NPS Form 10-900
(3-82)

OMB No. 1024-0018
Exp. 10-31-84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received APR 10 1984

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Gladstone Springhouse and Bottling Plant

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 145a Boon Street ___ not for publication

city, town Narragansett N.A. vicinity of Congressional District #2 - Hon. Claudine Schneider

state Rhode Island code 44 county Washington code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	X occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	X unoccupied	X commercial	___ park
X structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	X private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	N.A in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Shelby Jordan

street & number 6 Burlingame Road

city, town Smithfield N.A. vicinity of state Rhode Island 02917

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Narragansett Town Hall

street & number 25 Fifth Street

city, town Narragansett state Rhode Island 02882

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title none has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date ___ federal ___ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	_X_ original site
_X_ good	___ ruins	_X_ altered	___ moved date _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Set behind a row of residential and commercial structures along Boon Street, directly behind the old depot of the now defunct Narragansett Pier Railway, is a distinctive, conical-roof structure which houses the Gladstone Springs. This spring house was built in 1899 under the direction of T.G. Hazard, Jr., a civil engineer with offices in Wakefield, to replace a smaller stone lined pit which had previously held the water from the fresh water spring on the site. Immediately to the southwest of the spring house is a two-story building which once functioned as an office and bottling plant for the Gladstone Springs Water Company, and as a residence, probably for the plant manager.

The spring house is a round, low stone structure, approximately thirty feet in diameter and about eighteen inches tall, which is capped by a tall, conical roof. The roof, which flares out slightly at its base, is constructed with a ring of wooden rafters rising up to a point from the stone base. It was originally covered with wood shingles, but these have since been covered over with asphalt shingles. The stonework of the base was originally exposed but is now covered with stucco. A large dormer projects from the south side of the roof, providing an entrance into the spring house. This dormer is treated as a small temple front with its gable end forming a pediment. This pediment, in turn, is supported on corner posts trimmed with moldings and capitals to serve as pilasters. In contrast to this elaborate frame, the wall surface between these pilasters is finished with simple, vertical wainscot boarding. The door itself is also constructed of wainscot boarding and is set flush into the wall without a frame.

Water fills the interior of the stone foundation to a level within several feet of grade. The depth of the water is about seven-and-a-half feet. Below water level the wall of the spring is stone, laid without mortar and approximately two feet thick. Above water level the wall is only a foot and a half thick and laid in cement mortar. The interior face of the stone wall above water level has been lined with opaque glass panels, but these probably are not original. The wood structure which frames the roof above the spring may originally have been exposed, but it is now covered over with masonite. A small lattice panel covers the apex of the ceiling.

Approximately twenty-five feet southwest of the spring house is a Colonial Revival structure which has served at various times as a bottling plant, distribution center, and probably as offices for the Gladstone Springs Water Company, and as an apartment residence. The rectangular, clapboard structure is covered with an asphalt-shingled, gambrel roof. Long, full-length dormers on both the front and back sides provide a full second story for the structure. One-story, pedimented projections provide entrances on both the east end and south front and repeat the details of the entrance into the spring house. Four-over-one windows on the second

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

floor appear to be original, but large one-over-one windows on the ground floor appear to be later replacements. Two very large rolling garage doors provide entry into a gable-roof, concrete block addition at the west end of the structure. A small one-story addition attaches to the rear at the juncture of the main structure with this concrete block wing.

It is believed that the main floor of this structure originally housed the offices of the Gladstone firm while the concrete block addition was used for water bottling and storage. The small one-story addition at the rear apparently housed the pump and intake piping from the spring. Although the first floor of the main structure has been refinished and converted into two apartments, the second floor of the structure houses a single large apartment which does not appear to have been altered from the date it was constructed. It is likely that this apartment originally housed the manager or supervisor of the plant.

The exact construction date of this structure is not clear, but it could date as early as 1911 when Syria W. Mathewson, Frederick Olney, and William Sweet purchased the spring and incorporated the Gladstone Springs Water Company. Before that date all of the pumping and bottling operations were housed in a small rectangular shed just to the south of the spring. At that time a tall windmill on the site was used to power the pump. Neither of these structures survives, however. It is known from newspaper accounts that the property was improved soon after its purchase in 1911 with the construction of larger facilities for new bottling machines and washers, as well as for new carbonating machines, with the intent to increase the output of the company. Further alterations were made to the property in the 1930s, when the facility was remodelled under the ownership of Fred Clarke to serve as a distribution center for the Warwick Club Ginger Ale Company, but the extent of these alterations is not known.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture
___ 1600–1699	X architecture	___ education	___ military	X social/ humanitarian
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	
X 1800–1899	X commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
X 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

Specific dates 1899, 1911 **Builder/Architect** T.G. Hazard, Jr.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Under the ownership of George C. Robinson in the decades following the Civil War, the Gladstone Springs was developed as a source of pure spring drinking water for the village of Narragansett Pier. Because of the importance the Victorians placed upon health and sanitation, particularly in selecting resorts in which to spend the summer, the Gladstone Springs became significant as a supporting element in the development of Narragansett Pier as one of the more fashionable resorts on the East Coast in the late nineteenth century. As the area's only known spring water bottling plant, the Gladstone Springs remained a significant element in the commerce of Narragansett for almost one hundred years, and its history reflects the changes in the market for bottled water throughout the last century. Architecturally the spring house of the Gladstone Springs is significant for being representative of a building type long used for spring and ice houses, and of which very few examples are known to survive.

As is clear in hotel advertisements from the period, health issues were as important a factor in selecting a summer resort in the late nineteenth century as were features of climate and scenic beauty. In Narragansett, which had seen the construction of over a dozen large hotels in the 1870s and 1880s, the quality of the drinking water seems to have been of particular concern. The Continental Hotel advertised that it was "supplied with pure spring water," the Metatoxet announced that "the best of water is on hand in profusion," and the Mathewson House proclaimed itself blessed with "an abundant supply of pure spring water direct from the noted Mathewson Spring," However, the most important source of drinking water in Narragansett during this period was the Gladstone Springs, known in its earliest days as the "Robinson Spring" for its owner, George C. Robinson.

It is not known when the spring was first acquired by Robinson, but he is recorded as owner of the property by 1888. Not surprisingly, the spring provided the drinking water for the Hotel Columbus and The Gladstone Hotel, both of which were owned by Robinson. In 1889, J.R. Cole reported in his History of Washington and Kent Counties that "The Columbus was established in 1879 and has a reputation not surpassed by any at the Pier. It is ... supplied with unquestionable spring water from the celebrated Gladstone Spring, located about half a mile from the hotel." The name of the spring was probably changed to the Gladstone following Robinson's construction of the Gladstone Hotel in 1887. The notebooks from 1899 of T.G. Hazard, the engineer who was directing the improvements at the spring at that time, record that patrons of the Gladstone Spring also included the famous Narragansett Casino and the Rockingham Hotel,

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Cole, J.R. History of Washington and Kent Counties, R.I. New York: 1889

(See Continuation Sheet #4)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property c. 1 acre

Quadrangle name Narragansett Pier, R.I. **Quadrangle scale** 1:24,000

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	19	294680	4588800
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification Plat D, Lots 148, 223, 223A, 223B, 223C, 146A, 146C. This property includes the spring house and bottling plant, the only remaining structures associated with the Gladstone Springs, and surrounding lawn. No other structures stand on the site.

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Clifford M. Renshaw, A.I.A.

organization **date**

street & number 25 Main Street **telephone** 401-294-6538

city or town Wickford **state** Rhode Island 02852

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X 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 Frank C. Williamson

title State Historic Preservation Officer **date** 3/23/84

For NPS use only

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

Entered In the National Register

date 5/10/84

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: **date**

Chief of Registration

GPO 894-788

one of the largest and most modern facilities at the Pier at that time, as well as numerous other hotels, guest houses, and private cottages.

The spring, which had previously been a small, open pit lined with stones, was enclosed and enlarged into its present form in 1899 under the direction of T.G. Hazard, Jr., a local engineer. The form chosen for the spring house at Gladstone was undoubtedly selected because of its utilitarian nature. The circular shape of the stone basin provided the most efficient way to create a small reservoir to hold the spring water. Similarly, the steep conical roof was most likely designed because it offered a structurally efficient way to roof over the round spring basin. Only the dormer entry offered any opportunity for architectural embellishment, and here Hazard succeeded in developing a simple but distinctive architectural presence for the spring house by treating it as a small temple front, almost reminiscent of a miniature, classical pavilion once found in fashionable eighteenth-century gardens.

Although unusual in form, the spring house Hazard designed is not unique in Rhode Island. Rather it remains as one of very few examples of a traditional, utilitarian building type which is known to date from as early as the first half of the eighteenth century. About 1740, an ice house was constructed on the Greene Estate at Occupasstuxet, Warwick, Rhode Island, which is remarkably similar in size and form to the Gladstone Spring House. This structure is still standing, and it is believed to be one of the oldest ice houses remaining in New England. Here a circular stone pit was built deep into the ground in order to store a quantity of ice and keep it cold through the warm weather, and the tall, turret-like roof (here octagonal in form rather than purely conical) provided a structurally efficient means for enclosing the circular space. Like the Gladstone Spring House, a gable-roofed dormer also provides the entrance into the John Brown ice house.

The enlargement of the Gladstone spring and the construction of the roof enclosure was probably done both to increase the supply of the water and to protect its quality. A windmill provided power to pump the water, in conjunction with two mechanical pumps. The windmill and the early pump house which stood just south of the spring no longer survive. Water was put up in five-gallon and two-quart bottles, as well as in siphons, and it was apparently also piped to a number of nearby customers directly. By the early twentieth century fresh spring water had become popular throughout Rhode Island and was being bottled at a number of other locations, including the Crystal Springs in Middletown, the Diamond Springs in Jamestown, the Girard Springs in North Providence, and the Dybala Springs in Woonsocket. No distinctive spring houses are known to have been built at these sites.

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

In 1911 Robinson's widow sold the property to three investors newly incorporated as the Gladstone Springs Water Company. The three partners were Syria W. Mathewson, whose family had long owned the locally important Mathewson House hotel, Frederick C. Olney, a lawyer with offices in Wakefield who was one of the only (if not the only) black lawyer in the area, and William R. Sweet, a house painter, decorator, and proprietor of an art supply store in Narragansett who joined the partnerhsip to direct sales. Immediately after purchasing the property the company enlarged the facility, equipping it with new bottling and carbonating machines and new bottle washers, with the intent of increasing the output of the spring by bottling all popular types of soda, including ginger ale and 'vichy lithia' water. In addition to trying to meet changes in taste at the beginning of this century, the new firm also installed telephone service and introduced an auto delivery wagon. This investment and the intent to develop a new market in bottled soda pop, may have resulted from a gradual falling off of the market for pure spring water in Narragansett. By 1889 the pipes of the Wakefield Water Company were extended into Narragansett Pier, and in 1891 a local tourist brochure proclaimed of Narragansett "It has a most perfect system of waterworks, supplied with unquestionable spring water from some five miles distant which, besides giving us a bountiful sypply of pure water, furnishes most perfect fire protection, having a pressure sufficient to carry a stream over the highest structure."

Evidently the new Gladstone Springs Water Company did not flourish for long, and in 1922 the property was purchased by Bradlee Clough from Herbert W. Rathbun, who had been appointed as receiver for the company. Clough advertised that he sould "continue to furnish the public with the 'Very Famous Spring Water,' and will soon supply siphons of soda" which were to be distributed to stores, as well as made available by the case at the plant. In 1935 Clough defaulted on his financial obligations, and the property was sold to Fred Clarke, the owner of the Warwick Club Ginger Ale Company. Although it had been Clarke's intention to continue operating the facility as a spring and bottling plant, he made the decision to incorporate it into his larger soda manufacturing operation and to convert the Gladstone property into a warehouse and distribution center. Warehouse space was rented out to the Pepsi Cola Company, which subsequently purchased the property in 1969. The spring and the bottling facility have recently been purchased by new owners who plan once again to bottle the "unquestionable spring water from the celebrated Gladstone Spring."

Narragansett Historical Society. Souvenirs of Narragansett Pier, 1883 to 1922. Whipporwill Publication, 1980.

Narragansett Times, "Narragansett Pier, Its Past, Present, and Future." Special supplement, April 1887.

Narragansett Times, miscellaneous news notes dated 7 April 1911, 28 April 1911, 21 April 1922, 9 June 1922, 2 August 1935.

Reid, J.A. and R.A. A Guide to Narragansett Bay. Providence: 1878.

Stedman, Oliver H. Stroll Through Memory Lane. West Kingston: Kingston Press, 1978.