

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For NPS use only

received DEC 17 1987  
date entered JAN 22 1988

1. Name

historic MILFORD POINT HOTEL

and or common Milford Point Hotel

2. Location

street & number End of Milford Point Road N/A not for publication

city, town Milford N/A vicinity of

state Connecticut code 09 county New Haven code 09

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection  
Leslie Carothers, Commissioner

street & number State Office Building Room 117

city, town Hartford N/A vicinity of state CT

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Milford Town Clerk

street & number City Hall - River Street

city, town Milford state CT

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title State Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1987  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission

city, town 59 South Prospect Street  
Hartford state CT

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## 7. Description

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**Condition** excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Milford Point Hotel, named for the narrow spit of land on which it is located, is a two-story, gable-roofed, wood-frame structure facing southward toward Long Island Sound (Photograph 1). The facade or south elevation is six bays wide with two separate entrances about a third of the way in from the ends. Across the entire front of the building is an open porch with chamfered Italianate columns on high pedestals; jig-sawn brackets in a scroll pattern spring from the capitals of the columns, and the ends of the porch roof's rafters are carved in complex curves (Photograph 2). The exterior of the building is mostly covered with horizontal matched boards, though the east elevation and part of the rear have been clapboarded. Windows and door openings have simple board frames, with the windows fitted with six-over-six sash and wooden movable-vane blinds. The pitch of the roof is fairly shallow, and the wide overhang at the gable ends is finished as a boxed cornice. The building is long and narrow in plan, about 25' by 50', and rests on a foundation of red sandstone. An original or early ell is attached to the east rear of the house, and there is a side porch along the ell similar to but plainer than that across the front of the house.

In the post-World War Two period, the building was part of a military lookout station, and one-story, concrete-block, flat-roofed additions were made to the west and rear elevations (Photograph 3). Other than an exterior chimney on the east end and the later clapboards, the c.1950 concrete-block additions are the only alterations to the exterior of the building, and these are not readily visible from most of the property. The building appears to be in good structural condition, but the exterior condition is poor in many places: peeling paint, broken blinds, deteriorated porch floor, and missing moldings on the porch columns.

The interior plan reflects the original seaside-hotel use and consists of three large rooms on the first floor, with a series of small (8' x 11') rooms off a central second-floor corridor extending the length of the building. Interior detailing is simple, with molded window and doorway surrounds, narrow beaded-board wainscot on the first floor, and paneled doors which appear to date from the early 20th century (Photograph 4).

The building is now vacant and is part of an 8-acre wildlife sanctuary. To the rear, about 20' behind the house, are extensive marshes forming the estuary of the Housatonic River, which joins Long Island Sound at the point (Photograph 5). The grounds immediately in front of the house include a lawn, with medium-sized elm, horse chestnut, and other shade trees. The concrete foundation to a lookout tower and a wooden information booth are found at the southern end of the yard (Photograph 6). Much of the rest of the property is overgrown with wild roses, tree-sized sumacs, and other shrubs. Beyond the front yard is a private road leading to cottages further out on the point, and on the other side of the road begins the sandy scrub and dunes which form the upper part of the beach (Photographs 7 and 8). The hotel now stands much further from the water than when it was started in 1847 due to continuing sand deposits building up the beach.

The nominated property includes one contributing building, the former hotel. The information booth and tower foundation are not substantial in size and scale and are not counted.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 6 Page 1 Milford Point Hotel  
Milford, CT

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Representation in Existing Surveys (continued):

Department of Environmental Protection Cultural Resource Survey

State - 1985

Records Deposited with Connecticut Historical Commission  
59 South Prospect Street  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

# 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 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 checked="" 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)

Criterion A

**Specific dates** 1847 - built **Builder/Architect** Not known.

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Milford Point Hotel is significant for its association with the development of the Connecticut shoreline as a recreational destination in the early Victorian period (Criterion A). One of the first of its type, it is a well-preserved example of a small, family-run seaside hotel. It was started in 1847, just as the New Haven Railroad was being built through Stratford, by George T. Smith (c.1814–1894) of Woodbridge, Connecticut. At that time, Milford Point (like most other points on the shore) was a sparsely populated area frequented only by local oystermen. The railroad, however, opened up the shore to middle-class urbanites anxious for a respite from city life, and small hotels such as this offered clambakes, seafood dinners, salt air, and boating to summer boarders. According to George Smith's obituary, the shore dinners at his Milford Point Hotel had a reputation which extended from New York City to Boston. While other types of development also occurred once the railroad made the shore accessible, such as single-family cottages and the grander hotels of the late Victorian period, small buildings such as this, essentially seasonal rooming houses, once dotted the shoreline between New York and New Haven. Milford by the 1890s had three such hotels, and George Smith's own brother ran one across the river in Stratford.

It is believed that few of these buildings still exist, at least not in recognizeable form. Moreover, Milford Point Hotel's status as a rare survivor of the type is enhanced by its early date and its relative integrity. The building is said to include, in the eastern part, the original structure erected in 1847, with the hotel later enlarged to the west.<sup>1</sup> The Italianate porch detailing, interior moldings, and cornice treatment suggest 1875 as an approximate date for the hotel's enlargement, and the present appearance substantially reflects that period. The interior plan, with its large public rooms on the first floor and small guest rooms above continues to illustrate its historic function, and the small-pane sash, fancy porch detail, and much of the exterior siding are historical fabric from the hotel's heyday.

George Smith ran the Milford Hotel for forty-six years, and his widow kept the place in operation into the 20th century. In the 1930s it was conveyed to the state for use as a wildlife sanctuary named in honor of George Smith and another family member, Sarah Hubbell Edwards.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Environmental Protection Cultural Resource Survey (1985).

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Atlas of New Haven County. New York: F.W. Beers, 1868.  
Map of New Haven County. Philadelphia: H. & C.T. Smith, 1856.  
Milford Directory, 1897, p. 68.  
Obituary of George T. Smith, Bridgeport Evening Post, February 12, 1894.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 3

Quadrangle name Milford

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	8	6	5	9	2	1	0	4	5	5	9	8	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

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D 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is part of an 8-acre parcel recorded in the Milford Land Records, vol.244, page 109 (1938). It includes the yard around the house and extends southeasterly to Long Island Sound (see enclosed map).

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

N/A

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bruce Clouette and Matthew Roth, edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization Historic Resource Consultants date March 24, 1987

street & number The Colt Armory  
55 Van Dyke Avenue telephone (203) 547-0268

city or town Hartford state CT

## 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.

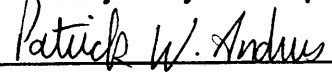
State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

date December 9, 1987

### For NPS use only

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

  
Keeper of the National Register

date 1/22/88

Attest:   
Chief of Registration

date 1/22/88

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_<sup>10</sup> Page \_\_\_\_\_ 1

Milford Point Hotel  
Milford, CT

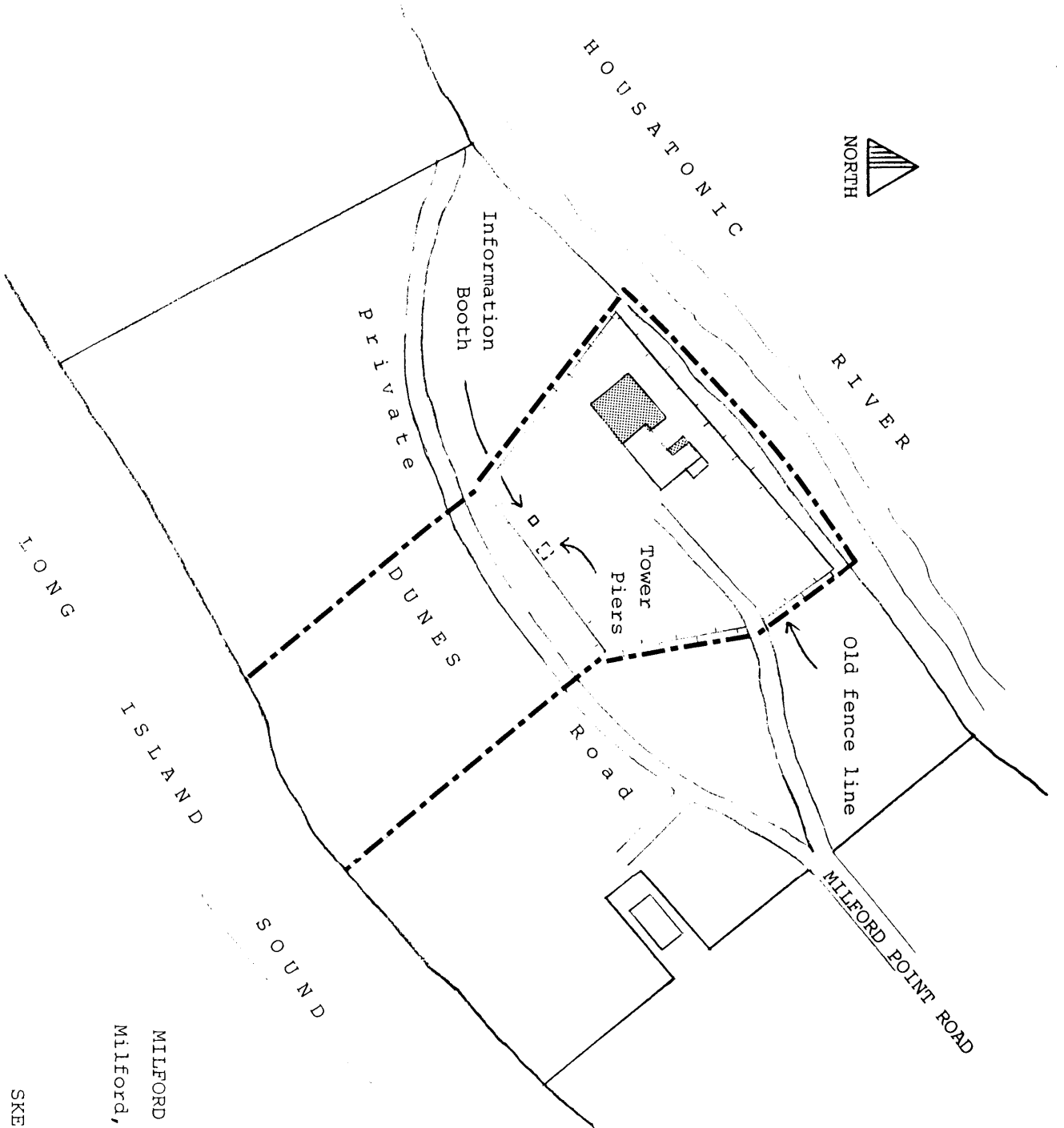
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Geographical Data (continued):

Boundary Description and Justification:

The nominated property does not include the entire 8-acre wildlife sanctuary, but rather includes only a small amount of land around the former hotel and the beach immediately to the south. The boundary follows an old fenceline (still visible and plotted in a recorded survey) around the house and yard and then continues to the high water mark of Long Island Sound in lines paralleling the side walls of the house. Because Milford Point is in a long cycle of accretion, the hotel now stands much further from the Sound than when originally built. The high tide mark in the mid 19th century appears to have been close to the present private right-of-way. Although the boundary takes in more than the one or two acres which originally went with the parcel, it allows the nominated property to illustrate the building's historic function as a seaside hotel.

0 100 200 feet



MILFORD POINT HOTEL  
Milford, Connecticut

SKETCH MAP

- Boundary of Nominated Property
- ▣ Additions, c.1950