

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

AUG - 5 1989

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Montgomery Union Church, ST. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church (preferred)

and or common Pratt Hall

2. Location

street & number Vermont Route #113

N/A not for publication

city, town Montgomery

N/A vicinity of

state Vermont

code 50

county Franklin

code 011

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: <u>Community Hall</u>

4. Owner of Property

name Montgomery Historical Society

street & number N/A

city, town Montgomery

N/A vicinity of

state Vermont

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of Town Clerk

street & number N/A

city, town Montgomery

state Vermont

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Vermont Historic Sites & Structures Survey has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1983 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

city, town Montpelier

state Vermont 05602

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 former St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, a graceful, 1 story, woodframe, clapboarded, Gothic Revival style structure, is the major architectural focal point of the early nineteenth century rural hamlet of Montgomery, Vermont. Built between 1832-35, its design reflects the widespread use of the Gothic Revival style in ecclesiastical construction which occurred throughout Vermont in the decade between 1830-1840. Its simple rectangular form, derived from traditional 17th and 18th century meeting house design, is embellished with Gothic Revival detail, including tall lancet arch windows and a central three-stage bell tower with crenelated parapet roof. This handsome early nineteenth century building has retained much of its original integrity of design, despite minor late 19th century alterations to window detail and addition of a rear chancel wing, as well as the replacement of the top two tower stages (accurate reproductions of deteriorated fabric) by the current owner, the Montgomery Historical Society. It is presently being used as a community hall.

The former church is situated on the north side of Vermont Route 118, just west of the Montgomery Village green, surrounded by modest nineteenth century residences, inn and c.1840 brick Methodist church. Its facade faces Vermont Route 118, a major north-south thoroughfare, the three-stage bell tower rising purposefully above roof and treetops to become the dominant architectural feature of the hamlet.

Using the traditional meeting house form, unknown builders erected a simple, rectangular, 1 Story post and beam frame structure with fieldstone foundation and slateclad gable roof. Dominated by a three-stage bell tower, its gable front facade is three bays in width, measuring to 22 feet. Eaves elevations (east and west) are also three bays wide, measuring to 36 feet. The building's eaves are adorned with a delicately molded box cornice with gable end returns and Doric frieze with triglyphs -- elements which can be considered as holdovers from the then well-established Federal style. Holes drilled in the soffit of the cornice are intended to imitate classical guttae. Fenestration on both east and west side elevations of the building generally consists of paired twenty-over-twenty sash, capped by lancet arch screens with pointed arch lights. One of these multi-light sash is missing from each side elevation at the present time, temporarily replaced by single-paned plexiglass storms until the original (albeit deteriorated) sash can be repaired and reinstalled.

The building's gable front facade faces the main street of the hamlet, its delicate eaves treatment visually overwhelmed by the dominant three-stage crenelated bell tower. The tower's first stage contains the main entrance, whose heavy double doors together form a Gothic Revival style lancet arch. The doors are slightly recessed and are set into a lancet arch surround. Single lancet arch windows are set into each side of the tower (east/west), lighting an interior vestibule. An oculus window above the main entrance also aids in lighting this vestibule, as well as providing light to an interior stair which ascends to the bell chamber in the tower's second stage. Flushboard sheathing at ground level was applied in imitation of stonework. The first and second stages are clapboarded while the third has flushboard sheathing like the base.

The tower's second stage -- a recent accurate reproduction of the original -- houses the church's original cast iron bell, its four symmetrical sides displaying a pair of louvered lancet arch openings, set into a single lancet arch surround. Likewise an accurate reproduction, the tower's third stage is capped by a crenelated parapet roof, housing the church's original clockworks. Each of its four sides displays a clock face with Roman numerals.

**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 1

At the rear of the main block is a one-by-one bay, gable roof wing added in the 1870s to house the church's interior chancel. Its exposed gable end features a tripartite arrangement of stained glass windows with lancet arch heads. A pair of shed roof structures lie off either side of the wing, housing the church's vestry and baptistry. At ground level on the north end of the wing is a basement entrance with double board and batten doors. Within the basement, evidence of the church's unique heating system can be seen. Woodframe and plaster "walls", constructed at 45° angles to the fieldstone foundation, help retain heat generated from a wood burning furnace. Narrow hinged slots in the floors of the chancel and auditorium above were adjusted manually by parishioners so that heat could be channeled to their cold feet in winter (cool air in the summer months.) In extreme cold weather, boxes with hot coals were placed directly under these vents to provide added warmth.

The interior of the church is unmistakably Gothic Revival in style and atmosphere. A vestibule in the first stage of the bell tower leads into the auditorium through a pair of large doors set into a lancet arch surround. A central aisle flanked by eleven sets of original pews leads to a raised chancel at the north end of the auditorium, reached by passing through a large lancet arch bay. To the west of the chancel is a smaller lancet arch bay which leads to the vestry. Both auditorium and chancel ceilings are plastered and display exposed wooden beams which descend to a heavy cornice, visually resting upon large wall brackets on eaves sides. The auditorium features lancet arch stained glass windows installed at various times between 1870 and 1912, one of which was manufactured by Tiffany's in New York City. The windows are all dedicated to founding members of the parish or direct descendents thereof.

The floor space of the auditorium is almost entirely occupied by sets of pews whose aisle bench ends are carved in a Gothic Revival trefoil motif. Eleven sets face the chancel separated by a central aisle. Two sets of pews are placed on raised platforms, perpendicular to the rest, on either side in front of the chancel entrance. A late 19th century dossel and episcopal chair -- both decorated with Gothic Revival motifs such as trefoils and lancet arches -- remain in the auditorium. The church also retains its original Estey organ. Kerosene chandeliers and wall sconces from the late nineteenth century have been retained; those over the main aisle have been electrified while all others can still be fueled with kerosene.

In 1974 the building was condemned. It was fortunately purchased soon after by the newly-formed Montgomery Historical Society. At that point in time, the top two stages of the bell tower were removed for safety's sake, and the first stage of the tower structurally reinforced. Both the original bell and clockworks were saved and have recently been returned to their respective positions in the second and third stages of the tower which are accurate reproductions of the original deteriorated fabric removed in 1974. Also new are the four clock faces on the tower's third stage, reproduced using an original clockface salvaged in the 1974 tower removal. Note how the Roman numeral four was written as "IIII" instead of "IV". The Society has also repainted the building's interior according to the original paint scheme found through paint analysis and has plans to restore the missing exterior sash to their respective positions on east and west elevations.

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 1832–35 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The former St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church is a well-preserved example of ecclesiastical Gothic Revival style architecture, a representative design of numerous religious structures built during the 1830s and 1840s in small Vermont villages. Constructed between 1832–35, the building displays a traditional meeting house form which has been adorned with Gothic Revival detail, including tall lancet arch windows, lancet arch door and prominent three-stage bell tower with crenelated parapet roof, thus crediting its unknown builders with a knowledge of both traditional and newly-emergent architectural vocabularies. The appearance at Montgomery of Gothic Revival stylistic features in 1832–35 followed close upon the heels of St. James Church in Arlington, Vermont, which was Vermont's first substantial example of that style, completed in 1831. St. Batholomew's is also of importance because it has retained much of its original integrity over the past 150+ years, suffering few major alterations (or major repairs) with the exception of its authentically replicated bell/clock tower (1985.) The building continues to serve the community of Montgomery well, though in a different capacity than was originally intended. It is now a community hall and the home of the Montgomery Historical Society.

Located in north-central Vermont, not far south of the Canadian border, Montgomery township was sparsely settled until the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Between 1820 and 1850, the town's population jumped from 307 to 1,001. This dramatic rise was due, in part, to its location along the old Hazen's Notch Military Road (1776–1779), used as an access road to Canada during the Revolutionary War. The route was subsequently developed (1820s) as a major north-south toll road, connecting Boston to northern Vermont and Montreal. Local farm and manufactured goods were easily able to flow out of the community by means of this market route, and the town's economy grew and prospered because of it until the end of the century. The town's population peaked in 1900 at 1,876 persons, three times the number of residents remaining in the town today.

The Episcopal parish belonged to the first generation of religious groups in the town of Montgomery. The former Union Church/St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church was the first religious edifice to be erected in the town (between 1832–35), closely followed by the Congregationalist Church (1841) and the Methodist Church (1843). The land for the church was bought in 1829, but actual construction did not commence until 1832. The church was completed three years later at a total cost of three thousand dollars.

The Epicopal parish flourished during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century; in 1850 it boasted of 100 parishioners. During this time the rear chancel wing, vestry and baptistry were added to the 1835 structure, and many gifts were donated, including a \$100.00 Estey organ, mahogany dossel and richly-carved episcopal chair. Stained glass windows were also installed during this period (and later) in memory of prominent church members including the Clapp, Goodspeed, Hamilton and Head families -- all early settlers in the town of Montgomry. The etched glass wall sconces and chandeliers remaining in the church to this day were also added during this period of prosperity in the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Branthoover, W.R. and Taylor, Sara. Montgomery, Vermont: The History of a Town. Montgomery Historical Society, 1976.
Herrin, Ralph. Bygone Churches of Franklin County, Vermont. Georgia Historical Society, 1979.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 0.50 acre

Quadrangle name Jay Peak, VT

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

1	8	6	8	6	4	5	0	4	9	7	4	6	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

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

N/A

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lauren H. Murphy

organization Architectural Historian

date July 1, 1985 (rev. January 1, 1987)

street & number 93 Messenger Street

telephone (802) 527-0463

city or town St. Albans

state Vermont 05478

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 Director/State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/20/88

For NPS use only

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


Keeper of the National Register

date 9/1/88

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**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 8

Page 1

By the late 1880s, however, the parish was on the decline and no longer could support a rector of its own. It had to look to nearby Richford and Enosburg Falls for supervision. The coming of the railroads to northern Vermont (via. St. Albans, Swanton, Enosburg Falls and Richford) had shifted the economic focus away from the more isolated agricultural towns such as Montgomery, which caused a parallel population decline. In 1897 the name of the church was changed from the old Union Church to St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church. Regular services were held until 1927, after which time only one summer service was held in order to justify the building's official use as a church. In 1974, after many years of physical decline due to disuse, the building was condemned. It was quickly purchased from the Burlington Diocese of the Episcopal Church by the Montgomery Historical Society for \$1.00.

Though years of disuse and dwindling resources of the Episcopal parish caused little alteration to occur to the structure since the 1880s, much deterioration of the existing physical fabric was allowed to take place. Most significantly, the second and third stages of the central bell tower had to be taken down, only recently replicated and reinstituted to their rightful places by the Montgomery Historical Society. Under the care of the Society, much restoration work to the exterior and interior of the structure has occurred, thus rescuing a key architectural landmark from certain destruction and assuring its continued service to the community for many years to come.

The building is currently being used by the Montgomery Historical Society for occasional community activities, weddings and historical society functions. The name of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church has been changed to the Lawrence Pratt Memorial Hall in honor of the man who was largely responsible for saving the old building and, in the process, creating the Montgomery Historical Society in 1974.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The former Union Church/St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church occupies a small, rectangular half-acre lot, described in Book 1, Page 289 and Book 17, Page 467 of the Town of Montgomery Land Records--the original half-acre church lot. It is bounded on the south by Vermont Route 118, the east by a private lane, the north by a stream and west by the Roberts property.



85-17-256

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
Montgomery, Vermont

Credit: Lauren Murphy

Date: June, 1985

Negative filed at Vermont Division for
Historic Preservation

Description: Facade and east elevation

View Looking Northwest

Photograph #1



85-A-256

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
Montgomery, Vermont

Credit: Lauren Murphy

Date: June, 1985

Negative filed at Vermont Division for
Historic Preservation

Description: Rear and east elevations

View Looking Southwest

Photograph #2



85-A-257

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
Montgomery, Vermont
Credit: Lauren Murphy
Date: June, 1985
Negative filed at Vermont Division for
Historic Preservation
Description: Chancel
View Looking North
Photograph #3