

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
80 BOYLSTON STREET  
BOSTON, MA 02116

| AREA | FORM NO. |
|------|----------|
|      | NH 299   |

Newton, Mass. MRA  
Town NEWTON (Newton Highlands)  
Address 333 Nahanton Street  
Historic Name Working Boys Home

Photo (3"x3" or 3"x5", black and white) Indicate address of property on back of photo. Staple to left side of form.

Use: Present Jewish Community Center  
Original home for homeless boys

**DESCRIPTION**

Date 1896  
Source Archdiocese Chancery Archives  
Style Romanesque Revival  
Architect W.H. & J.A. McGintly  
Exterior Wall Fabric red brick  
Outbuildings gym, playground shelters  
community facilities (1980s)  
Major Alterations (with dates) single-story addition; sash replaced  
Condition Good.

Sketch Map: Draw map showing property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection(s).  
Indicate north

(SEE ATTACHED MAP)

Moved no Date ---  
Acreage 74,860 square feet (1.7 acres)  
Setting Hilltop setting overlooking Charles River; rural

UTM REFERENCE 19. <sup>3</sup>18250. <sup>46</sup>85200  
USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON, MA  
SCALE 1: 25,000

Recorded by Elsie M. Husher; Peter Stott  
Organization Newton Historical Comm.  
Date Sept. 4, 1980; April 1986

## NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

As a major example of Romanesque Revival architecture in Newton, the Working Boys Home meets criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places.

### ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.

Designed by the Boston church architects, William H. and John A. McGinty, in the Romanesque Revival style, the Working Boys Home was built in 1896. Its 4-1/2 stories on a raised basement has an H-shaped plan with a 7-story tower at the right front wing. There are 13 bays on the front facade arranged in a 2-9-2 pattern. The building is constructed of red brick with granite capitals, window sills, lintels, and pilasters, colonettes, and stairway at the front entrance. The grey slate roof has copper flashings, and copper is the roofing material of both cupolas. A corbeled cornice extends around the entire building. At each corner there is a brick pilaster with a granite capital.

### HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.

The Working Boys Home was started in Boston in 1883 by Rev. David H. Roche, a Roman Catholic priest who used as his models similar successful homes in New York City and Baltimore. It was designed "to provide a home for a great number of working boys -- messenger boys, newsboys, boot blacks, etc. -- who, having no homes of their own nor means of renting decent lodgings, were accustomed to roam the city at night, sleeping in stables, alleyways, vacant lots or flop houses, often thrown among the worst companions or exposed to most evil influences." (History of the Archdiocese of Boston, Vol. III, p. 365) It was opened for homeless boys between 12 and 17 years of age, who were expected to work and contribute a part of their wages to the support of the home.

The need for such a home was so tremendous that a second building was soon required, this to accomodate younger boys as well, and also to provide training in a number of trades as well so that the boys would be betterable to earn decent livings as adults. This second building was constructed in 1896 on a large lot in Newton at the corner of Winchester and Nahanton streets, which had been purchased earlier by Archbishop Williams as a site for a seminary, but never used. The enormous-for-its-day expense for the construction of this building was

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Records, Chancery Archives, Archdiocese of Boston.  
Lord, Sexton & Harrington, History of the Archdiocese of Boston, Vol. III, 1866-1943. (Boston, 1944).  
O'Connell, William Cardinal, Recollections of Seventy Years (Cambridge, 1944.)  
The Mirror of Newton, Past and Present, ed. by The Newton Federation of Women's Clubs, 1907.  
The Boston Herald, 4 June 1961.  
The Newton Graphic, 24 July 1891.  
Architects File, Fine Arts Division, Boston Public Library.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

|                                  |          |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Community:                       | Form No: |
| Newton, Mass. MRA                | NH 299   |
| Property Name: Working Boys Home |          |

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

The front facade has a recessed central section embellished with a semicircular bay rising full height. The shallow right wing contains the main entrance at the 2nd-story level: a broad round-arched opening with a granite keystone containing triple doors. The arch is supported by granite Corinthian colonettes supporting a granite entablature. Access to the entrance is provided by a sweeping horseshoe staircase consisting of rock-faced granite ashlar and contains a second arched entrance at the ground level.

Entrance to the building is through the large square 7-story clock tower which has a tall pyramidal roof. Each corner of the tower's eaves is ornamented with a round copper-faced tourelle. There is a clock face in each facade above the 7th story. At the 7th story, there is an ornate copper-clad balcony supported on consoles. Opening onto the balcony are paired glass doors with rectangular transoms under granite lintels. Additionally ornamenting this level are staggered quoins of granite. At the 6th story beneath the balcony there is a band of 5 windows with scamozzi capitals. This treatment can be found on each facade of the tower.

William H. McGinty (1862?-1942), a native of St. Albans, Vermont, was a prominent Catholic architect practicing in Boston at the turn of the century. For several years he practiced with his brother John. William was also credited with the design of the Working Girls Home, 89 Union Park Street, Boston (1892-3); St. Ambrose Church and Rectory, Dorchester; and the Administration Building for the Holy Ghost Home for Incurables in Cambridge (c.1901). He also contributed to the magazine Catholic World and wrote on Catholic architecture.

## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE, cont.

\$300,000, and the construction loans and mortgages for this, together with the mistake of an inexperienced management, came very near to bankrupting the entire nobly-conceived organization.

After a number of economically turbulent years, the Home was reorganized in both its management and financing by the newly elevated Archbishop William O'Connell in 1907, and then placed under the direction of the Xaverian Brothers.

The Working Boys Home continued to provide successfully a good place to live, schooling, trade instruction, and religious training for generations of boys for many years. Its last class of 16 boys graduated in June of 1961. Younger boys were transferred elsewhere and the Home was closed. It was reorganized almost immediately as the Xaverian Brothers Novitiate, but it, too, was closed in the mid-1970s. The buildings were sold in 1979 to the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston to be used as a center for activities meeting cross-generational needs. At that time, the nearly 70 acres of land was divided, the City of Newton purchasing about 30 acres near the Charles River for conservation/recreation land for Newton's citizens.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received 7/23/86

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic GroupName Newton MRA  
State Middlesex County, MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

121. Whittemore's Tavern--  
Bourne HouseEntered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

Shelene Byers 9/4/86

122. Working Boys Home

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

Shelene Byers 9/4/86

123.

123. Brae-Burn Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

Shelene Byers 2/16/90

124. Commonwealth Avenue Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

Shelene Byers 2/16/90

125. Day Estate Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

Shelene Byers 2/16/90126. Gray Cliff Historic District  
(Boundary Increase)Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

Shelene Byers 2/16/90

127. Monadnock Road Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

Shelene Byers 2/16/90

128. Morton Road Historic District

Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

Shelene Byers 2/16/90\* 129. Newton Highlands Historic District  
(Boundary Increase)

for Keeper

Attest

Bobby L. Savage 02/16/90\* 130. Newtonville Historic District  
(Boundary Increase)Entered in the  
National Register

for Keeper

Attest

Bobby L. Savage 2/16/90

86001898

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Working Boys Home (Newton MRA)  
Middlesex County  
MASSACHUSETTS

- ☐ resubmission  
☐ nomination by person or local government  
☐ owner objection  
☐ appeal

Entered in the  
National Register

Working No. \_\_\_\_\_

Fed. Reg. Date: JUL 23 1986

Date Due: 8/21/86 - 9/6/86

Action: ☒ ACCEPT 9-4-86

☐ RETURN

☐ REJECT

Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: \_\_\_\_\_ technical corrections cited below  
\_\_\_\_\_ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership          | Status     | Present Use |
|----------|--------------------|------------|-------------|
|          | Public Acquisition | Accessible |             |

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition

- ☐ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair

- ☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

Check one

- ☐ unaltered  
☐ altered

Check one

- ☐ original site  
☐ moved date \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph  
☐ completeness  
☐ clarity  
☐ alterations/integrity  
☐ dates  
☐ boundary selection

## 8. Significance

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_

Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. Form Prepared By

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

## 13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

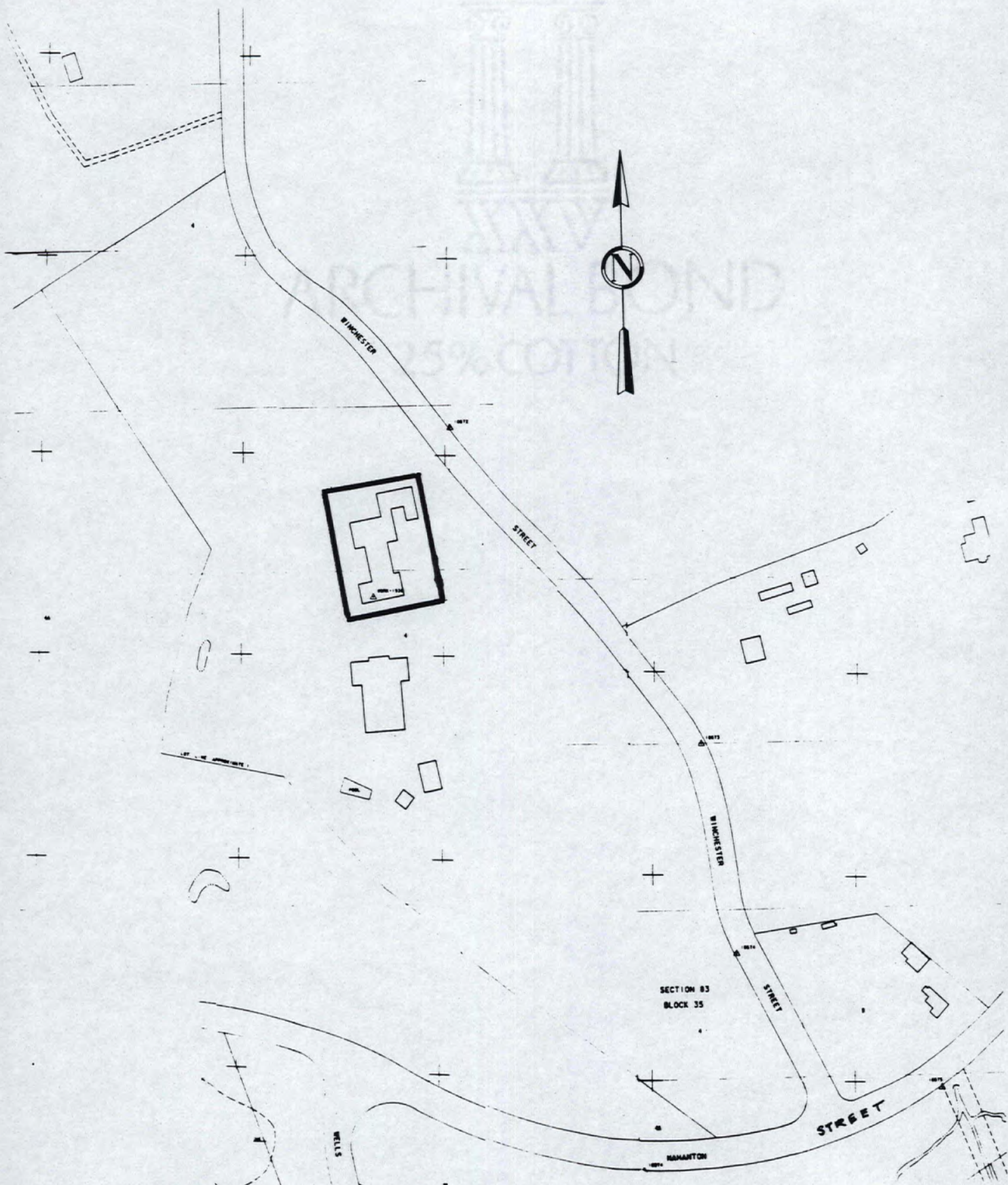
Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Newton, Mass. MRA  
333 Nahanton St., N. Highlands  
(Working Boys Home)  
Inv. #NH 299

Newton, Mass. MRA



City of Newton Assessor's Maps. Sheets 145, 153, 154  
 Metric Series. 1979  
 Scale: UTM grid line interval = 100 meters (328 feet).

Newton, Mass. MRA  
 333 Nahanton St., N. Highlands  
 (Working Boys Home)  
 83-35-4