

Quaker Meeting House
New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail
West Main and North Green Streets
Tuckerton
Ocean County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-1118

HABS
NJ
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PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American buildings Survey
National Park Service
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ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS

LITTLE EGG HARBOR FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE
(Quaker Meeting House)
Friends Meeting House Study
West Main & North Green Streets
Tuckerton
Ocean County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-1118

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ADDENDUM TO
QUAKER MEETING HOUSE
W. Main and N. Green Streets
Tuckerton
Ocean County
New Jersey

PHOTOGRAPHS

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
LITTLE EGG HARBOR FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

Addendum to
Quaker Meeting House

HABS NO. NJ-1118

Note: The new record name reflects the historic name of the structure.

Location: W. Main Street (Rt. 9) behind the gas station, east of Lake Pohatcony and west of N. Green Street, Tuckerton, Ocean County, New Jersey.

Present Owner: Little Egg Harbor Friends Meeting, Society of Friends

Present Use: Meeting House for religious worship and meeting for business of the Little Egg Harbor Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Significance: The design of Little Egg Harbor Meeting House, erected in 1863, reflects a later nineteenth century trend within some Friends' meetings to adopt mainstream ecclesiastical architecture. It more closely resembles a small rural parish church than the typical Friends Meeting House of the era. While the latter generally consisted of a two-celled structure with separate men's and women's entries positioned along the length of the building, Little Egg Harbor's meeting house has a single entry in the gable end with the facing bench on the opposing wall. Still, the meeting house is void of ornamentation, remaining true to the Quaker tenet of simplicity. In addition, its plan includes a front lobby that provides for individual entrances into the men's and women's apartments, separated by the retractable wood partition that was traditional.

The current meeting house is the second on this site, replacing the antiquated structure that was erected ca. 1709 as the first meeting house of the Little Egg Harbor Friends. The original meeting house bore little resemblance to the current one. It was a single-cell, shingle frame, gambrel-roofed building with an addition to accommodate separate women's business meetings. The additive quality of the old meeting house was indicative of the earliest American Friends meeting houses. Meetings generally began with a single space intended for group worship, to which a separate women's business meeting room was appended. For nearly a century, the American Friends experimented with various building forms as the solution to determining the role of separate business meetings was played out. Eventually, the Friends fixed upon a plan that incorporated equally sized apartments for men's and women's business, as seen in the current Little Egg Harbor Meeting House.

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Historian: Catherine C. Lavoie

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1863. The decision to remove the old meeting house and erect a new one was recorded in the Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting Minutes on May 14, 1863. The building was reported to be finished at a monthly meeting held on December 10th of the same year.

2. Architect: Not known. The extant records provide no information as to the architect or designer. The simple vernacular design of the meeting house was the combined effort of the building committee and the carpenter/builder with whom they contracted. The following passage taken from the monthly meeting minutes is the only reference to the design and construction process:

The committee appointed to consider the subject of building a new meeting house reported that the time has come to proceed to build the same with which the meeting unites and appoints Archs R. Pharo, Willits Parker and Amos Ridgeway to dispose of the old house and to *build a new house as in their judgement they may deem best and suitable* and report when accomplished (italics mine).¹

Therefore, the three-member building committee most likely developed the design themselves based on the needs of the meeting.

3. Original and subsequent owners: In 1708, Edward Andrew, the founding member of the Little Egg Harbor Friends Meeting, gave 2 acres upon which to establish a meeting house. The property has been maintained by the Friends since that time; they still actively use the meeting house and adjoining burying ground.

4. Builder, suppliers: As with the design, the members of the building committee were responsible for overseeing the building process, but the actual builder is not known. The construction of the meeting house was financed through subscriptions from meeting members, with each contributing according to his or her ability.

5. Original plans and construction: No original plans or early descriptions of the meeting house exist. However the building appears to have received no major additions or alterations that suggest post-1863 construction. Based on the timeliness of its

¹ Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting, Minutes, 5th month of 14th day 1863.

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construction, which evidently occurred within a seven-month period, the building was erected as planned and without complication. When completed, it consisted of a large open space divided lengthwise by a retractable partition, with an entrance lobby to the front. At the east end of the lobby is a book cabinet now used as a cupboard for the restroom. Opposite, in the southwest corner, is a boxed winder stairway that provides access to the unfinished attic where the mechanism for lifting the partition is can be found. Beneath this stair is the stairway to an unfinished basement where the furnace is located. Historic photographs from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century show the panels of the doors painted in contrasting colors from the stiles and rails, with the corner boards and shutters painted in the same contrasting color. There was probably a privy structure on the site in addition to the horse sheds and the fencing (lattice, and later, pickets) that surrounded the cemetery to the rear of the meeting house.

6. Changes and additions: The meeting house has changed little since the time of its construction. The most apparent alteration is to the interior. A restroom facility (a boxed enclosure) was installed at the east end of the entrance lobby. A cellulose fiberboard has been applied to the walls throughout the meeting house, in the interest of heat conservation. The old furnace is no longer being used; instead, the meeting relies on a (new) wood stove for heat. The only exterior change is the addition of concrete stoop with railing, replacing a similar wooden platform, and a handicapped access ramp at the west side entry.

From a programmatic standpoint, the east side of the meeting house is used as a social room. The men and women meet together on the west side for meetings for worship and business. Cushions have been placed on the benches on the west side only, and portable buffet tables are found on the east side. The partition is no longer operable (the ropes used to lift them have been removed) and they remain in the open position.

B. Historical Context

Brief History of Little Egg Harbor Meeting & Its Early Meeting House

Although Philadelphia, the seat of Penn's Colony, is recognized as the focal point in the early establishment of the Society of Friends in the Delaware Valley, Quaker settlement to this region actually began in New Jersey. The first Quaker settlement in New Jersey took place in Shrewsbury, in 1663, with a preparative meeting set up in 1666. The earliest settlement to the western part of the state was in Salem, in 1675. The first yearly Meeting of Delaware Valley Friends was held in Burlington, New Jersey in 1681; a yearly meeting was not held in Philadelphia until 1683. The following two years New Jersey and Pennsylvania Friends each held their own yearly meeting, but in 1685 it was agreed that a "General Yearly Meeting" of Delaware Valley Friends would be held beginning the next year, alternating yearly between Burlington and Philadelphia. This occurred until 1760, when the Yearly Meeting finally settled

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in Philadelphia. The New Jersey Friends meetings remained, as they do today, under the care of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. The Burlington Quarterly Meeting maintained a prominent position, with its sphere of influence extending all the way to the New Jersey shore to include Little Egg Harbor. By the time that Little Egg Harbor Meeting was established in 1704, the Burlington Quarter consisted of the Monthly Meetings of Burlington, and Chesterfield. This encompassed the preparative meetings of Burlington, Chesterfield, Mount Holly, (old) Springfield, Rancocas and Little Egg Harbor. Eventually, the meetings of Tuckerton (Little Egg Harbor), Mount Holly, and Upper Springfield became large enough to warrant a monthly meeting of their own, with additional preparative meetings under its care.

According to tradition, Edward Andrew was responsible for establishing a Friends Meeting at Little Egg Harbor, as well as providing the lot upon which the first meeting house was erected. Andrews came to this area (along with his brother) from Upper Burlington County. He established a farm and built a grist mill on the property.² Due largely to their influence, the town was referred to as “Quakertown” or “Andrew Mills.” The first indulged meetings for worship were held as early as 1704, probably in Edward Andrew’s home. In 1708, he deeded 2 acres of his property to the Friends on which to erect a meeting house and to establish a burying ground. The meeting house is said to have been completed by the following year.

Both an illustration and a description of the building exist that convey much information regarding the structure during its later years. The drawing, undertaken ca. 1862,³ shows a one-story, five-bay wide shingled wood-frame structure with a gambrel roof. There was a single doorway to the center of the building, flanked by two windows per side, and elevated to a position just below the roof line. A smaller, three-bay wide gable-roofed structure was appended to the side. In her 1868 publication entitled “History of Little Egg Harbor Township,” Leah Blackman, describes from memory, the original meeting house.

The old meeting house was a one story edifice, built in the plainest style of architecture. There was a smaller structure attached to the west end of the principal building, where in the females transacted the business pertaining to their portion of the society. The roof of the meeting house was a hip-roof⁴, as was the fashion of that primitive age, and the four sides were covered with cedar shingles, and the inside of the house was ceiled with boards, and what they called the gallery⁵ was a raised platform; and seats for the

² The pond that sits to the west of the meeting house today was once used as a mill pond to help to power the mill (replaced in later years by the current mill building).

³ T. Chalkey Matlack Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. According to Matlack, the drawing was produced by J. Henry Bartlett from a photograph taken upon the request of Beulah Pharo in 1862, in anticipation of its removal. (Both individuals were members of the meeting).

⁴ Actually, the early illustration shows a gambrel, not a hipped, roof. The author was probably just unfamiliar with architectural terminology.

⁵ Term popularly used by the English (and early colonial Friends) to refer to the facing benches.

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audience were long benches with two rows of slats for backs: most of the seats had movable cushions covered with brown Holland. On the north side of the church there were large wooden shutters,⁶ which, in warm weather, were opened for the purpose of admitting air. The builders had been spairing (sic.) of glass, and there were but four windows in the church, and they were about four feet square, with nine panes of seven by nine glass.⁷ These were the windows it contained when demolished. The first windows of the meeting house were imported from Old England, and the panes were small diamond-shaped, and the sash formed of lead: and during the Revolutionary War, the windows were taken out and concealed behind the wooden ceiling, in order to keep them out of the hands of those who would have been likely to have appropriated the leaden sash to the formation of musket balls.⁸

The meeting house, “built in the plainest style of architecture,” appears to have been very domestic in character, probably not unlike the early dwelling houses of the period. In fact, the meeting house greatly resembles Andrew’s own house. Certain features do, however, call attention to its use as a meeting house; most notable was the unusually high placement of the windows. This was done in early meeting houses to avoid direct light and also to prevent its occupants from being distracted by events taking place outside during meeting for worship. The steeply pitched roof, typical for the period, suggests a loft space, further evidenced by the reference to the boarded ceiling. Such a space could have been used for storage, or even for other purposes such as a meeting space prior to the addition of the women’s business meeting section at the west end. Also depicted was a hitching post located to the front of the building.

Little Egg Harbor Meeting was elevated in status from an indulged to a preparative meeting in 1714, set up by Chesterfield (Crosswicks) Monthly Meeting. The following year, a monthly meeting was established here under the care of the Burlington Quarterly Meeting. These events could have prompted the construction of the women’s meeting section (date unknown). The rise in status clearly would have necessitated business meetings. Besides Little Egg Harbor, the newly formed monthly meeting consisted of Barnegat and Beach Haven meetings.⁹

⁶ The north facade was probably the rear as most meeting houses were built with a south facing orientation, and the reference to the large shutters may be referring to carriage doors, a popular feature of eighteenth century New Jersey meeting houses. (Otherwise, shutters, in this case, referred to “window” openings that were not glazed.)

⁷ This makes no sense; nine panes of 7" x 9" glass would mean a window 21" x 27" or closer to 2 feet square. And how does that translate to diamond-shape panes in her later reference? The early illustration shows two-part casement windows, 3 lights per sash, but may reflect the artist licence!

⁸ Leah Blackman. History of Little Egg Harbor Township from its First Settlement to the Present Time (Tuckerton: The Great John Mathis Foundation, 1880, reprinted 1963), 194; quoted in Damon Tvaryanas, “The New Jersey Quaker Meeting House: A Typology and Inventory” (Master’s Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1993), 171.

⁹ New Jersey Historical Records Survey Project. “Inventory of Church Archives of New Jersey: The Religious Society of Friends.” Division of Community Service Programs, Work Projects Administration, Sponsored by the New Jersey State Planning Board. (Newark, NJ: The Historical Records Survey, 1941), 51-52; unpublished manuscript available on microfilm FHL.

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By 1844 the old meeting house was in need of repair and a committee was appointed to determine what should be done. The committee, consisting of Nathan Bartlett, Timothy Pharo, Willits Parker and Jonathan Gifford, was asked to “take a view of the meeting hous (sic.) And consider in what way it would be best to repair it and report to (the) next preparative meeting.”¹⁰ Evidently, the small addition appended to the side of the meeting house--used by the women for their business meeting--was in the worst shape. Recorded during a meeting held on August 1st, was the possibility of making “shutters to devide (sic) the hous (sic.) instead of repairing the little part.” This implies that the Little Egg Harbor Friends were still meeting according to English program, whereby men and women met together for worship in a single space, and then separated for business, with the women retiring to another apartment. The proposed shutters would have brought the meeting house up-to-date in terms of the revised American program in which men and women met to either side of a partition that was left open for worship and closed during business meetings. Although it was first decided to partition the old section, the meeting reversed their decision two months later, agreeing to “repair both parts.” It is not known whether the decision indicated their reluctance to change the old ways, or was based upon matters of practicality. The old building alone may not have been sizable enough to accommodate the entire meeting. It simply may have been the desire to adequately maintain their property that motivated their decision. Nevertheless, the needed repairs, including roofing and weatherboard replacement, was accomplished by February 1845.

The old meeting house was heated by a wood stove. This is evident by the request for the installation of a “suitable stove” in 1860, and repeated references such as, “Friends find wood, they cut it short and make fires.”¹¹ The 1868 illustration shows a center chimney, suggesting that a single stove, placed in the middle of the room, heated the meeting house. Making the fires prior to each meeting was the job of the caretaker, whose position was renewed on a yearly basis. During the 1840s and early 1850s, Zelpha Shinn was the caretaker for Little Egg Harbor’s meeting house. He was replaced by Oliver Shinn in 1853, who continues in that role after the new meeting house was erected.

The Current Meeting House

With the needed repairs made, the meeting house remained useful for nearly two decades. It was not until March 5, 1863, that the Friends discussed “The property (properness) of building a new meeting house or repairing the old one.” The subject then was presented before the next monthly meeting, which appointed a committee to “consider the subject and make a report.” The committee consisted of Willits Parker, Archelaus R. Pharo, Amos Ridgeway, and Jonathan Cox. After two months of deliberation, the committee reported that “the time has come” to proceed with the construction of a new meeting house. The meeting thus appointed Willits Parker,

¹⁰ Little Egg Harbor Preparative Meeting, Minutes, 4th day 7th month 1844.

¹¹ Ibid., Minutes, 1st month 5, 1860; 3rd month 1, 1849 (for example).

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Archelaus R. Pharo, and Amos Ridgeway to dispose of the old meeting house, which was dismantled for salvage, with the proceeds from the sale of building parts applied to the cost of erecting a new house. As instructed, the building committee then was asked to, “build a new house as in their judgement they may deem best and suitable.” While, this statement infers that these individuals built the new meeting house themselves, there is no substantiating evidence. Most likely they acted as the contractor, overseeing carpenters who undertook the actual construction. The preparative minutes make no mention with regard to the design or construction process. The only further information appears in the monthly meeting minutes, on December 10, 1863 when it was recorded that, “the building (is) now finished.”

The total cost, including the “heater in the cellar,” was \$2,074.40, exclusive of the proceeds from the sale of the old meeting house.¹² A committee, consisting of Jarvis H. Bartlett, Willits Parker, Archelaus R. Pharo, Amos Ridgeway and Jonathan Cox, was appointed to determine the appropriate amount to assess each member as their subscription towards the building of the meeting house. The list of twenty-five persons (or, possibly, heads of household) includes the amount ascribed to each one, ranging from \$500 to \$5, presumably determined based on their ability to contribute. The members are all from the Pharo, Price, Cox, Parker, Bartlett, Shinn, Ridgeway, Gifford, Mathis, Owing and Collins families.¹³ The largest subscription came from the Clerk of the Meeting and member of the building committee, Archelaus Pharo.¹⁴

Little Egg Harbor Friends Meeting House within the Context of Meeting House Design

Compared with the antiquated structure that it replaced, the new meeting house at Little Egg Harbor represented a quantum leap in the evolution of American meeting house design. It marked a significant shift in both meeting program and meeting house layout. The decision in 1845 not to partition the main structure of the old meeting house, combined with the description of it recorded in 1868, implies that the Little Egg Harbor Friends did not adopt the revised American program accepted by most Friends by the turn of the nineteenth century. This may not have occurred until the new meeting house was completed in 1863. In addition to the innovative plan of the new building, necessitated by the shift in program, was the atypical nature of the architectural design. It did not conform to patterns of meeting house design generally accepted within the Friends’ community, but rather, reflected the use of elements more indicative of mainstream ecclesiastical architecture.

¹² Little Egg Harbor Monthly Meeting, Minutes, 4th month 14, 1864; report of the committee to audit is made. An additional bill for \$18.50 was later brought forth, bring the total to \$2,092.90.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Minutes, 1st month 14th day 1864. The list includes the amount of the assessment ascribed to each, which ranges from \$500 to \$5, presumably determined by their ability to pay.

¹⁴ The other members of the Building Committee (and Auditing Committee) made above average contributions suggesting that the “weighty” or most influential Friends were also the most prosperous.

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The architecture of the early period of Friends settlement in the colonies is characterized by a fairly wide array of building forms, attesting to the lack of a prescribed standards. Beginning in the mid to late eighteenth century, a prototypical meeting house form began to emerge. The rectangularly shaped two-cell, *doubled* structure with dual entries for men and women become the dominate form, and remained so for nearly a century. Reflecting a significant programmatic shift, this form had evolved out of the need to provide equally size rooms in which to conduct men's and women's business meetings following meeting for worship.¹⁵ Various factors would eventually cause a decline in the use of this form as well, beginning in the mid to late nineteenth century. Not the least among these was the de-emphasis of the role of ministers and of separate men's and women's business meetings.¹⁶ Prior to these programmatic or internal changes, however, were external ones, both in terms of architectural preferences and societal pressures. Most relevant to Little Egg Harbor Friends Meeting House was the evangelical movement that enveloped the nation during this period.

Orthodox Quakerism & the Effects Mainstream Evangelical Thought

Disputes over the reliability of biblical interpretations presented by the early Friends versus those being offered by evangelical Christians were at the heart of a major schism that erupted in 1827, creating "Hicksite" and "Orthodox" factions. The disputes brought to the fore questions of belief, authority, and practice. The search for clarification on points heretofore unquestioned was also a response to the external pressures imposed by the evangelical movement and rising industrialization facilitated by innovations in areas such as transportation and communication. Regionalism was giving way to a growing national economy; it was becoming increasingly difficult for the Quakers to live exclusive of the larger society. This was particularly true within the Orthodox segment of the population where religious thought was increasingly more aligned with that of the evangelical mainstream. For these reasons, many Orthodox Friends no longer found it desirable to maintain their seemingly-peculiar identity through distinctive dress and speech, or through isolation. Many sought interaction on a par with evangelical religious groups, citing declining membership as the basis for such action. The subsequent infusion of mainstream religious culture ultimately resulted in the stripping away of Quaker distinctiveness.¹⁷ While the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was fairly successful at thwarting the most severe effects of

¹⁵ Prior to the later eighteenth century, men and women met together in a single room and then separated for business. Generally the women would retire to a separate room that lacked the facing bench from which the ministers, elders, and overseers presided over meeting for worship, and only had to be half the size of the room for meeting for worship. The first examples this author has seen of the new program manifesting itself in the architectural design and plan occurred in the 1760s (see Buckingham Friends Meeting House, HABS No. PA-6224).

¹⁶ These changes eliminated the need for the facing benches and the partition.

¹⁷ The basis for this argument was formed largely from information present in, Thomas D. Hamm, *The Transformation of American Quakerism, Orthodox Friends, 1800-1907* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988). For more information see Hamm.

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evangelicalism upon Friends thought and practice, a handful the meeting houses within their care became more church-like in appearance during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.¹⁸

Little Egg Harbor meeting house does not conform to the standard design used for American Friends meeting houses. It was among the first of approximately twelve meeting houses erected in the Delaware Valley to adopt a church-like plan.¹⁹ The only one of these to precede Little Egg Harbor was Longwood, the meeting house erected by the Progressive Friends in Chester County, Pennsylvania in 1854. Little Egg Harbor was thus among the first to follow this trend, with most of the others being erected in the 1890s and the first decade of the early twentieth century. The motivation behind Little Egg's adoption of this design form is not discussed within the minutes. However, it is difficult to ignore the fact that the New Jersey shore was then a popular site for religious retreats and camp meetings, which included those held by "Holiness" Friends, an evangelical wing of Orthodox Quakerism. If not involved directly, the impact of revival meetings in this region was surely felt by the Friends at Little Egg Harbor (although the hey-day of camp meetings post-dates the construction of Little Egg Harbor Meeting House). The only other New Jersey meeting house to adopt church-like architecture was erected in 1883 at Squan, also on the shore.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: Little Egg Harbor more closely resembles a rural parish church than the typical Friends Meeting House of the era. Its orientation, with the entry in the gable end, does not conform to the generally accepted plan whereby an entrance(s) was placed along the length of the building, with the facing bench on the opposing wall. A facing bench running the length of the building maximized oversight by the ministers, elders and overseers whom occupied them during meeting for worship. The building does, however, differ from rural churches of other denominations in its lack of such elements as a steeple or bell tower, cross or other iconography, as well as superfluous ornamentation. Like most meeting houses, the Quaker tenet of simplicity precludes incorporating any of the above in the architectural design. From the exterior, there is little about the meeting house that distinguishes it as a building intended for religious worship. In fact, it is not dissimilar from a town hall, school house, or other structure erected for

¹⁸ For more information regarding the Hicksite vs. Orthodox split and the effects of evangelicalism upon Quaker thought and practice, see Germantown Friends Meeting House, HABS NO. PA-6654.

¹⁹ Identified through an architectural survey of meeting houses of the Delaware Valley conducted 1997-99 by Catherine Lavoie & Aaron Wunsch for HABS, these include Longwood (1854), Little Egg Harbor (1863), Germantown (1868), Reading (1868), Swarthmore (1879-81/1901), Squan (1883), Middletown Preparative (reconfigured as such in 1888), Horsham Orthodox (1890), Gwynedd at Norristown (1890), West Grove (1901), Sadsbury (1902), and Lansdowne (1903).

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civic purposes. Aside from its orientation, the interior of Little Egg Harbor Meeting House conforms to the two-cell arrangement, partitioned into separate apartments for men's and women's meetings for business.

While the meeting house is so austere it nearly defies stylistic classification, its design reflects a pared-down example of the Greek Revival style. The three-bay-wide, rectangular, gable-front plan that typifies the Greek Revival church was adopted almost universally by many religious denominations during the 1820s through the 1860s. A period of intense church building, spurred by westward migration and evangelical fervor, the Greek Revival church proved to be a prolific form. In more elaborate examples, the style includes a classical portico or temple front, a pronounced entablature, and corner pilasters. But as often it is found in a simplified version, substituting the portico and pilasters with a return cornice and plain corner boards. Little Egg Harbor reflects the latter type; it is a simple, vernacular wood-frame building resting on a foundation of native Bog Iron stone. Its clapboarded exterior is delineated by sill and corner boards, and its windows by louvered shutters. The gable end is punctuated by a half-round window in a sunburst pattern and there is a overhanging roof line with a cornice return. The interior is almost rustic, and there is a sense that little change has taken place over the past century. The pale-yellow painted wainscoting gives it a neat appearance while reflecting the natural light that is directed inward from the over-sized windows. The pegs upon which hats and coats could be hung are still mounted on the wall in the lobby. Screen doors allow for the comfort of a summer breeze, while a wood stove supplements the baseboard heating to provide warmth in cold weather.

2. Condition of the fabric: The meeting house appears to be structurally sound, and is well maintained. The exterior clapboards have been painted recently (although the process of removing the old paint has somewhat damaged the wood).

B. Description of exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Little Egg Harbor Meeting House is a single-story, rectangularly shaped, frame, three-bay-by-two-bay structure with a gable-front roof. The building measures 37'-3" x 40'-3-1/2" and is 31' in height. The principal entry is to the center of the south front facade, in the gable end, and there is a second entry towards the rear of the west side.

2. Foundations: The foundation is of roughly coursed Bog Iron stone.

3. Walls: The walls are of narrow weather boards with corner and sill boards.

4. Structural system, framing: The meeting house is of wood frame construction. The structural system of the roof consists of king post trusses which are reinforced by braces

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that are mounted perpendicular to the trusses, attaching to the ridge pole. The joints are held by mortise and tenon. The roof rafters rest on purlins lying against the outside of the trusses. The roof shingles are nailed to battens, attached to the rafters.

5. Porches, stoops: At the front entryway is a large stoop made of concrete with an iron railing and steps to either side. Historic photographs show a similar stoop of wood frame construction, but without the railing across the front that exists today. A handicapped access ramp, made of pressure-treated wood with a plain balustrade, provides entry to the doorway towards the rear of the west side elevation.

6. Chimneys: There is an interior brick chimney in the north rear gable end.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The principal entry is to the center of the south front facade. It consists of a double-door entryway with a plain wooden surround with butt joints and a bead along the top of the lintel. There is a four-light transom above. Each door of the pair has six panels. The only other exterior doorway is located to the rear of the west elevation. The doorway has the same surround (without the transom) and a single door with six lights in the upper portion and two panels below.

b. Windows and shutters: The meeting house is lit by large nine-over-nine-light sash windows. The surround matches that of the front entryway, and they have louvered shutters. Ornamental iron stays hold the shutters back. There are two windows to the south front, east side and north rear elevations, the latter being somewhat smaller to accommodate the elevated facing benches along the interior wall behind them. There is a half-round window in a sunburst pattern in the south front gable end.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: There is a gable-front roof covered with composition shingles applied over the original wood shakes.

b. Cornice, eaves: There is a boxed cornice with a return, with overhanging eaves.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans: The meeting house consists of a large, rectangularly shaped meeting room separated into two apartments by a central partition. There is a facing bench along the north rear wall. Doorways to either side of the south wall provide access from the entry

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lobby. The lobby has an enclosed restroom addition to the east side. To the west is a boxed winder stair, providing access to the attic, and below is a stairway to the unfinished basement.

2. Stairways: There is a boxed winder stairway in the southwest corner of the meeting house. A straight run of steep steps, without a balustrade, leads to a door beyond which the steps proceed, winding their way to the attic. There is a stairway beneath it that leads to the basement.

3. Flooring: The floor is of wide, unfinished wood boards.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls of both the lobby and meeting room are plaster. There is beaded match-board wainscoting, and cellutex fiber board has been applied to the walls above. The walls currently are painted pale yellow. A simple board (with a bead along either edge) runs along the north wall of the lobby, between the flanking doorways, upon which hooks are mounted to hang coats and hats.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: Along the north wall of the lobby are two doorways, one into each of the two apartments of the meeting house. Both have a plain, wide surround with butt joints overhanging to form a slightly shouldered lintel. The doors are four panel with heavy molding around each panel. Each doorway has a screen door ornamented by brackets that appear at the center rail and in each corner. The door at the stairway has four panels, and is finished on the side facing into the lobby only.

b. Windows: The windows have the same plain surrounds as the doorways. There are blinds on the window located on the north rear wall to the west side of the partition only (this is the window that the meeting faces when seated for worship, which is held on the west side only).

6. Benches: The facing benches run the length of the north rear wall. They consist of two tiers with three rows of benches separated by the center partition, with steps to the center of each section. The fixed benches have high backs and are painted pale yellow. There is a clerks desk on the middle tier, aisle seat of each apartment. The other benches are fixed to look north towards the facing benches, and arranged to create an aisle down the center of each apartment. Cushions have been placed on the benches in the west apartment.

7. Partition: The centrally located partition has fixed, match-board sections to the top and bottom with three large paneled sections to the center. The the rest of the interior, the

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partition is painted pale yellow. The panels can be raised up into a pocket by means of an elaborate pulley mechanism found in the attic. The ropes that operate the partition were lowered through holes in the ceiling that appear in the lobby, but they have been removed and the partition remains open.

8. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating: When built, the meeting house included a central heating system located in the basement. The heat emanated upward through ornamental registers located near the base of the facing benches (west side removed to accommodate brick pad for wood stove). While the system is still in place, it is no longer operational. The meeting house currently is heated by an electric base-board system that is complimented by a wood stove. The wood stove is located to the front of the facing benches in the west apartment, with a pipe feeding to the interior brick flue at the gable end wall.

b. Lighting: There is electrical lighting in the lobby area only. The meeting room is illuminated by natural light during (daytime) meeting for worship.

c. Plumbing: A restroom facility was added in the late 1980s. It is enclosed in a box-like arrangement (that does not extend to ceiling), located to the east end of the lobby.

9. Original furnishings: The built-in cupboard (now located in the restroom) originally was used as the book cabinet; it held the various books and papers associated with the meeting, as well as the rules of discipline and volumes of Quaker history traditionally distributed by the yearly meeting.

D. Site:

1. Historic landscape design: The original meeting house, erected on this property ca. 1709, was situated in a tiny rural hamlet that probably contained little more than a few dwellings and a grist mill. The village grew with the prosperity created by the fishing, boating building, and lumber trades. The village was transformed by the Tucker family (from whom the town derived its name) after they settled here in 1765. It became a port of entry in 1787, from which Ebenezer Tucker transported the pine and cedar lumber his company manufactured in Tuckerton.²⁰ The meeting house property is located near the intersection of the two main thoroughfares through town, and was eventually surrounded by commercial development. Still, it was strategically located atop a hill which not only

²⁰ Sarah Allaback, "HABS report for Town of Tuckerton," HABS NO. NJ-1030, 1991.

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allowed for more healthful conditions, but over the years has served to isolate the building somewhat from the hustle and bustle of the town. The site maintains a peaceful atmosphere, buffered by the burying ground and pine trees to the north rear and east side, and the lake (former mill pond) to the west.

2. Outbuildings: No outbuildings stand today. The property once contained a “necessary,” and the traditional open sheds that provided protection for the horses and carriages that carried Friends to meeting in the early days. The various wooden fences that surrounded the burying ground-- built in 1853, replaced in 1865, and rebuilt again in later years-- no longer stand.²¹

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

A. Early Views:

Friends Historical Library, Meeting House Photographs Collection, Little Egg Harbor; 110/L574.
Includes: “First Little Egg Harbor Meeting House at Tuckerton, N.J.” Pen & ink drawing (artist & date unknown); Postcard View of South front & east side; undated perspective photograph of south front.

B. Interviews:

Jernigan, Harold. Interview by author, July 1999, Little Egg Harbor Meeting House, Tuckerton, New Jersey.

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Little Egg Harbor Preparative Meeting. Minutes (Men’s Meeting), 1805-1842 (HV Q4.5.1)

Ibid. 1842-1880 (HV Q4.6)

²¹ Reference to the construction of fences appear in the Little Egg Harbor Preparative Meeting Minutes, 8th day of the 3rd month 1853 & 11th day 9th month 1865. A lattice-work fence can be seen in historic photographs dating from the late 19th or early 20th century, and a picket fence in later views.

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Ibid. Minutes, Women's Meeting, 1840-1853 (HV Q4.8)

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Trueblood, D. Elton. "Quaker Architecture." *The Friend* (29 September 1936): 118-19.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION:

The documentation of the Little Egg Harbor Friends Meeting House was undertaken during the summer of 1999 as part of a larger program to record the Friends Meeting Houses of the Delaware Valley. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), E. Blaine Cliver, Chief of HABS/HAER; Paul Dolinsky, Chief HABS; funding was made possible through a congressional appropriation for documentation in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The project was planned and administered by HABS historians Aaron V. Wunsch and Catherine C. Lavoie; and architect Robert R. Arzola. Measured Drawings were produced by supervising architect John P. White, and architectural technicians Cleary Larkin, James McGrath, Jr., Elaine Schweitzer, Kelly Willard, and Irina Madalina Ienulescu (US/ICOMOS). The project Historians were Aaron V. Wunsch and Catherine C. Lavoie; this report was written by Catherine Lavoie. Large format photography was undertaken by HABS photographer Jack E. Boucher. Special thanks to Harold Jernigan, Clerk of the Little Egg Harbor Meeting, for his assistance and support.