearance which has not changed substantially in subsequent years, except for the lengthening of the second floor windows in 1853.

Effect of the Move on the Historical Integrity of the Building: The Park Hill Meeting House has been moved twice, first in 1779 and then in 1824. The first move was a direct result of a demographic shift in Westmoreland, and was intended to relocate the building near the new center of population in the town. The second move coincided with the remodelling of the building to its present exterior form, and appears to have been dictated by aesthetic considerations. It entailed the placing of the structure 90 feet north of its former site, in a higher and more prominent location, and thus allowed the new facade with its tower and portico to be seen to better advantage from the surrounding countryside. Since this second move was dictated by the same motivations that gave the structure the architectural form for which it is chiefly nominated, this move is an integral and significant part of the history of the building and reveals the aesthetic attitudes of the people of Westmoreland in the 1820s.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" 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/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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 1764;1824;1853

BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Park Hill Meeting House is significant in that its evolution since the time of its construction in 1764 embodies the history of the religious society that built and maintained it, while at the same time typifying the broader history of meeting house architecture in southwestern New Hampshire during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

**Architecture:** The Park Hill Meeting House is one of an important group of related structures built in the early 1800s along both sides of the Massachusetts-New Hampshire border. Unlike its prototypes, which were built in single construction efforts either by or under the influence of architect Elias Carter (1781-1864) of Brimfield, Massachusetts, the Park Hill Meeting House acquired its present form through a series of remodellings. Given its tower and portico in 1824, the building is the latest example of its type among the group of related meeting houses. The Park Hill tower and portico relate closely to corresponding features on the meeting house constructed by Carter at Templeton, Massachusetts (1811) and on a close copy of the Templeton design at Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire (1818). Certain departures from these prototypes on the Park Hill tower (notably the inclusion of a Palladian window on the first stage of the tower and the omission of a second octagonal lantern) show a slow evolution away from Carter's original design. The Park Hill structure nevertheless illustrates the persistence of Carter's formula for tower and portico to the period when the forms of the Greek Revival were about to sweep rural New England as a result of the publication of new architectural guidebooks.

In its retention of a frame of 1764 and in its Greek Revival remodellings of 1853, the building also preserves architectural fashions both earlier and later than those of the late Federal period when it assumed its present exterior form.

**Community Planning/Religion:** The Park Hill Meeting House embodies much of the religious history of a small but characteristic New Hampshire town. Originally constructed in 1764 in a different location as a simple steepleless meeting house, the structure typified the type of building used by Congregational churches throughout northern New England. Due to a shift in population, the building was moved to Park Hill in 1779. At the time of a second move and remodelling in 1824 the congregation was split by a secessionist movement occasioned by the desire of some parishioners to move the church activities to the South Village of Westmoreland. Again occasioned by a shift in population, this schism typified the church history of New England towns in which the center of population moved and the old meeting house was seen as no longer convenient to the majority of people. Once again in 1853, at the time of the most recent remodeling of the meeting house, the congregation was split by a similar secessionist movement. Thus, the architectural history of the Park Hill Meeting House parallels and embodies the religious history of the society that built the structure and the demographic history of the town in which it stands.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bellows, Robert P., Country Meeting Houses along the Massachusetts-New Hampshire Line, The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs, XI, 5 (1925).  
 Sinnott, Edmund W., Meetinghouse and Church in Early New England. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963.  
 Westmoreland History Committee, History of Westmoreland (Great Meadow) New Hampshire, 1741-1970. Westmoreland, N.H.; the authors, 1976.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2 acres

UTM NOT VERIFIED

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	9	7	0	7	4	0	0	4	7	6	1	0	0	0
ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING							

B 

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING							

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Bounded on the west and south by New Hampshire Route 63; on the east by Park Hill Road; and on the north by private property.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Sara and Clyde Shepherd

ORGANIZATION

Park Hill Meeting House Association

DATE

September 27, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

Park Hill

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Westmoreland,

STATE

New Hampshire, 03467

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

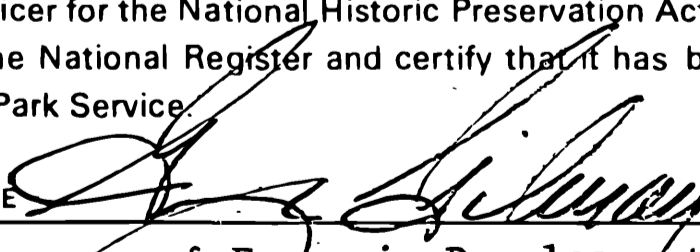
NATIONAL

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



TITLE Commissioner, Dept. of Resources & Economic Development  
 NH State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE May 23, 1980

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. Ray Luce

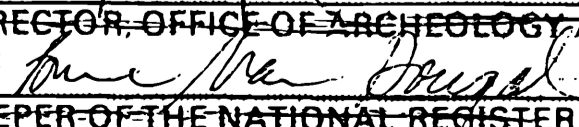
DATE

8/8/80

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

APPROVER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:



DATE

8.29.80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER