

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation 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 HCRS use only

received MAR 18 1982

date entered APR 15 1982

1. Name *Camp Atwater*

historic David Fisher Atwater Camp

and/or common Camp Atwater (preferred)

2. Location

street & number *Shore Road*

N/A not for publication

city, town North Brookfield

N/A vicinity of

congressional district Second

state Massachusetts

code 025

county Worcester

code 027

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☐ district	☐ public	☐ occupied	☐ agriculture
☒ building(s)	☒ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial
☐ structure	☐ both	☒ work in progress	☐ educational
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment
☐ object	☐ in process	☒ yes: restricted	☐ government
	☐ being considered	☐ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial
		☐ no	☐ military
			☒ other: Recreation

4. Owner of Property

name Urban League of Springfield

street & number 756 State Street

city, town Springfield

N/A vicinity of

state Massachusetts 01109

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Worcester County Registry of Deeds

street & number

city, town Worcester

state Massachusetts

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Inventory of the Historic Assets of the Commonwealth
has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1979

☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston

state Massachusetts

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Camp Atwater is located in the small central Massachusetts town of North Brookfield on the shore of Lake Lashaway. It encompasses 67 acres of land on both sides of Shore Road; 50 acres remain undeveloped. Interior access is gained by a U-shaped road which extends south toward the lake. Atwater includes 325 feet of lakefront property with a retaining wall and beach. In addition, the camp owns a three acre island which once housed a camper hut. This was destroyed, but its stone fireplace remains.

Twenty-four buildings, most constructed between 1921 and 1945, stand on the camp grounds. The major buildings, such as the Main Lodge, Recreation Hall, and Dining Hall, are ranged about the access road while the fourteen campers' cabins surround them. Additionally, the camp grounds include such recreational facilities as basketball and tennis courts and baseball fields. Individual buildings are described below:

The Main Lodge (building #1; photo #1) is a two-story, rectangular plan building enclosed by a broad gable roof. It is surrounded by a partially enclosed verandah. Fenestration is irregular on all elevations, but windows generally contain multi-paned double hung sash.

The Recreation Hall (building #2; photo #2) is nearly identical to the Main Lodge. Its major feature is its broad gabled roof which extends out to form a one story porch.

The oldest structure on the camp grounds is the White Cottage (building #7; photo #5) which was built in 1760 by Roger Stevens. It is a traditional 2½ story, 5-bay, center hall house with twin rear wall chimneys. Its original design has been somewhat obscured by the addition of a c. 1870 one story porch to its facade. The porch's shed roof is supported on turned posts with decoratively sawn heads.

Another building which pre-dates the camp is the West Annex (building #9; photo #6). This is a simple two story structure with a gable end orientation. A one story porch with turned posts extends across the facade.

The campers' huts are similar in design and all are quite small and simple. The senior hut (building #11; photo #7,9) is representative. It is a one story, rectangular plan structure enclosed by a low ridge roof. It is sheathed with shiplap and stands on concrete pilings. Its summer use is visually reinforced by the porch attached to its facade, and the continuous band of windows set directly beneath the eaves.

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

Specific dates	1921-1922	Builder/Architect	N/A
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Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Camp Atwater possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship. It is distinguished as the first and only recognized camp for Blacks in the country and so meets criterion A. A number of its graduates have gone on to distinguish themselves in public life so it also meets Criterion B.

Mary Atwater of Springfield donated 60 acres of land to Dr. William DeBerry in memory of her father, David Fisher Atwater, in 1921. During the first season in 1921, 40 Black children were enrolled at the camp and enjoyed many activities such as tennis, sailing, baseball, and basketball. The White Cottage (#7) accommodated these first campers and served as the center of camp activities. During the camp's second season, the Main Lodge was built and served a variety of needs. Other buildings have been constructed gradually as the camp grew in popularity.

In the early years, the majority of campers were from families of middle and upper class Blacks, but recently more disadvantaged youngsters have attended. In the beginning, campers were also drawn primarily from New England, but due to a rapid increase in popularity, campers were soon coming from all over the country. This includes many distinguished Black Americans who attribute much of their success to their stay at Camp Atwater and to the cultural and environmental exchanges and strong role models of leadership experienced there. Listed below are several of Camp Atwater's well known alumni:

Coleman Young - Mayor, Detroit, Michigan; Cliffton Wharton - Chancellor of the State University of New York State at Albany; William Harris - District Court Judge, Washington, D.C., and husband of Patricia Harris, Secretary of HEW; Rebecca Johnson - retired school principal, first Black principal in Springfield, MA; Late Daniel "Chappie" James - Four Star General, and the highest ranking Black in the U.S.; Bobby Thompson - Offensive Back for the Detroit Lions; Wade McRee - Solicitor General, U.S. Government; J. Tabor Bolden - Vice President, NBC, Washington, D.C.; Ronald B. Lee - former Postmaster General, and currently a Xerox Senior Vice President; Henry M. Thomas - youngest President of National Urban League.

The grounds of Camp Atwater should be considered to have the potential for the presence of prehistoric archaeological remains. Bordering Lake Lashaway, the camp is approximately one quarter mile north along the lake of the Drake Site, a large prehistoric site which has yielded diagnostic artifacts representative of the Archaic and Woodland periods. Camp Atwater is found in the same environmental setting as the Drake Site and therefore, may also have been a site of aboriginal occupation.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Temple, J. H., History of North Brookfield, 1887, Rand Avery, Boston-pp.470, 740.
Interview-December, 1978, Mrs. Gulliver, Afro Cultural Center, Boston University
Historical Background of Camp Atwater-prepared by Springfield Urban League
History of St. John's Congregational Church 1844-1962-copyright 1962, pps. 69,70,73,91
Sociological Survey of the Negro Population of Springfield, MA-by Dr. W. N. DeBerry, pub. by Dunbar
Community League - 1940.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 67 (divided by Shore Road)

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle name East Brookfield

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

UTM NOT VERIFIED

A

1	8	7	4	3	2	5	0	4	6	8	0	5	2	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

1	8	7	4	3	5	3	0	4	6	8	0	5	7	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

1	8	7	4	3	5	5	0	4	6	8	0	2	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

1	8	7	4	3	3	9	0	4	6	8	0	1	6	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification This nomination consists of two parcels of land divided from east to west by Shore Road. Parcel I (17A.) is recorded in B1876, P109 at the Registry of Deeds and is bounded by Shore Rd. on the north, Land owned by Stickles on the east, Lake Lashaway on the south and land owned by Martin on the west. Parcel II (50 A.) is recorded in B2211, P549 at the

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

Historical Commission

name/title Candace Jenkins, Register Director with Kathleen E. Crevier, Chairperson, N. Brookfield

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date December, 1980

street & number 294 Washington Street telephone (617)-727-8470

city or town Boston state Massachusetts

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Peter R. Weslowski

title Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission date 2/25/82

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

Entered in the
National Register

Melores Byers
Keeper of the National Register

date 4/15/82

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

OMD NO. 024-0018
EXP. 12/31/84

For NPS use only

received **MAR 18 1982**

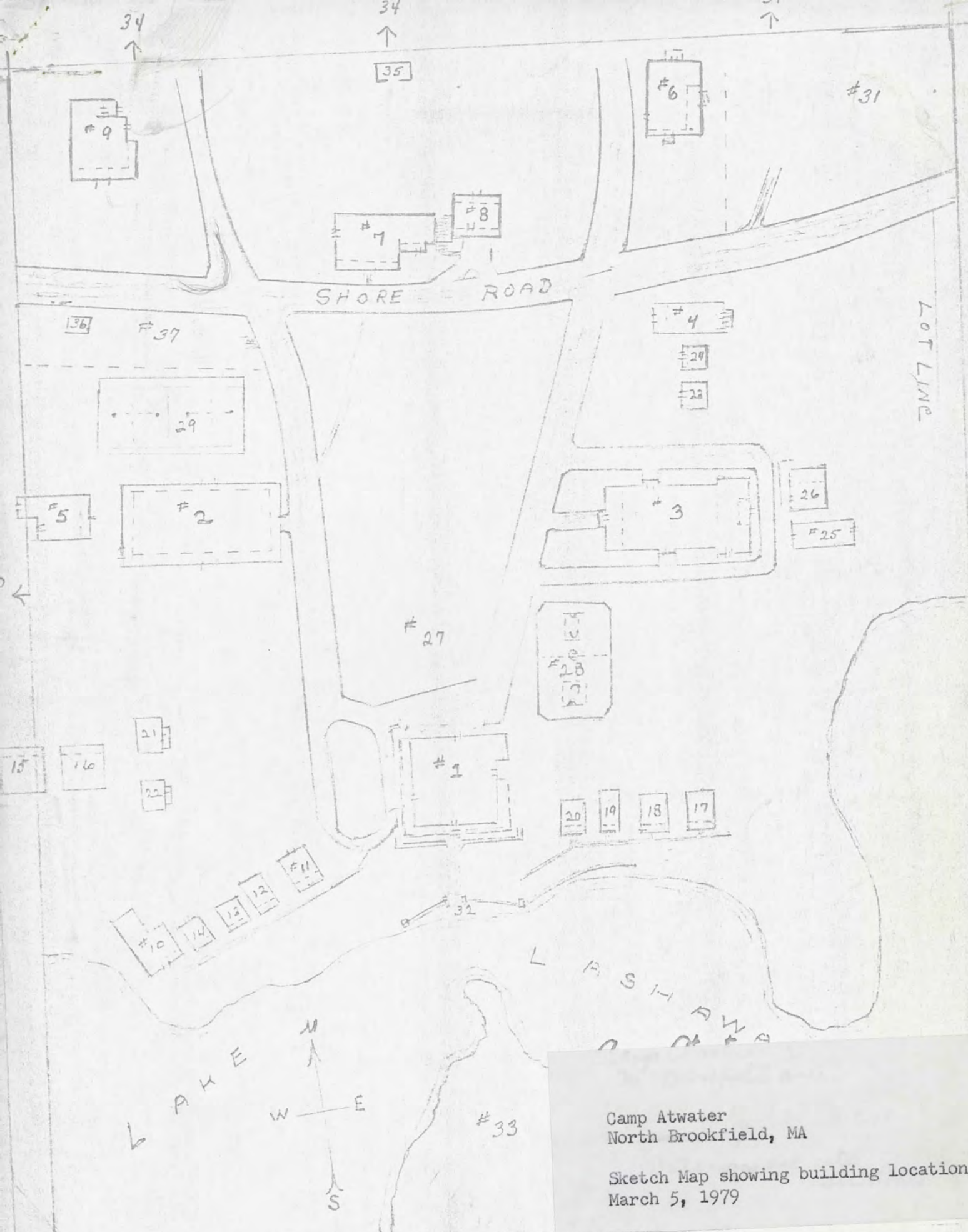
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 2

Registry of Deeds, and is bounded by the New England Power Co. to the north, land owned by LeBlanc and Warner to the east, Shore Road to the south, and the New England Power Co. to the west.



Reference Sheet

CAMP ATWATER--3/5/79---Buildings and site locations

Major buildings including blds. with plumbing

1. Lodge
2. Recreation Hall (Bebee Hall)
3. Dining Hall (Amnity Hall)
4. The Shelter
5. The Pines
6. Infirmary
7. White Cottage
8. East Annex
9. West Annex
10. Harris Bath House

Senior Huts

11. Laura Stebbins (Farm Credit)
12. Means
13. Goodwill
14. Boston Hut
15. Island Hut
16. DeBerry "

Junior Huts

17. Maples Hut
18. Birches
19. Lakeview
20. Alumni

Small Huts

21. Sunshine
22. Oak Shades
23. Elm Shades
24. Chosen Few

Other References

27. Proposed site for septic system
28. Basketball Ct.
29. Tennis Ct.
30. Baseball Field #1
31. " " #2
32. Bathing Beach
33. Island
34. Woodland
35. Gazebo (well house)
36. Pump House (under ground)
37. Parking
- Other buildings
25. Arts and Crafts
26. Showers and Toilets

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

82004477

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

Property: CAMP Atwater
 State, County: MA, Worcester
 Federal Agency: _____

Working No. 3-18-82-813
 Fed. Reg. Date: 2.1.83
 Date Due: 4/15/82 - 5/2/82

____ resubmission
 ____ nomination by person or local government
 ____ owner objection
 ____ appeal

Entered in the
National Register

Action: ☒ ACCEPT 4/15/82
 ____ RETURN
 ____ REJECT

photos ☒
 maps ☒

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. Name2. Location3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	☒ Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property5. Location of Legal Description6. Representation in Existing Surveys

has this property been determined eligible? ____ yes ____ no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
____ excellent	____ deteriorated	____ unaltered	____ original site
____ good	____ ruins	____ altered	____ moved date ____
____ fair	____ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

____ summary paragraph
 ____ completeness
 ____ clarity
 ____ alterations/integrity
 ____ dates
 ____ boundary selection

for NPS use only

8. Significance

Period _____ Area 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

Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UNIT 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: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Main Lodge
Camp Atwater
North Brookfield, MA

Donald C. Smith 1979
N. Brookfield Historical Comm.

Photo # 1 of 10
Main Lodge



Camp Atwater
North Brookfield, MA

pg 283 Doanald C. Smith 1979
N. Brookfield Historical Comm.

Photo # 2 of 10
Recreation Hall (Bebbee Hall)

Worcester
Co.

MA-2



Camp Atwater
North Brookfield, MA

Donald C. Smith 1979
N. Brookfield Historical Comm.

Photo # 3 of 10
Dining Hall (Amnity Hall)



#6 - Infirmary

Camp Atwater
North Brookfield, MA

Donald C. Smith 1979
N. Brookfield Historical Comm.

Photo # 4 of 10
Infirmary



#7
Camp Atwater
North Brookfield, MA Cottage

Doanald C. Smith 1979
N. Brookfield Historical Comm.

Photo # 5 of 10
White Cottage



Camp Atwater
North Brookfield, MA

Donald C. Smith 1979
N. Brookfield Historical Comm.

Photo # 6 of 10
West Annex



Senior Hut (Laura Stebbins)
Camp Atwater
North Brookfield, MA

Donald C. Smith 1979
N. Brookfield Historical Comm.

Photo # 7 of 10
Senior Hut (*Laura Stebbins*)



Camp Atwater
North Brookfield, MA

Donald C. Smith 1979
N. Brookfield Historical Comm.

Photo # 8 of 10
Junior Hut

HUT (Alumni)



Camp Atwater
North Brookfield, MA

Donald C. Smith 1979
N. Brookfield Historical Comm.

Photo # 9 of 10
Senior Hut (DeBerry)



#21 + 22 - Sunshine
Oak Shades

Camp Atwater
North Brookfield, MA

Donald C. Smith 1979
N. Brookfield Historical Comm.

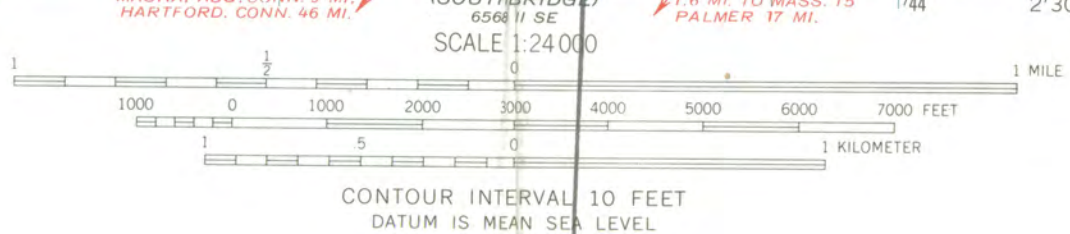
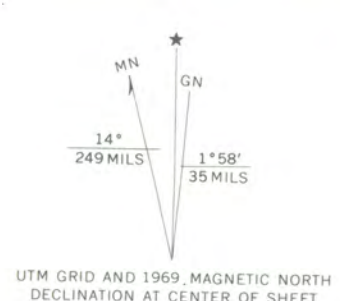
Photo # 10 of 10
Sunshine & Oak Shades



Camp Atwater
North Brookfield

UTM REFERENCES:
A. 18/743250/4680529
B. 18/743530/4680570
C. 18/743550/4680200
D. 18/743300/4680160

Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Topography by planetable surveys 1943-1944. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1967. Field checked 1969
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 18, shown in blue
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked
Areas covered by dashed light-blue pattern are subject to
controlled inundation



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, all weather, hard surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface
Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

EAST BROOKFIELD, MASS.
N4207.5—W7200/7.5

1969

AMS 6568 II NE—SERIES V814

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

STATE MASSACHUSETTS

Date Entered APRIL 15, 1982

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Camp Atwater	North Brookfield Worcester County
Lyman Block	Brockton Plymouth County
Curtis Building	Brockton Plymouth County
Goldthwaite Block	Brockton Plymouth County
Howard Block	Brockton Plymouth County

Notified

Honorable Edward P. Boland
Honorable Brian J. Donnelly
Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Honorable Paul E. Tsongas

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, NPS
North Atlantic Regional Office, NPS

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Patricia L. Weslowski
Executive Director, Massachusetts
Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108