

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic PT Boat 796

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Battleship Cove \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Fall River \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state Massachusetts code 025 county Bristol code 005

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input 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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name PT Boats, Inc.

street & number Battleship Cove

city, town Fall River \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Massachusetts

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Department of the Navy

street & number Naval Sea Systems Command

city, town Washington state DC 20362

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town \_\_\_\_\_ state

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date

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

PT (Patrol, Torpedo) Boat 796 is a Higgins-type torpedo boat built for service in World War II. She was built by the Higgins Company in New Orleans, Louisiana, launched in mid-1945, and commissioned as a unit of PT Squadron 43 in July of that year. Like all American PT boats, 796 (nicknamed "Tailender") was constructed of mahogany and plywood and powered by three 1,550-horsepower Packard engines which used high-octane aviation gasoline as fuel. Dimensions and data on PT 796 are:

Length: 78'

Beam: 21' 6"

Displacement: 55 tons

Speed: 44 knots maximum, varying with load and sea conditions .

Range: approximately 500 miles

Armament: 2-Mark 13 torpedoes  
2-twin .50 caliber machine guns  
1-twin 20mm machine gun  
1-single 20mm machine gun  
1-single 40mm machine gun<sup>1</sup>

PT 796 is in excellent condition and retains its World War II integrity.

## 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	architecture	education	X military	social/
1700-1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian
1800-1899	commerce	exploration settlement	philosophy	theater
X 1900-	communications	industry	politics government	transportation
		invention		other (specify)

Specific dates 1945 Builder Architect Higgins Company

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

#### Summary

#### PT Boats--General

PT boats, as they were known in World War II, were a British invention, adopted and used by the U.S. Navy. The idea of the PT boat was that of the small, fast--and ultimately, expendable--interdiction ship, armed with torpedoes and machine guns for cutting enemy supply lines, for harassing enemy forces, and for short-range oceanic scouting. American PT boats served during World War II in the Philippines and the Southwestern Pacific areas, in the English Channel, off Normandy, and in the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>2</sup>

There were 43 PT squadrons, with a normal complement of 12 boats. Some 300 PT boaters were killed in World War II, an extremely high loss rate for this comparatively small, elite service.<sup>3</sup>

PT boats were a significant American naval warship type in World War II. They were responsible for numerous enemy losses, in warships, materiel, and personnel. They spawned a number of offshoots - the Japanese "Shinyo" suicide boat; the fast, hydrofoil missile ships of today; and the numerous inshore patrol craft used by many navies of the 1980s.<sup>4</sup>

#### Significance

At the present time there are four extant PT Boats remaining. PT 617 is now undergoing restoration and will be displayed opposite PT 796 at Battleship Cove. PT 619 is in very poor condition in Memphis, Tennessee, and has lost most of its World War II integrity. Another PT Boat (Hull number unknown) is in Camp Wythycombe, Oregon, but this boat has no armament and is in need of additional restoration. PT 796, thus is the best representative of this class of warships. PT 796 is in excellent condition and retains her World War II integrity.

PT 796 is also the PT Boat tht was used in President Kennedy's Inaugural Parade in January 1961, painted with the numerals "109".

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Continuation sheet

Item number

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FOOTNOTES

1. USS Massachusetts Memorial Committee, Inc. PT 796—Physical Description (Fall River, Massachusetts: USS Massachusetts Memorial Committee, Inc., 1984), p. 1.
2. Ibid., p. 3.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Johnson, Frank D. United States PT Boats of World War II. Dorset, England: Blandford Press, 1980.

USS Massachusetts Memorial Committee, PT 796. (Physical Description) Fall River, Massachusetts, 1984.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property N/A

Quadrangle name Fall River

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 

1	9	3	2	0	1	8	0	4	9	1	9	0	1	2	0
Zona				Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone				Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone				Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone				Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone				Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

N/A

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

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Harry A. Butowsky		
organization	National Park Service	date	May 1985
street & number	Division of History	telephone	(202) 343-8168
city or town	Washington	state	DC 20013-7127

# 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 \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

For NPS use only

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

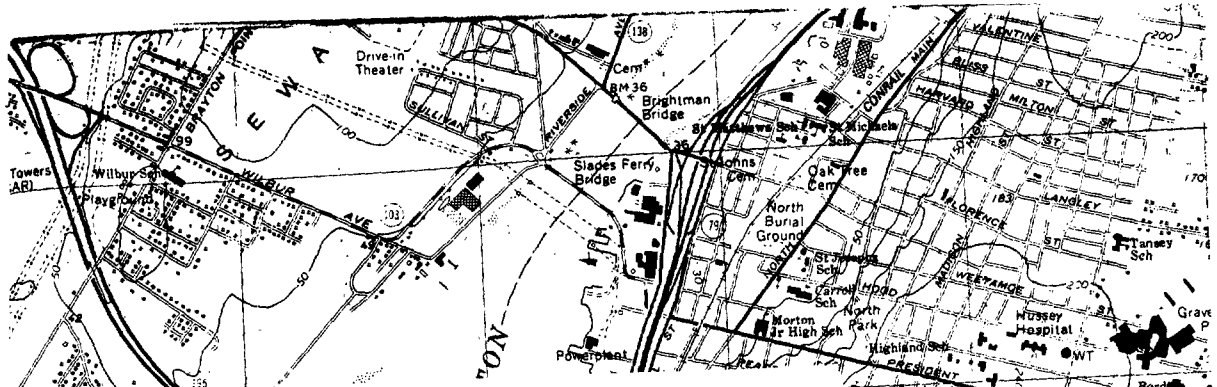
date \_\_\_\_\_

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration



PT 796  
Fall River Quadrangle  
19/320180/4919020

