

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NOV 21 1988

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. Instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Conway Junction Railroad Turntable Site other names/site number

2. Location

street & number Southwest Corner of Fife Lane and Route 236 city, town South Berwick, state Maine code ME county York code 031 zip code 03908

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public-State and categories like building/site/structure/object. Includes a small table for contributing/noncontributing resources.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: [Signature] Date: 11/16/88 State or Federal agency and bureau: Maine Historic Preservation Commission

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: Date: State or Federal agency and bureau:

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register. determined eligible for the National Register. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:)

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/Rail-Related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)Other: Railroad Turntable

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone: Granitewalls N/A

roof N/Aother N/A

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Conway Junction Railroad Turntable Site embraces a nineteenth century granite turntable pit and the adjoining granite foundations of the former engine house. It occupies a 0.90 acre parcel of land located at the intersection of Fife Lane and Route 236 in South Berwick.

The turntable pit is approximately sixty feet in diameter and has a depth which slopes from about two feet at the edges to about three feet in the center. Three courses of large rectangular granite blocks form the outer ring. They rest on a granite ledge that extends into the pit and also served as the base upon which the table's outer support wheels traveled. A short round granite pier with a later concrete cap is located in the middle of the pit where it served as the hub upon which the table itself revolved. (The table and its track were removed when the line was abandoned in the 1940s.)

To the west of the turntable pit is the three-sided granite slab foundation of the engine house. As is typical of these structures the walls had a wedge-shaped configuration with the end facing the turntable covered only by tall movable doors that allowed the entrance of the engines. The original building was probably of frame construction, but it too was removed after the line was abandoned.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Period of Significance

C. 1855-1936

Significant Dates

C. 1855

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Believed to have been constructed about 1855, the Conway Junction Railroad Turntable is the most visible extant structure in Maine that is associated with the Great Falls and South Berwick Railroad, a short branch line that connected Great Falls, New Hampshire with the Portland, Saco and Portsmouth Railroad. It is eligible for nomination to the National Register under criterion A as a site that illustrates the early period of railroad development in the community.

The Town of South Berwick has had a long association with the growth of railroads, beginning with the founding of the Portland, Saco and Portsmouth (P, S and P), which was chartered by the Maine Legislature in 1837. Construction of this road commenced in 1841 and was completed the following year. In 1843 a second railroad, the Boston and Maine, whose route was extended eastward toward Portland from Exeter, Massachusetts met the P, S and P in South Berwick, thus establishing the town's important railroad ties at an early date. Twelve years later the three mile long Great Falls and South Berwick line was built between Conway Junction (formerly known as Brooks Crossing on the P, S and P) and Great Falls, New Hampshire where it intersected with the Boston and Maine. In this manner a triangular web of rail lines was created across the northwestern corner of South Berwick.

The Great Falls and South Berwick made its base at Conway Junction and here it constructed the existing turntable and engine house. This line assumed three other names (usually as part of a larger system) during the course of the century including the Great Falls and Conway, the Portsmouth, Great Falls and Conway and the Boston and Maine. Throughout the period the facility at Conway Junction continued to be utilized as a fueling station and minor engine maintenance shop. In 1910 the junction was renamed the Jewett

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Bradlee, Francis B. C. The Boston and Maine Railroad: A History of the Maine Road, With its Tributary Lines. Salem, Massachusetts: Essex Institute, 1921.
- Harlow, Alvin F. Steelways of New England. New York: Creative Age Press, Incorporated, 1946.
- Tobey, Raymond E. "The Portsmouth, Great Falls, and Conway Railroad", in Boston and Maine Bulletin, Summer, 1983. Boston and Maine Historical Society Publishers.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.90

UTM References

A

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Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property embraces the turntable structure and engine house foundation located on the Town of South Berwick Tax Map 17 and referenced as the "Turntable Lot".

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property embraces the remaining portion of the original turntable site which has not been destroyed or altered by more recent construction activity.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohny, Architectural Historian

organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date October, 1988

street & number 55 Capitol Street, Station #65 telephone 289-2132

city or town Augusta, state Maine zip code 04333

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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Junction; the last scheduled train departed from here in 1936; and five years later the line was abandoned. Sometime thereafter a state highway was built over the rail bed of the old P, S and P line as well as that of the Great Falls and South Berwick. The turntable site survived by virtue of its location away from the new road and its method of construction although the actual movable table and the engine house were removed. Nevertheless, it continues to be an important physical reminder of the prominence of railroads in South Berwick's past. Furthermore, it has recently been leased to the town with the hope that it will become a public park.