10-300 (Rev. 10-74) UNITED STATES DEPANATIONA NATIONAL REGIST INVENTORY 1	AL PARK SERVICE	ferior CPLACES	FOR NPS USE RECEIVED DATE ENTERE	OCT 2 5 1977	EET
	RUCTIONS IN <i>HOW T</i> YPE ALL ENTRIES (S
1 NAME HISTORIC AND/OR COMMON	Keney Tower				· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
2 LOCATION STREET & NUMBER	Southeast corner	r Main and El	-	T FOR PUBLICATION	
CITY, TOWN	Hartford		CO	NGRESSIONAL DISTR - William R	
STATE	Connexticut	CODE 09		UNTY	CODE 003
3 CLASSIFICAT	ION				
DISTRICT XP X_BUILDING(S)P STRUCTUREB SITE I OBJECTI	DWNERSHIP UBLIC RIVATE OTH PUBLIC ACQUISITION N PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED	STATUS OCCUPIED X_UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGR ACCESSIBLE YES: RESTRICTED X_YES: UNRESTRIC	 	AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL	ENT USE MUSEUM X-PARK PRIVATE RESID RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTAT
4 OWNER OF PR	OPERTY	NO		MILITARY	OTHER:
NAME	Department of Pa	arks, City of	Hartford		
STREET & NUMBER	25 Stonington St	•			
CITY, TOWN	Hartford			STATE Connecticu	t
5 LOCATION OF	F LEGAL DESCR	IPTION			
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.	Hartford Land Re	cords, Munici	ip a l B uildi	ng	
STREET & NUMBER	550 Main St.		·····		
CITY, TOWN	Hartford			STATE Connecticut	t
6 REPRESENTA	TION IN EXIST				_
DATE	Hartford Archite	cture Conserv	ancy Survey	of Hartford	1
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS	1976-77 Stowe-Day Memori		RALSTATE _	_COUNTY _ <u>x</u> local	-
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7' DESCRIPTION

CONDITIC)N	CHECK ONE	СНЕСК С	NE
▲EXCELLENT —GOOD —FAIR	DETERIORATED RUINS UNEXPOSED	LUNALTERED	LORIGINAL	SITE DATE

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Keney Tower stands in a small park just north of Hartford's downtown business district at the northeast edge of a major intersection where five streets come together (Main, Ely, Ann, and High Sts. and Albany Avenue). The tower, which is set approximately in the center of the one and one-half acre park, measures 30 feet square and 130 feet tall. It is constructed from reddish brown ashlar from nearby Longmeadow sandstone quarries. The upper portion of the tower is occupied by a clock with faces on each of the four walls, and with chimes which ring the quarter hour.

Ecclesiastical Gothic Revival is the architectural style of the design. The upward thrust of the tower is accentuated by the taper of paired piers at each corner which lead up to four pinnacles at the corners of the roof. The rise of the piers to clock level is three times broken by string courses and at each break the dimensions of the piers in both width and depth are diminished. Above the clock level the piers are turned 90° on their axes so that the vertical edges are outward, helping to carry the eye upward to the pinnacles and at the tops of the pinnacles to their finial crosses.

The top third of the tower is occupied by a clock and by louvers behind which are the chimes. The louvers on each wall are in pairs and over each louver is a molding in the form of a Gothic arch leading up to a cornice which supports a balustraded parapet. At the four corners of the cornice are vigorous bird of prey gargoyles.

The entrance to the tower is approached by a flight of four brownstone steps on the southwest side facing Main St. The steps lead to a series of four receding arches which spring from engaged columns in front of a two leaf wrought iron gate and oak batten door.

The northwest corner of the tower is different from the others. The paired piers here give way to the curved wall of the spiral stairway which rises from the ground floor to the level of the clock and chimes. The Seth Thomas clock with eight foot diameter dials was manufactured in Thomaston, Connecticut. Now electrified, it originally worked from weights, the largest weighing some 1,900 pounds. The chimes and hour bell came from the Methuen Bell Co., of Methuen, Massachusetts.

A high wrought iron fence runs along Main St. in front of the tower. Its posts are worked in a variety of S and C curves and at the top of each post is a cluster of carefully wrought leaves. In the center of the fence is a two leaf gate having intricate strap work under a cipher of the letters K and M for Keney Memorial.

The tower and its site are in good condition other than being in need of cleaning. No intrusions or alterations have occurred.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AF	EAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	IECK 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	SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
X_ 1800-1899	COMMERCE	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	TRANSPORTATION
1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	OTHER (SPECIFY)
		INVENTION		
SPECIFIC DAT	ES 1898	BURBER / ARCI	HITECT Charles C. Hai	ght

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Keney Tower is a private, memorial clock tower. It is unique in the state and one of a handful of its kind in the nation. Constructed in 1898 to the design of Charles C. Haight (1841-1917), prominent New York architect, it is a good example of the Collegiate Gothic style which was his specialty. In Connecticut other work by Haight included Phelps and Vanderbilt Halls and, in part, the Sheffield Scientific School at Yale University.

Haight was chosen for the commission by the trustees of the estate of Henry Keney (1806-1894) whose will provided for construction of the tower. Henry and his brother, Walter Keney (1809-1889), conducted a successful wholesale grocery business under the firm name of H. & W. Keney and had other business interests besides. An example of their business sagacity was the purchase by Henry in 1849 of 52 shares of stock in Hartford Fire Insurance Co. at a total cost of \$260 which at the time of his death, having paid him dividends in the amount of \$124,864, had a market value of \$80,525. Neither brother had children, and the City of Hartford benefitted from a number of substantial gifts from the Keneys both during their life times and by their wills.

Walter Keney married the aunt of Rev. Francis Goodwin. Goodwin, who throughout his life time worked aggressively to enlarge the Hartford park system, in due course became chief among the trustees of the Keney estate. As a Keney trustee he oversaw the establishment of Keney Park, largest of Hartford's parks and another testamentary benefaction of the Keneys, as well as Keney Tower. Thus, Keney Tower and Keney Park are part of the Hartford heritage from both the public spirited career of Rev. Francis Goodwin and the financial generosity of the Keney Brothers.

The question of precisely whom or what is memorialized by the Keney Tower is subjext to divergent interpretations. The trustees caused to be erected on the wall of the tower's vestibule just inside the entrance a bronze plaque reading, "This tower erected to the memory of my mother is designed to preserve from other occupancy the ground sacred to me as her home and to stand in perpetual honor to the wisdom, goodness and womanly nobility of her to whose guidance I owe my success in life and its chief joy -- Henry Keney." This sentiment is consistent with the fact that the Keney home and business formerly occupied the tower's site and with the fact that their mother, as a widow, brought up the brothers through difficult times.

continued

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

David F. Ransom, "Keney Tower in Hartford," <u>The Connecticut Anti-</u> <u>quarian</u>, v. 27 (July 1975) 1, pp. 5-9.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY RECEIVED OCT 2 5 1977

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Keney Tower CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

On the other hand, the pertinent clause of the will charged the trustees with removing the existing buildings from the Keney property and with erecting on said land "...some suitable and proper memorial according to their taste and judgement to perpetuate the memory of the firm of H. & W. Keney." Consideration of the difference in emphasis here leads to the presumption that Rev. Francis Goodwin did a little Christian editing whereby the wording in the will was revised to the wording on the bronze plaque.

The Keney trustees deeded the small park and the tower to the City of Hartford on 30 July 1924 (562/437).