

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

|                         |      |
|-------------------------|------|
| STATE:<br>Pennsylvania  |      |
| COUNTY:<br>Philadelphia |      |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY        |      |
| ENTRY NUMBER            | DATE |

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
Free Quaker Meeting House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Southwest corner Fifth and Arch Streets

CITY OR TOWN:  
Philadelphia

STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: 42 COUNTY: Philadelphia CODE: 101

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

| CATEGORY<br>(Check One)   | OWNERSHIP   | STATUS  | ACCESSIBLE<br>TO THE PUBLIC  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District<br><input type="checkbox"/> Site<br><input type="checkbox"/> Object<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building<br><input type="checkbox"/> Structure | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public<br><input type="checkbox"/> Private<br><input type="checkbox"/> Both | Public Acquisition:<br><input type="checkbox"/> In Process<br><input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work<br>in progress | Yes:<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

|  |  |  |   |                                   |
|--|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural  | <input type="checkbox"/> Government        | <input type="checkbox"/> Park              | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation             | <input type="checkbox"/> Comments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial    | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial        | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational   | <input type="checkbox"/> Military          | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious         | HG's for Junior League of Philadelphia              |                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific        |   |                                   |

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Pennsylvania General State Authority

STREET AND NUMBER:  
21st and Herr Streets

CITY OR TOWN:  
Harrisburg

STATE:  
Pennsylvania

CODE:  
42

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
City Hall, Records Office

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:  
Philadelphia

STATE:  
Pennsylvania

CODE:  
42

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1964  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Washington Planning and Service Center, National Park Service

STREET AND NUMBER:  
801 19th St., NW

CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington

STATE:  
D. C.

CODE:  
11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Pennsylvania  
COUNTY: Philadelphia  
ENTRY NUMBER  
DATE  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

|                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| STATE<br>Pennsylvania  |      |
| COUNTY<br>Philadelphia |      |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY       |      |
| ENTRY NUMBER           | DATE |
|                        |      |

(Number all entries)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Newspaper clipping file in Philadelphia Historical Commission.

Philadelphia Historical Commission file. Contains photographs, copies of insurance surveys.

2 drawings, 2 photographs made by Old Philadelphia Survey, 1931. In possession of Free Library of Philadelphia.

(All information from Philadelphia Historical Commission files)

7. DESCRIPTION

|           |   |                                    |   |  |                                |                                    |
|-----------|---|------------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One)                                   |                                    |   |  |                                |                                    |
|           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good      | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair             | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated  | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
|           | (Check One)                                   |                                    |   | (Check One)                            |                                |                                    |
|           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered   | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input type="checkbox"/> Original Site |                                |                                    |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Free Quaker Meeting House was built in 1784 and is basically a plain two-and-one-half story brick building with a gable roof. The facade is laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers. A double belt course of brick and brick giant pilasters on each corner add enrichment, as do the stone lintels and sills of the 9-over-12 sash windows, the wide box and dentil cornice, and the pedimented wood doorway with its recessed paneling. Shutters (paneled) are on all first story windows. On the gable end is a stone commemorative tablet above the cornice return. There is a low brick watershed, and four steps to the entranceways.

In 1788 there was an addition of a second floor, for despite the exterior appearance of two stories, the interior had previously been only one story. This second story was reached by an outside stairway, also added at that time, so that the upper part of the building could be rented out and used separately. To support the new floor, two brick piers had to be built in the cellar to receive two wooden columns immediately above.

As it originally stood, the building had two unusual cellars, one beneath the other. The sub-basement was double vaulted with a paved floor.

Descriptions of all alterations can be found in Peterson, Notes on the Free Quaker Meeting House.

In 1961 the building was moved 33' W and 8" S to allow for the widening of Fifth Street. Nineteenth century additions were demolished. The unusual double vaulted cellars were paved over in the street widening. Restoration of the building to its 1788 condition was undertaken by Harbeson, Hough, Livingston and Larson, AIA. The Meeting House is now in excellent condition.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1784**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The building was erected in 1783 to house those Quakers who had been disowned by their own meetings for taking part in the Revolutionary War. A group of members were in charge of the construction. Samuel Wetherill was responsible for the major plans, while Timothy Matlack, who wrote out the Declaration of Independence in his now-familiar hand, drew the plans for the vaults.

After the addition in 1788 of a second floor, the building was occupied 1788-91 by John Poor's Academy for Young Ladies. (Since many of the original Quakers had moved from the area or died, meeting was held only once weekly, then cancelled entirely in 1836.) From 1791 to 1799 the building was used by the Grand Lodge of the Freemasons. 1800-1836 it was occupied by Benjamin Tucker's Philadelphia Select Academy.

In 1841 The Apprentices' Library Company of Philadelphia began their long occupancy. The Apprentices' Co. made several alterations, an addition to the south side in 1857, enclosing the yard in 1859, and in 1868 the addition of a two story building on the Fifth Street side. The building was occupied until 1897 by the Apprentices' Library.

The Meeting House is important for the role it played in Philadelphia's religious, social and cultural life.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Peterson, Charles Notes on the Free Quaker Meeting House, Philadelphia, 1966. Published report compiled for Harbeson, Hough, Livingston and Larson, ATA. 43 photographs, 15 measured drawings; notes and transcriptions (600 cards) deposited with the Free Quaker Collection in the Historical Society of Philadelphia.

Wallace, Philip B., Colonial Churches and Meetinghouses, Philadelphia, 1931. Manuscript records of the Apprentices' Library at Historical Society of Philadelphia. Contain much information pertinent to various additions, etc. Three original drawings, the receipt book of 1783-84, and one rough estimate sheet at Historical Society of Philadelphia.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |                         |                         | O<br>R | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES |                         |  |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------|---|-------------------------|--|
| CORNER  | LATITUDE                | LONGITUDE               |        | LATITUDE  | LONGITUDE               |  |
|   | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds |        | Degrees Minutes Seconds   | Degrees Minutes Seconds |  |
| NW  | 0 . "                   | 0 . "                   |        | 39° 57' 10"   | 75° 08' 34"             |  |
| NE  | 0 . "                   | 0 . "                   |        |   |                         |  |
| SE  | 0 . "                   | 0 . "                   |        |   |                         |  |
| SW  | 0 . "                   | 0 . "                   |        |   |                         |  |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acres

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|--------|------|
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Mary C. Means**

ORGANIZATION: **Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission** DATE: **6/26/70**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**Box 1026**

CITY OR TOWN: **Harrisburg** STATE: **Pennsylvania** CODE: **42**

12. STATE LIAISON 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Keeper of The National Register*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

|                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| STATE<br>Pennsylvania  |      |
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COMMON: Free Quaker Meeting House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

SW corner Fifth and Arch Streets

CITY OR TOWN:

Philadelphia

STATE:

Pennsylvania

CODE  
42

COUNTY:

Philadelphia

CODE  
101

3. MAP REFERENCE

SOURCE:

SCALE:

DATE:

4. REQUIREMENTS

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.

