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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name The Church Home
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 123 Retreat Avenue not for publication
city, town Hartford vicinity
state Connecticut code CT county Hartford code 003 zip code 06106

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] October 17, 1988
Signature of certifying official Date
Director, Connecticut Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

Beth L. Savage 12-8-88

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/institutional housing

DOMESTIC/institutional housing

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

(enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brownstone

walls Brick

roof Asphalt/slate

other _____

Classical Revival/Colonial
Revival

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Church Home is a brick structure built in two sections, 1898 and 1928 (Photograph 1), by the Episcopal Church to provide care for the elderly. It is located on Retreat Avenue, a busy street south of Hartford's central business district, in a neighborhood dominated by Hartford Hospital and the Institute of Living. The integrity of the Church Home is excellent. It continues to fulfill its original function, accommodating 24 residents.

The 1898 section of The Church Home is a 2½-story ell-shaped block designed by George Keller in the Classical Revival style, with a 2-story portico, quoins, and roof-line balustrade. (Photograph 2) Aside from the loss of the balustrade and the addition of the 1928 wing to the West, the building remains substantially unchanged.

The Church Home's great projecting 2-story wooden porch has Tuscan columns at the first floor, Scamozzi columns above, with ramped railing and dentil course at both levels. (Photograph 3) The cornice and raking cornices are enriched by mutules while the center of the tympanum is occupied by a semi-elliptical window surrounded by enframement with key block. The capitals of the upper columns are decorated with Maltese crosses at the echinus. (Photograph 4) The entrance at the first floor is off center to the right under a semi-elliptical transom and leads to a foyer and wide glazed front door. An elliptical window is to the left.

The 6-over-6 windows are regularly spaced above a high brownstone basement. Shed dormers have been added in the front slope of the hipped roof and a 1-story addition projects on the east elevation, but generally the original effect continues. The big gable-roofed dormer has a triple window with arched central transom between the eaves returns. (Photograph 5)

At the north elevation is a hipped-roof porch with square columns. Since it has a standing-seam metal roof like the roof of the addition on the east elevation, the porch may not be original. (Photograph 6) The main roof is now covered with asphalt shingles.

The 1928 addition designed by Smith & Bassette in the Colonial Revival style extends to the west. Its windows continue the 6-over-6 sash, here with key blocks, in seven regularly spaced bays. The central group of three recessed bays at the first floor features French doors under arched fanlights

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The Church Home, Hartford, CT

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that open onto a narrow terrace now obscured by shrubbery. Steps from the terrace come down to a serpentine walk leading to the garden west of the building. Peaked dormers in the slate roof have small-paned double casement windows and slate siding. (Photograph 1) Fenestration continues regularly around the building to the rear elevation where an altered 2-story porch protects an arched rear entrance. (Photograph 7)

The front entrance leads to a large central hall whose chief feature is a gracious central stairway framed by an Ionic screen. (Photograph 8) A side hall to the left has on its front wall a tier of cupboards and 32-inch deep drawers for the residents' use. (Photograph 9) An identical bank of cupboards and drawers is located directly above on the second floor.

To the right of the front hall is the drawing room, which has a large fireplace with a Colonial Revival mantel, and, at the north end behind an Ionic screen and sliding doors, an altar. This space serves as the chapel. (Photo 10) The dining room is to the rear of the drawing room in the beginning of the ell. Its fireplace is flanked by free-standing columns. The dining room was enlarged in 1928. The new section is identifiable by its grouped windows and by its china cupboards with arched glazing. (Photograph 11) The kitchen at the rear of the ell still displays its original pressed metal ceiling. Between the ceiling and the dining room is the butler's pantry with original cupboards and dumb waiter (still operable). (Photograph 12)

On the second floor, over the first-floor hall, there is a central hall or community room that opens onto the porch. Bedrooms are large and well appointed. (Photograph 13)

On the first floor of the 1928 addition is a large room called the library. It is lighted by the three arched French doors and has a fireplace with bolection moldings at each end. (Photograph 14) The basic floor plan of both floors of the wing is a conventional central corridor with rooms on either side. (Photograph 14) The bedrooms are small. (Photograph 15)

Third-floor rooms of both sections may originally have been occupied by residents and/or staff. Now they are apartments, not used by residents. The basement of the original building has a high ceiling. Under the front block the space is divided by two brick bearing walls pierced by segmental arches. (Photograph 17) The laundry room, with original tubs, is still in place under the kitchen (but not used).

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1898-1988

Significant Dates
1898, 1928

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
George Keller
Smith & Bassette

The Church Home is significant architecturally because the original building was a successful institutional design in the Colonial Revival style by George Keller, Hartford's leading 19th century architect, and because it was later expanded with a complimentary Colonial Revival-style addition by Smith & Bassette, who were the most prominent firm in the city in their time. The Church Home possesses a high degree of architectural integrity.

Historical Note

The Church Home of Hartford was chartered by special act of the Connecticut General Assembly in 1876¹ "for the purpose of encouraging and administering charities...under the direction of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Connecticut." The Bishop of the Diocese of Connecticut is the chairman of The Church Home. The mission statement has been refined over the years and now reads, "The purpose of The Church Home of Hartford is to provide a dignified and congenial residence for elderly persons." After more than a century when the "persons" were required to be female, both men and women now reside on the premises.

Operations were started promptly in June of 1876 with the rental of a house at 103 Elm Street. This soon proved to be inadequate, and a larger home on Bellevue Street was purchased in June 1880. During these 19th-century years the affairs of The Church Home were looked after by a Board of Trustees, who managed financial matters, and a Standing Committee, which oversaw day-to-day operations. Members of the Standing Committee expressed their interest and commitment by making practical gifts, as noted in the annual reports, of such items as 3½ dozen eggs and six yards of linen for making towels. Now, a Board of Directors, of which the president, a layman, is chief executive officer, is in charge of all aspects of operations. The bishop continues as chairman.

The question of further improvement in physical facilities claimed the attention of the Standing Committee, as recorded in the minutes, in 1895. After due deliberation, the Barnard property² on Retreat Avenue was pur-

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West Hartford. Their addition to the Church Home fits well into this genre.

The gambrel-roofed 1928 building respects the original by maintaining its height and by continuing the cornice line with dentil course. The setback of its front elevation consciously positions the new structure as the addition, avoiding any challenge to the original facade. The two work well together, each being clearly identifiable. The central arched openings to the library give focus to the design of the elevation while articulating the first-floor plan. The key blocks of these openings and of the windows, the row of peaked dormers, and the line of four tall chimneys all successfully evoke their Georgian precedents. On the interior the library is a gracious room in an otherwise conventional but eminently functional plan.

¹General Assembly, May Session, 1876, House Joint Resolution No. 169.

²A photograph of the John Barnard House hangs in the hall of the Church Home. It was a 5-bay, central-chimney, central-doorway saltbox built in 1673. At the time of its demolition to make way for the Church Home, it was considered to be the oldest house standing in Hartford.

³The Wethersfield building is also in the Colonial Revival style, designed by Carl J. Malmfeldt.

⁴George Beach built and maintained the home as an individual. Only by his will did title to the property pass to a board. This arrangement is a further example of the personal nature of 19th-century philanthropy.

⁵In 1941 the George Beach Home moved to 370-374 Wethersfield Avenue but again suffered the experience of demolition, this time for Bulkeley High School, in the late 1960s. The present building on Allyn Place was constructed at that time.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Landau, Sarah Bradford, and Zukowski, John. P.B. Wight: Architect, Contractor, and Critic, 1838-1925. Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1981.

"Market Street Landmark." Hartford Courant, 27 July 1941, i1.

Meade, Reynolds. "The Church Home -- Christian Care For The [sic] Aged," The Connecticut Churchman, May 1971, p. 8.

Ransom, David F. George Keller, Architect. Hartford: The Stowe-Day Foundation, 1978.

The Church Home. Annual Reports and Minutes of Standing Committee.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings

Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering

Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

State historic preservation office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Specify repository:

Episcopal Diocesan Archives

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1.24

UTM References

A 18 | 692860 | 4624660
Zone Easting Northing

C | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
Zone Easting Northing

D | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is city parcel No. 414-001-003.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The bounds of the property are the same as those that existed when the building was built, except for a few square feet at the north sold to Hartford Hospital in 1941.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

name/title David F. Ransom, Consultant

organization Connecticut Historical Commission date April 22, 1988

street & number 59 South Prospect Street telephone 203 566-3005

city or town Hartford state CT zip code 06106