

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED FEB 13 1980
DATE ENTERED NOV 13 1980

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

New Durham Town Hall

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street and Ridge Road

__ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

New Durham

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

__ VICINITY OF

#1

STATE

New Hampshire

CODE

33

COUNTY

Strafford

CODE

017

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Town of New Durham

STREET & NUMBER

Town Hall

CITY, TOWN

New Durham

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

New Hampshire

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Strafford County Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Strafford County Justice & Administration Building, County Farm Road

CITY, TOWN

Dover

STATE

New Hampshire

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The New Durham Town Hall, completed in 1908, successfully combines elements of the Italianate and the Colonial Revival architectural styles of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

It is a rectangular, wood frame, clapboarded structure, 38' x 63' (main block) with a hipped roof, bracketed eaves, and granite foundation. The entry on the main (north) facade consists of double leaf, three-panel doors deeply recessed into match-board reveals. Over the entry way is a four-paned transom light and a triangular-pedimented door hood supported by two large scroll brackets. (Due to deterioration, the original porch was removed c. 1965). On the wall directly above the door hood are paired windows with 1/1 sash. Under the cornices on all four elevations is a frieze articulated with a vertical, denticular molding.

The east and west elevations of the main block contain six windows. The windows on the second story are topped by single-paned transom lights, and the lintels of the first-story windows are connected by a simple string course. The roofs of the north, east and west elevations each have a gable dormer with triangular pediment, bracketed eaves and paired windows.

The northeast corner of the main block contains a 55', square, four-level clock and bell tower framed by pilasters rising to the top of the third level. The fourth level houses the bell, is louvered on all four sides and supports a hipped roof with two cross gables, each gable containing a circular clock face. The roof is topped by a 6' metal weathervane. The tower features tall, narrow windows on the three lower levels.

The first floor of the building houses town offices and a library. The second floor consists of an auditorium measuring 37' x 41' with an 18' x 20' stage. Recent alterations to the interior of the auditorium include the enclosing of a balcony and the dropping of the ceiling to increase heating efficiency. The original stamped metal remains intact above the new ceiling.

Connected to the rear of the building by a flat-roofed, woodsheathed ell is a one-story, hip-roofed cement block addition containing a vault for the storage of town records. Added in 1977 to replace a deteriorated extension designed to house horses, the addition is compatible with the design of the structure's main block.

Two non-contributing structures, a three-bay fire station and the town storage shed, are also on the nominated property.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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Fire Station: The New Durham Fire Station is a concrete block structure with a five-bay facade and a wood-framed gable roof. The central bay of the structure rises above the two side wings and extends rearward about 35 feet to give the building a T-shaped plan. The front gable end of this raised central bay creates a central pavilion on the facade. All gable ends of the structure are sheathed with matched boards laid vertically. The overall dimensions of the building are approximately 60 feet wide and 65 feet deep. The second bay from the northeast end has been closed with concrete blocks.

Town Shed: This barn-like structure is gable-roofed and is sheathed with clapboards over a balloon frame. A gable end, three bays wide, faces Ridge Road, and the side elevation that faces Main Street is fitted with three large sliding garage doors. The building measures approximately 35 by 60 feet.

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/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input 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

1908

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Alvah T. Ramsdell

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The New Durham Town Hall is significant as a fine example of turn of the century civic architecture, designed by one of northern New England's most prolific architects, and as the social and political center of the community since its erection in 1908.

Architecturally, the building is representative of a national trend toward the combination of characteristics of late nineteenth century styles, in this case Italianate, with those of the Colonial Revival style that emerged as a result of an awakened interest in colonial architecture following the American Bicentennial in 1876 and continued into the twentieth century.

It was designed by Alvah T. Ramsdell, a prominent Dover, New Hampshire, architect who specialized in institutional architecture and designed numerous public buildings in southern New Hampshire and eastern Maine. These include town halls in Alton, Rollinsford and Wakefield, New Hampshire, all similar in design to the nominated building, as well as school buildings in Dover, Ashland, Plymouth, Woodsville, Rochester and Somersworth in New Hampshire, North Berwick, York, Springvale and Eliot in Maine, and Salisbury, Massachusetts. Also in Dover, he was responsible for the Stafford Banks Building, the Wentworth Home for the Aged and the Ricker Memorial in the Pine Hill Cemetery.

A native of southern Maine who was trained as an architect in Boston, Ramsdell's work expressed a concern for adapting the urban fashions in public architecture to the needs of the small New England and design elements used in the New Durham Town Hall, which fitted in well with the small scale and wood frame construction that characterized the town's building stock at the time the town hall was built.

Stylistically, the results is a structure that combines such Victorian era elements as the vertical massing and off-center placement of the clock tower, steeply pitched gables, paired windows and brackets with Colonial Revival components such as the rectangular, massing of the main block, hipped roof, clapboard wall surface, pilasters and triangular pediments. Ramsdell thus provided the town with a facility that blended popular architectural features of the time with familiar designs from its distant past.

Until the town hall was built in 1908, local political affairs were conducted

(See Continuation Sheet #8-1)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Continuation Sheet #9-1).

UTM NOT VERIFIED

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 1 9	3 2 4 7 8 1 6	4 8 1 1 1 0 7 5	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Tax Map Reference Number: Map #9, Parcel #71) The property nominated is an irregularly shaped lot approximately 490' x 180' x 344' bounded on the north by Main Street, south by the Jacobus property, east by Ridge Road, and west by the Swett property.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
None			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Bernard Hiatt, Preservation Advisor

ORGANIZATION

Strafford-Rockingham Regional Council

STREET & NUMBER

1 Water Street

CITY OR TOWN

Exeter

DATE

May 25, 1979

TELEPHONE

(603) 778-0885

STATE

New Hampshire

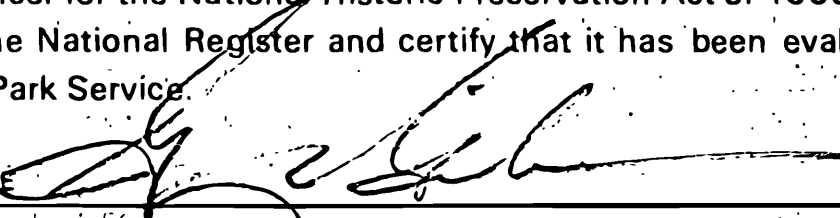
12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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

January 4, 1980

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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



DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

11/13/80

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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in the Old Meetinghouse at New Durham Corner, the original town center a few miles to the south. The location of the new town hall reflected the shift of the town's center as the population grew, as new roads were built, and as the railroad penetrated the area in the 1850's.

The building has been in continuous use since its construction as the seat of the town's government and social affairs. The first floor houses the town offices, police station and library, and the second floor auditorium continues to accommodate fraternal organization meetings, dances, plays and suppers, and makes an important contribution to the social fabric of the town.

In spite of the removal of the main entry porch due to deterioration, the building retains its basic integrity and is well maintained. Recent maintenance work has included the installation of a new heating system and new wiring in 1972.

Preservation activities have largely centered around the work of the Archives and Historical Collection Committee and the restoration by the New England Document Conservation Center of town records dating from 1759, the church records of the first Free Will Baptist Church in the United States, and one of only four original town charters in the state, all of which are stored in the vault added to the rear of the town hall in 1977.

The Town Hall occupies a pivotal location at the corner of Main Street and Ridge Road and provides a strong visual focus for the town center. Due to the fact that other historically and architecturally significant structures, such as the Old Meetinghouse (1770) and the Free Will Baptist Church (1819), are not within the sight lines of the town center, the building assumes added importance in defining the historic character of the community.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

"Farmington News" (Farmington, New Hampshire), "Dedication at New Durham,"
February 14, 1908.

"Foster's Daily Democrat" (Dover, New Hampshire), "A. T. Ramsdell, a Well
Known Leading Architect of Dover," August 10, 1916

Jennings, Ellen Cloutman, The History of New Durham, New Hampshire. New
Durham, New Hampshire, 1962.

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UTM REFERENCES

(Correction of original nomination form - New Durham Town Hall - UTM)

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