

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

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

received FEB 7 1985
date entered

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

1. Name

historic New Hampton Village Free Will Baptist Church

and/or common NEW HAMPTON COMMUNITY CHURCH (preferred)

2. Location

street & number Main Street n/a not for publication

city, town New Hampton n/a vicinity of

state New Hampshire code 33 county Belknap code 001

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name New Hampton Community Church

street & number Main Street - P.O. Box 247

city, town New Hampton, n/a vicinity of state New Hampshire 03256

5. Location of Legal Description

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

Belknap County Courthouse

street & number 64 Court Street

city, town Laconia, state New Hampshire 03246

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title New Hampton Historic
Resources Inventory

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records Lakes Region Planning Commission

city, town Meredith, state New Hampshire

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The New Hampton Community Church is a Greek Revival wooden church which stands on its own lot at the east end of Main Street in New Hampton village, between Route 132 on the north and Lower Road on the south. Basically, the high, gable-roofed, rectangular main block is one story in height, with a full basement that is exposed on the east and the west. (The western end of the main block is actually two stories in height, but this internal division is not visible on the exterior.) The church is set with its western gable end facing Main Street, so that the church is virtually centered on the axis of the street. In the center of this western main facade is the main entry, set in a recessed porch, which is fronted by a shallowly projecting pedimented portico. Directly above the entry portico is the church's three stage tower. On the rear (eastern) facade is found a shallow modern addition at the basement level, a one-story, hip-roofed kitchen-furnace room section. On the south side, again at the basement level, is a small, gable-roofed entry porch.

On the north and west sides, the church foundation is smooth cut granite blocks. On the south facade (and the east facade, before it was covered by the kitchen addition), the exposed basement wall is of brick laid in common bond, flemish variation, on a cut granite block foundation. The church proper is clapboarded on three facades, but sheathed with flush boarding on the main west facade. The walls are ornamented by wide pilasters at the corners and flanking the side bays of the west facade and the westernmost bays of the north and south facade. The massive deep pilasters have moulded capitals and narrow, almost slit like panels. They are set on bases formed by projections of the granite foundation or the brick basement wall. The facades are topped by a classical entablature--a wide box cornice with mouldings, and deep frieze and architrave with mouldings. The cornice is pedimented on the west gable, but has only returns on the east gable. The metal sheathed gable roof is interrupted by two plain brick chimneys with tapering caps, one on each slope, near the east gable end.

The main west facade is, as noted above, sheathed with flush boarding on a cut granite block foundation. The central bay of the three bay wide facade is distinguished by the distyle in antis portico in front of the tall recessed porch. Concrete steps with a central pair of metal pipe hand rails lead up to the porch's wooden floor. Standing on the porch floor are the two tall, massive Doric columns with very simple base mouldings, and the capitals common to the order. The square antae flanking the columns are identical in design to the church's pilasters, with the same capitals and narrow, slit like panels. They are set on relatively simple bases with flush boarding sides topped by simple mouldings. The portico projects from the main facade only to the depth of the columns and the antae. The portico's entablature and pediment are of the same design as the main block's entablature. And the entablatures of the main block's and the portico's pediments are set at the same level. The portico's tympanum, like the tympanum of the main block pediment, is sheathed with flush boarding. The walls of the recessed porch are sheathed with horizontal beaded boarding, trimmed with a plain baseboard. (The porch ceiling, as well, is covered with beaded boarding.) On the south wall is mounted a small memorial bronze plaque for the church clock. In the east wall, centered on the church's axis, is the main entry, double paneled doors with builtin windows, plain side trim with lower cornerblocks, and an entablature. The west

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 1

Item number 7

Page 2

facade's side bays are each flanked by the usual tall pilasters. Each side bay contains a large, tall double window, with six over six sash, plain sill and side trim and a low pitched, triangular pediment. Much of the main block's gable pediment is hidden by the portico pediment and the projecting base of the tower.

The square tower, directly above the portico, is composed of three stages, which grow smaller with height. Each stage is sheathed with flush boarding, trimmed with wide, deep cornerboards (each actually composed of several boards) and topped by simple but heavy box cornices with deep friezes. (The frieze of the top belfry stage is deeper and divided in two.) The base, which projects in front of the main block's pediment, is nearly as wide as the portico on which it stands. Its box cornice is only a little higher than the church's roof ridge. The west face of the base is further distinguished by a long, horizontal recessed panel. Large rectangular panels almost fill each face of the second stage. In the west face is the church clock--a round clock face painted black with gold Roman numerals and hands. The top stage is the open belfry, with a tall rectangular opening in each face. The bell, presented in 1857, is plainly visible, as is the belfry's flush boarding ceiling. At the apex of the belfry's asphalt shingled, low-pitched hip roof is a square block topped by a globe, on which stands the church's elaborate metal weathervane.

The north long facade is clapboarded above a cut granite block foundation, which is interrupted by four, plain framed, four pane windows. Pilasters mark the north facade's corners and the westernmost of its five bays. The blank westernmost bay corresponds to the small rooms, vestibule, pastor's study, etc., west of the auditorium. The three central bays, corresponding to the auditorium, each have a large, tall double window with six over six sash, plain sill and side trim. The windows are crowned by pseudo-pediments, peaked lintels topped by mouldings. The easternmost bay contains the side entry--a paneled door with builtin window, two granite steps, and the same trim as the windows, including a similar peaked lintel.

The long south facade is two stories high, as the brick walled basement is fully exposed. Three vertical strips project from the brick wall to support the pilasters above. All of the basement doors and windows have plain trim. And the windows all have six over six sash. From west to east, the main block's basement level features the following--a paneled door with modern louvred window, granite sill and steps; two windows; a four-paneled door with granite sill and an entry porch; two more windows; another four panel door with granite sill and steps; and, finally, another window. The entry porch has concrete floor and steps, the last served by a pair of metal pipe hand rails. The square chamfered posts with bases and ornate sawn brackets support the porch's pedimented box cornice with mouldings and frieze, and its asphalt shingled gable roof. Beaded boarding sheathes the porch's gable and ceiling. The main level of the south facade is virtually identical to the north facade, although, of course, it lacks the side entry in the last bay. It does have the same clapboard-ing, pilasters, blank western bay, and three tall double windows of the same design and placement as their northern counterparts.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 2

Item number 7

Page 3

The basement level of the east facade is hidden by the modern kitchen addition. The one-story addition has an asphalt shingled hip roof and a wooden box cornice with mouldings, vents, and (on the east and north facades) friezes. The addition's three facades are quite distinct in appearance. The short south facade is sheathed with brick laid in stretcher bond on a cut granite block foundation. It features a six over six sash window with brick sill, and a six panel door with granite sill and steps. The long east wall is clapboarded with cornerboards above a concrete foundation. From south to north, it features two double windows with horizontal pivoting sash, a single window with the same pivoting sash, a six over six sash window, and a six-panel door, all with moulded trim. The largely buried north facade consists only of two courses of clapboards above a concrete foundation. The rear (east) facade of the main block is clapboarded with corner pilasters. In the center of the wall at the main level is a semicircular arched stained glass window with hoodmould. Above the window is a light on a bracket, used to illuminate the window at night. The rear facade also has two six over six sash windows with the same peaked lintels with mouldings as are found on the north and south facade windows. One of the two windows is found on the main level north of the stained glass window, while the other, which lights the attic, is found high in the gable directly above the stained glass window.

The main entry opens into the vestibule, which has a carpeted floor, plaster walls with baseboards, plain door frames, and a modern tile ceiling with ceiling moulding. In the east wall, directly opposite the main entry, are the double leather-covered doors that open into the auditorium. Both the north and south walls feature a four-panel door, the north door serving the pastor's study, the south door the choir room. Both of the small rooms have carpeted floors, plaster walls with baseboards, plain window and door trim, and paneled ceilings with mouldings. The pastor's study also has a simple chair rail, and two builtin closets with modern, double, sliding doors. The study is lit by the bottom half of the northerly western double window. Four panel doors in the east walls of both the pastor's study and the choir room open into the auditorium. The smaller choir room has three doors in its south wall. The modern westerly door opens unto the landing of the stairs to the basement. The stair landing and the choir room share the bottom half of the other western double window, each room having a six pane sash. (The landing and the stairway share carpeted floor and steps, plaster walls with baseboards, and a plaster ceiling.) The central four-panel door serves a closet, while the easterly four panel door opens unto the stairs to the three storage rooms directly above the choir room, vestibule and pastor's study.

These three upper storage rooms, reached by a simple stairway whose plaster walls have baseboards, have board floors, unfinished plaster or plasterboard walls and ceilings. The northern and southern rooms are lit by the upper halves of the western double windows. A small door in the northern room is reached by a ladder, and in turn, serves the ladder that climbs through the unfinished attic and the first two stages of the tower to the open belfry.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 3

Item number 7

Page 4

The auditorium occupies most of the main level. The auditorium's hardwood floor is carpeted in the aisles. The plaster walls have a low wainscoating with moulded baseboard and coping. Beneath the windows, the wainscoating projects slightly and is paneled. The very high ceiling is sheathed with elaborate pressed metal designs. A pressed metal coved ceiling moulding encircles the room, save above the projecting central section of the east wall, which has a more conventional cornice. The ceiling now has modern recessed lights and a ceiling fan.

The west wall of the auditorium has three doors, the double doors to the vestibule, and the four panel doors to the choir room and the pastor's study, all of which have shouldered architrave surrounds. The north and south walls each have three tall, large double windows with six over six sash, moulded side trim, folding interior louvred shutters, simple entablatures, and frosted panes with geometric patterns.

The east end of the auditorium is rather more elaborate. The northeast corner of the main block is taken up by a side entry hall, and the southeast corner by the organ room. These separate small rooms flank the sanctuary, which, although raised above the auditorium, opens into it. The opening is framed by a true Palladian motif, which is echoed by simpler Palladian motifs to the north and south around the organ and the door to the side entry hall. The central Palladian motif has a moulded semi-circular arch with keystone, which rests on classical entablatures with pulvinated friezes. The entablatures are supported by inner fluted columns and outer fluted antae, all with bases and capitals. The columns and antae rest on the carpeted sanctuary stage which projects into the auditorium. The front of the stage has a shallow moulded cornice and a deep moulded baseboard. Carpeted steps up to the stage are found at the north end of the stage and on the main axis of the church. The Palladian motif and the wall above it project slightly from the auditorium's east wall to emphasize the importance of the sanctuary. The sanctuary has plastered walls with moulded baseboards. The barrel vaulted plaster ceiling has shallow cornices on the north and south walls. The north and south walls each have double louvred doors with moulded trim, the north door serving the side entry hall, the south door the organ room. High in the center of the east wall is a memorial semicircular arched stained glass window, depicting Christ the Shepard, with moulded sill and surround.

The eastern wall north of the sanctuary is ornamented by a similar albeit less elaborate Palladian motif, applied to the usual plaster wall with wainscoating. Fluted pilasters on pedestals support the same entablature with pulvinated frieze. Although indented, the entablature is continued across the central bay, setting off the moulded semicircular arch with keystone above the bay. The plaster filled tympanum thus created is painted with Christian symbols. The central bay contains double louvred doors, with shouldered architrave surround, which serve the side entry hall. South of the sanctuary is another Palladian motif of virtually the same design as its northern counterpart. Here the central bay beneath the indented entablature and the painted tympanum is open, showing the organ pipes above a paneled base

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

4

Item number 7

Page

5

with simple moulded cornice. The side bays each contain double louvred doors, which hide the organ works. Because the bays are open, the entablature is here supported by square fluted pillars, albeit of the same design as the northern pilasters. The pedestals are omitted here as the floor is raised in front of the organ room to accommodate the choir and the organ keyboard. The raised choir section, which projects farther into the auditorium than the sanctuary stage, is enclosed on the north and west by a low partition, with paneled front and sides, and fluted pilasters at the corners and flanking the low paneled door on the north side. Carpeted steps serve the northern door and an opening next to the south wall of the auditorium. Four simple wooden benches stand on the stepped choir stage, and the organ keyboard is found in the corner.

The slip pews in the auditorium are curved in plan, and divided by a central aisle. Their shaped arm rests are ornamented with carved crosses and foliage. The other auditorium and sanctuary furniture is movable--a piano in a corner of the auditorium, a small pulpit on the edge of the sanctuary stage, a table on the auditorium floor in front of the pulpit, the altar and two flanking chairs in the rear of the sanctuary.

The organ room in the southeast corner, virtually filled by the organ works, has plastered walls and ceiling. The side entry hall in the northeast corner has a carpeted hardwood floor, plain window and door trim and a high plaster ceiling. Its plaster walls are decorated with a high picture moulding and a low wainscoting similar to, but simpler than, the auditorium's wainscoting. The room is lit by a six over six sash window with frosted glass in the east wall. In the north wall is the side entry--a paneled door with window. Double louvred doors in the west wall open into the auditorium and carpeted steps lead up to another pair of louvred doors in the south wall, which serve the sanctuary. An exposed brick chimney stands in the southeast corner of the room.

The basement level of the main block contains a large dining room, two storage rooms, two classrooms, a nursery, two restrooms, and four hallways, arranged in a surprisingly complex plan. The newer addition to the east contains the kitchen, a small restroom, and the furnace room. For the purpose of clarity, our description of the basement will begin at the east end with the addition and then proceed westerly.

The kitchen at the south end of the addition has a linoleum floor, plywood walls with baseboards, builtin cabinets, kitchen equipment and counters, and a modern tile ceiling. The kitchen is lit by one southern sash window and two eastern double pivoting windows. Also in the south wall is an exterior door. (The doors and windows throughout the basement have plain frames.) A modern door and two sliding counter doors in the west wall connect the kitchen to the dining room. In the northeast corner of the kitchen is a small restroom, with one pivoting window and the same interior surfaces as the kitchen. A modern door at the north end of the kitchen leads to the furnace room, which occupies the north end of the addition.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

5

Item number

7

Page

6

The furnace room has a concrete floor, and in the eastern wall, a single window and one outer door. The church's brick foundation serves as the room's western wall. The northern wall is also an exposed foundation, here of modern concrete. The ceiling, south and east walls are sheathed with asbestos board.

The dining room west of the kitchen is the largest room in the basement, but somewhat irregular in shape. It has a carpeted floor and plaster walls with baseboards. Part of the ceiling is plastered, while part is distinguished by pressed metal tiles, with a pressed metal cove ceiling moulding. The south wall has three windows and an outer door. In the north wall are the two, four-paneled doors to the small storage rooms. (Both storage rooms have concrete floors, concrete or plaster walls, and plaster ceilings. The eastern storage room is lit by a high basement window.) The west wall is interrupted by an indentation, in the north wall of which is a five-panel door to one of the classrooms. North of the indentation in the west wall is an interior window for the classroom, while south of the indentation is a four-panel door with transom window, leading into the main hallway.

At the south end of the main hallway is the central basement entry, which is sheltered by the open porch. The main hall, which has the usual carpeted floor, plaster walls with baseboards, and plaster ceiling, has one eastern opening, the already mentioned door to the dining room, and two doorless western openings, serving the landing-hall at the foot of the basement stairs, and the western hallway. The landing-hall again has a carpeted floor, plaster walls with baseboards, and a plaster ceiling. It is lit by two southern windows. The L-shaped hallway partially surrounds the men's restroom. This restroom is lit by the frosted window in its paneled door and by a large frosted plate glass window in its south wall which diffuses light from the hallway. The restroom has a linoleum floor, plaster walls with baseboards, and a plaster ceiling. A short hallway, paralleling the main hallway, connects the landing-hall to the western hallway. West of this short hall, with its carpeted floor, plaster walls and ceiling, is the women's restroom, which has a linoleum floor, plaster walls and ceiling. Like its companion, the women's restroom is lit by the frosted window in its paneled door and by a frosted window in its south wall, here a high six pane window which diffuses second-hand light from the men's restroom to the south.

The western hallway, reached from both the main hallway, and (via the short hall) from the basement stairs, serves the three rooms in the west end of the basement. A five-panel door in its west wall opens into the nursery in the southwest corner of the basement. Two similar doors in the hall's north wall serve the two classrooms on the north side. The western hallway, with its carpeted floor, plaster walls and ceiling, also contains large builtin cabinets with paneled doors and moulded cornices.

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

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

6

Item number

7

Page

7

The nursery has a carpeted floor, plaster or painted concrete walls, and a plaster ceiling with ceiling moulding. In its south wall is the westernmost exterior door, while its north wall contains a five-panel door connecting it to the western classroom. The two classrooms both have partially carpeted concrete floors, plaster and painted concrete walls, plaster ceilings with ceiling mouldings. They are connected by a five-panel door and an interior louvred window, and are each lit by two high basement windows in the north wall. In the east wall of the eastern classroom, there is found, besides, the aforementioned window into the dining room, a door into the western storage room.

Because the lot slopes naturally from the north to the south, retaining walls have been built to reshape the terrain. East of the building is a concrete retaining wall which is actually a short extension of the northern wall of the kitchen addition. West of the church is a fieldstone retaining wall which is virtually in line with the south wall of the building. As the front lawn slopes gently to the west, the western retaining wall, although a full story high at the east end, tapers down to nothing at its west end. The wall is interrupted by concrete steps with metal hand rails, serving a paved walkway which crosses the lot to Route 132 on the north. East from this crosswalk is a long paved walkway to the front steps of the building. Paved walks are also found from the front steps north to Route 132, along the north side of the church, and along the east side of the kitchen addition. Most of the lot is grassed, although areas between the church and Lower Road, on both sides of the lower entry porch, are covered with pebbles and enclosed by landscape timbers. A few shrubs grow on the eastern boundary. East of the concrete steps, a hedge grows along the top of the stone retaining wall, which is itself covered with vines. The front lawn is ornamented with shrubs and trees. Near the steps stands a wooden church sign on two wooden posts. Aedicular in design with columns supporting a pediment, the church sign is further distinguished by raised letters.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet 7

Item number 8

Page 2

reveals the names of the builders as it conveys "the premises...on which Zelotes D. Gordon and John S. Gordon are now erecting a meeting house".⁶ Zelotes D. Gordon (1806-1878) was a local carpenter and miller whose own Greek Revival house still stands on Main Street. John S. Gordon was probably his brother, John Simpson Gordon (1810-1868). By early June, the building was apparently nearing completion, as two newspapers reported on the fall of a workman from the steeple.⁷ The church was dedicated on June 10, 1854, as part of the three day annual meeting of the New Hampshire Free Will Baptists, held that year at New Hampton.

By the end of the 19th century, the interior of the building seemed outdated. So, in 1899, the auditorium was completely renovated according to plans donated by J.W. Merrow, a New Hampton native who became a Boston architect. The renovation, done by "a Mr. Tucker of Lakeport",⁸ cost \$2400 and was dedicated on December 14, 1899. The work included the walling off of the gallery above the entry, and extensive redecoration. Some features of the remodeling, such as the new pews, are obviously late 19th century in character. But Merrow was not insensitive to his task and sought to make the interior "colonial to compare with the exterior".⁹ The Palladian motifs that now dominate the east wall of the auditorium, for example, were inspired by the Colonial Revival style of the day. The result is an attractive interior that reflects the taste of the turn of the century. (The only exterior change included in the 1899 renovation was the installation of the semicircular arched stained glass window in the east gable end.)

A number of changes have been made in the 20th century, but none as drastic as the 1899 interior renovation. The exterior has seen few changes. The upper wooden structure has been virtually untouched, with changes limited to the replacement of the front steps with more durable concrete steps, and in the 1960's, the installation of a tower clock. The basement level has been somewhat more altered. In the south facade, a porch was built to shelter the main entry, and a new door was added in the westernmost bay. About 1970, the eastern addition was built to house the kitchen and the furnace room.

⁶Belknap County Registry of Deeds, Book 24, Page 349, Laconia, N.H.

⁷The workman, James M. Hodgdon, "fell from the steeple...some 30 feet to the roof, upon which he rolled to the eaves from which he fell again some 45 feet to the ground", and somehow survived, although severely injured. The Baptist Observer (Concord) June 23, 1854.

⁸Bristol Enterprise, August 10, 1899.

⁹Bristol Enterprise, December 21, 1899.

8. Significance

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 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 c.1854 **Builder/Architect** Zelotes D. & John S. Gordon, Builders

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The New Hampton Community Church is significant in the area of architecture as one of New Hampshire's finest Greek Revival churches, whose well preserved exterior is notable for its sophisticated design and fine proportions. It can, in fact, be argued that the church has the most advanced and most creative design of any of the Greek Revival churches in the state.

The need for a Free Will Baptist church in New Hampton village became apparent when the New Hampton Literary and Biblical Institution, a Free Will Baptist school, was established there in 1853.¹ Two Free Will Baptist churches in the town of New Hampton decided to combine and establish a single church located in the village. Therefore, on September 17, 1853, the Second Free Will Baptist Church of New Hampton and the Meredith and New Hampton Free Will Baptist Church met to reorganize themselves as the New Hampton Village Free Will Baptist Church.² One of the first acts of the new church was to instruct its society "to secure a building spot and build a house of worship".³ Unfortunately, while the religious records of the church survive, the early records of the separate society that actually built and maintained the church do not. The only contemporary documents on the construction of the church known to exist are a few items in denominational newspapers and the deed for the property.

A letter to The Morning Star dated October 6, 1853, reported briefly on the meeting of the society following the organization of the new church, "Last Saturday at a meeting of the society called for the purpose, it was cordially agreed that this community needs a new and larger house for religious worship and committees were chosen to fix on a location and to present a general plan for a meeting house, to report in one week."⁴ But, the newspaper never received any correspondence on the committee reports. And we do not now know who designed the building. Another letter from New Hampton to the same newspaper dated January 27, 1854, noted that "A meeting house, to seat 600, is now in process of erection..."⁵ The church was being built on a fine lot donated by Rufus Lewis at the head of Main Street, a site which enabled the building to visually dominate the village street. The deed, signed March 1, 1854,

¹The Free Will Baptists had taken over a Calvinist Baptist school in the nearby village now known as The Old Institution and moved it bodily, buildings and all, to the village.

²In 1951, the New Hampton Village Free Will Baptist Church was reorganized as the non-denominational New Hampton Community Church.

³"New Hampton Village Free Will Baptist Church records (1853-1871)" (unpaged manuscript, property of New Hampton Community Church, on deposit at the Gordon-Nash Library, New Hampton, N.H.) minutes of meeting of September 17, 1853.

⁴The Morning Star (Dover), October 19, 1853.

⁵The Morning Star, February 8, 1854.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .28 acres

Quadrangle name Holderness, N.H.

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

1	9	2	8	6	2	5	0	4	8	3	1	3	5	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 nominated property is a four sided parcel of land in New Hampton village, bounded on the east by Main St., on the north by Rte.132, on the south by Lower Rd., and on the east by the property of the New Hampton Grange. The nominated property includes the New Hampton Community Church and the lot on which it has stood since its

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

state N/A code county

state N/A code county

construction. (New Hampton Property Map U-4, Lot 4). Boundaries of the nominated property have been highlighted in yellow on map.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Ruel

organization Lakes Region Planning Commission date July 20, 1984

street & number Main Street telephone (603) 279-8171

city or town Meredith, state New Hampshire 03253

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 *David Ruel* date 1/24/85

title State Historic Preservation Officer date

For NPS use only

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

Delores Byers date 3-7-85
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date

Chief of Registration

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

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

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received

date entered

Continuation sheet

8

Item number 8

Page 3

The auditorium has seen some more renovation. A pressed metal ceiling was installed in 1911 and the hardwood floor in 1925. The interior shutters were added in the 1960's and the louvred doors in the 1970's. But again, the basement has been more radically changed, as it was enlarged and remodeled to accommodate new church functions. The nursery and two classrooms were created in 1954-5 out of unfinished sections of the basement. After the kitchen-furnace room addition was built, the dining room was enlarged to include the old kitchen.

Today, the interior of the church must be considered as late 19th century and 20th century in character. The pre-Civil War interior survives only in some details and, to an extent, in the plan of the building. But, the exterior remains almost unchanged. If we ignore the changes at the basement level, which are, by their position, relatively inconspicuous, the exterior changes are limited to the concrete front steps, the tower clock, and the stained glass window in the rear gable end. Otherwise, the outer appearance of the church is the same as it was in 1854.

The Greek Revival style had a strong impact on the design of New Hampshire churches in the decades preceding the Civil War. However, few of the surviving churches of the period show the style in its more sophisticated forms. The typical clapboarded wooden church usually had a pedimented gable and wide pilasters, at least at the corners. But these Greek Revival elements were often simply applied as ornament and sometimes mixed with Federal and Gothic elements. In the better and purer examples, such as the First Baptist Church in Lower Gilmanston (1842), the results can be impressive. But, much of the monumentality of the Greek originals was lost when their columns were reduced to shallow pilasters dividing a clapboarded wall. Only a handful of New Hampshire's Greek Revival churches do have that monumentality that is, after all, the most significant feature of the Greek temples. Two of these, the Unitarian Churches of Nashua (1827) and Hampton Falls (1838) are steepleless buildings with full porticos covering their gable ends. They strive, in effect, to copy the Greek temple. The Congregational Church in Northfield (1840) is more complex, as here the Greek temple portico is crowned by a square pilastered steeple.

The New Hampton Community Church is the most sophisticated of this small group. The design went beyond the simple copying of the Greek temple, or the simple addition of a steeple to a Greek temple form, to create a new form that combined the monumentality of the Greek temple with the standard church plan of the day--the gable roofed, rectangular building, whose gable end was topped by a steeple. The building's monumentality can be attributed to several devices. The use of flush boarding on the main facade and the tower recreates in wood the smooth surfaces of stone buildings.

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

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

9

Item number 8

Page 4

The windows, pilasters, columns, antae, cornerboards, cornices, and entablatures are themselves monumental in scale, being taller, wider and deeper than their counterparts on other buildings in the area. The surfaces of the building, particularly those of the main facade and the tower, are not treated as flat planes. The large recessed panels of the tower facades, the deep pediments of the main facade, the projecting portico in front of the recessed porch, even the deep pilasters and entablature framing the side bays and the long facades, all enliven the surface and reinforce the viewer's sense of mass and volume.

The design in general shows considerable skill. The integration of the tower and the main facade is very successful. The central portico serves both as the base for the three stage tower and as the centerpiece of the pedimented gable end. It thus ties together in an appropriate way two elements, the pedimented gable end and the steeple, that in many 19th century churches seem simply to be placed one on top of the other without any real connection. The proportions of the church are excellent. And the details, although never elaborate, are always suitable for their place in the design. Bryant Tolles in his *NEW HAMPSHIRE ARCHITECTURE* called the New Hampton Community Church "one of the finest examples of its style in New England".¹⁰ It certainly must be ranked as one of the finest, perhaps the best, Greek Revival church in New Hampshire.

¹⁰Bryant F. Tolles, Jr. - *NEW HAMPSHIRE ARCHITECTURE* (Hanover, 1979) p. 257.

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

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

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date entered

Continuation sheet 10

Item number 9

Page 1

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Correspondence - Pauline S. Merrill

Interviews - Pauline S. Merrill, July 3 and 18, 1984.

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Inventory—Nomination Form

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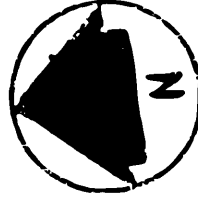
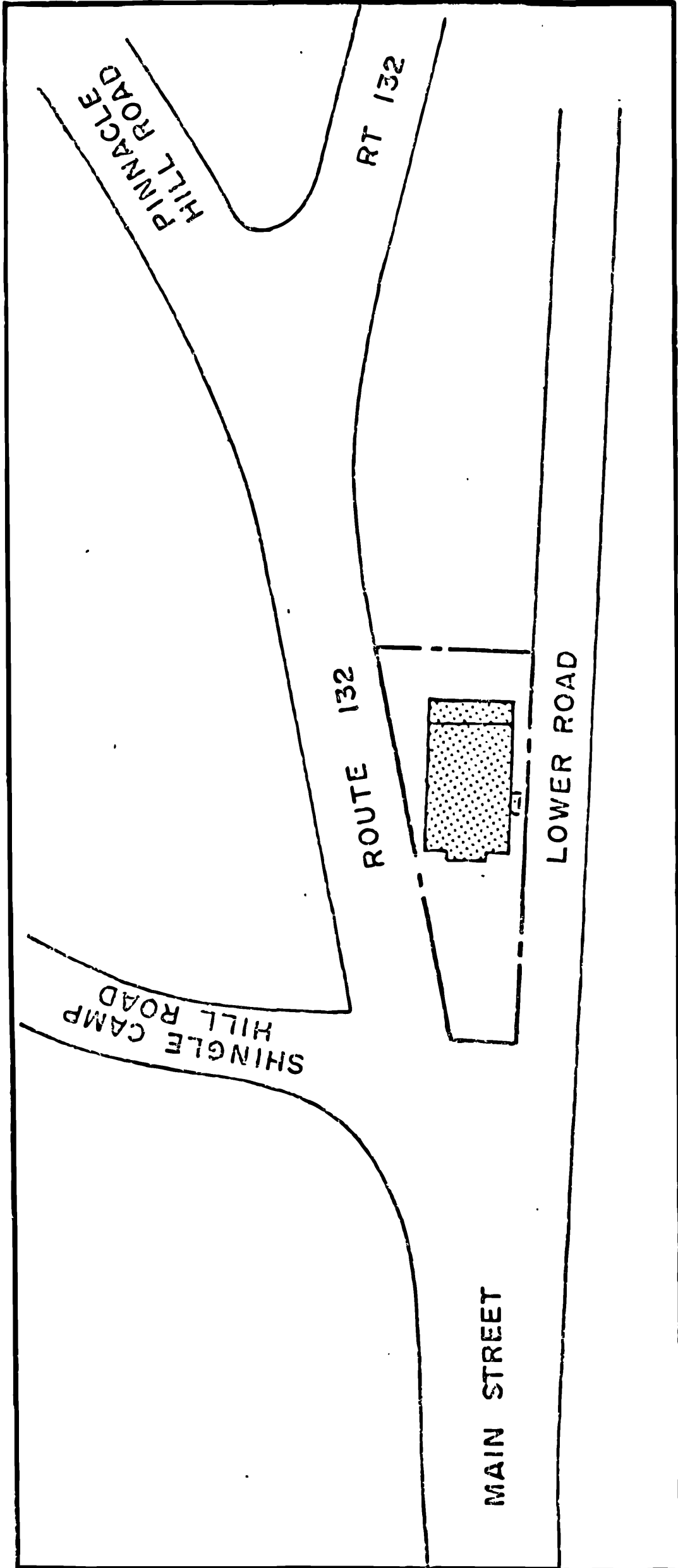
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Continuation sheet 11

Item number 10

Page 2



NEW HAMPTON COMMUNITY CHURCH
New Hampton, NH