NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

1. NAME
COMMON:
Plymouth Friends Meeting House
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER:
Corner Germantown and Butler Pikes
CITY OR TOWN:
Plymouth Meeting
STATE:
Pennsylvania
CODE:
542
COUNTY:
Montgomery
CODE:
091

3. CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY (Check One)
☐ District ☑ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object
OWNERSHIP
☐ Public ☐ Private ☐ Both
PUBLIC ACQUISITION:
☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered
STATUS
☐ Occupied ☐ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress
ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ Yes: ☐ Restricted ☐ Unrestricted ☐ No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
☐ Agricultural ☐ Government ☐ Park ☐ Transportation ☐ Comments
☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Private Residence ☐ Other (Specify)
☐ Educational ☐ Military ☐ Religious
☐ Entertainment ☐ Museum ☐ Scientific

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNER'S NAME:
Plymouth Meeting Society of Friends
STREET AND NUMBER:
Corner Germantown and Butler Pikes
CITY OR TOWN:
Plymouth Meeting
STATE:
Pennsylvania
CODE:
4237

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Montgomery County Courthouse
STREET AND NUMBER:
Airy and Swede Streets
CITY OR TOWN:
Norristown
STATE:
Pennsylvania
CODE:
37

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY:
Pennsylvania Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks
DATE OF SURVEY:
June 1, 1970
☐ Federal ☑ State ☐ County ☐ Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
William Penn Museum
STREET AND NUMBER:
Box 1026
CITY OR TOWN:
Harrisburg
STATE:
Pennsylvania
CODE:
3747
The present Meeting House was probably built in 1708 of native limestone, in the Colonial style. In 1780, the eastern wing was added to be used as a school, and to replace the original log cabin school on the premises.

In 1867, the interior was damaged by fire but the original walls remained sound and the interior was rebuilt pretty much as the original. At this time a porch was added across the entire front of the building.

In 1945, another wing was added to the rear of the building, which is now used as a social room.
The first Quakers to own this site were Francis Rawle and James and Elizabeth Fox, who bought 5327 acres from William Penn in 1686. About two years later these families moved to Philadelphia and sold their land to Welsh Quakers.

Before the erection of the present Meeting House, meetings were held in the homes of friends in the area. As early as 1691, William Penn wrote from London, "Commend me to the Friends at Plymouth Meeting."

The first deed for the Meeting property was dated October 6, 1704. Title was given by Lumly Williams for two pounds to Isaac Price, William Dickinson, Abraham Dawes and John Roads, elders of the Meeting.

About this time, friends conducted a school on the premises in a log cabin. It was the first school in the Township and still flourishes here. The Meeting played a primary role in organizing and developing education in the area. David Rittenhouse (clock maker and astronomer) went to school here and one of his clocks is still in use in the Meeting House.

During the Revolutionary War, the Meeting House was used as a hospital and gathering place for George Washington's troops. There is a letter written by Mordecai Gist of Baltimore, a distinguished officer in the American Army. It is headed, "Camp at Plymouth Meeting House, the 13th day of the 12th month, 1777." This was when the army was at Culpep Mill, six days before going to Valley Forge. The letter begins: "I have these two nights past taken up my quarters in this House of Contemplation."

Prior to the Emancipation Proclamation, Plymouth Meeting was a hub of Underground activity. Plymouth Meeting Friends were active in the movement. Lucretia Mott, while campaigning for the Abolition Movement, at Abolition Hall across the road, attended meeting at Plymouth. Thomas Hovenden, internationally known artist, attended meeting and is buried in the graveyard.
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bean's, History of Montgomery County
Roberts, Ellwood, Plymouth Meeting
Crane, Abbie, Research for 200th Anniversary of Plymouth Meeting Friends

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORNER</th>
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LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

- LATITUDE: 40° 06' 06"
- LONGITUDE: 75° 16' 48"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 5

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

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11. FORM PREPARED BY

Helen Reichart Miras, Historical Committee

Organizations

Plymouth Meeting Historical Society

Street and Number:

807 Inverness Lane

City or Town:

Philadelphia

State: Pennsylvania

Date: 12/30/69

12. STATE LAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

- National
- State
- Local

Name: [Signature]

Title: [Title]

Date: Sept 8, 1970

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: [Date]

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date: [Date]