

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED APR 7 1975
DATE ENTERED NOV 25 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Constance Witherby Park

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

210 Pitman Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Providence

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1 (St. Germain)

STATE

Rhode Island, 02906

CODE

44

COUNTY

Providence

CODE

007

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input checked="" 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

City of Providence

STREET & NUMBER

Providence City Hall, Dorrance Street at Washington Street

CITY, TOWN

Providence

VICINITY OF

STATE

Rhode Island

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Providence City Hall

STREET & NUMBER

Dorrance Street at Washington Street

CITY, TOWN

Providence

STATE

Rhode Island 02903

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Not so represented

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Constance Witherby Park, given to the City of Providence in 1929 by Mr. and Mrs. S. Foster Hunt in memory of Mrs. Hunt's daughter by her first marriage, is a small (just under 100,000 square feet) neighbourhood public park far up on Providence's East Side and near the river which divides the larger city from East Providence -- in a fringe area of mixed residential and commercial use. It is bounded on the north and south sides by the busy arteries of Waterman and Pitman Streets, on the west by the rear of house properties on Cold Spring Street and on the east by commercial or light-industry structures; and it is rectangular in shape, flat in terrain.

Built on filled land, it was landscaped and planted with the guidance of the then (1929) parks superintendent, Ernest K. Thomas. Intended as a recreational strolling-sitting- and play-area and as an open-space adornment to its neighbourhood, it is very simply laid out, without walls or even paths, and there are no flower beds. The park is bordered by spaced desiduous trees, now matured, and groupings of conifers and lower green shrubberies; such occur also in informal, random placement within the park, and here and there are benches for the rest of strolling elders or playing children, who, together with dog-owners, chiefly comprise the park's "clientele." There is one grouping of evergreen planting -- more concentrated than elsewhere -- near the middle of the park's north side, and this forms the surround for a bronze statue on a stone plinth of a young girl presumably not unlike Constance Witherby. Representing the "spirit of youth," this statue is the work of Gail Sherman Corbett and was put in place in 1933.

The park is still to-day an attractive and used "breathing-space" in a closely built-up and busy area, though due to present neglect by the city's park department it is not kept as well-groomed as it ought to be; nevertheless, over forty-five years it has remained the open amenity its donors intended it to be and has its users and its unexpectedly-come-upon attractiveness.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		Small neighbour- hood park	

SPECIFIC DATES

1929

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Constance Witherby Park is, as its givers intended, a useful and pleasing asset in its neighbourhood and deserves preservation, certainly, and improved maintenance if possible. A stipulation in its deed of gift, in fact, was that it should be owned by the city of Providence only so long as used for its green-oasis purpose. As the large Medway Street house of the Foster Hunts overlooked an area where they saw sprouting rather constricted houses of the middle class, with, of course, growing children, Mr. and Mrs. Hunt no doubt thought of this park space they decided to give as particularly suitable to the young and their parents and as an appropriate memorial for Mrs. Hunt's daughter, who died in Switzerland in 1929 just before reaching the age of sixteen. A statue in the park -- the only formal adornment there -- represents either Constance herself or, more generally, the "spirit of youth:" a girl, whose dress is blown close about her body, looks off (as one used to be able to do) towards Providence harbour and Narragansett Bay; below is the inscription "The wind roars by; I feel it blow/ And know that I am free to go." The donors could look down from their house and see both the park and the statue.

The park should not, in any case, be overlooked or neglected. Particular attention needs to be directed upon it now, as there is the threat that a connector road to a suburban throughway will be cut through this small, hitherto-protected and greatly-needed green space.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Doyle, James J.: "The Death of a Park," pp. 8-11 in The Rhode Islander
Providence Sunday Journal, August 24, 1969

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

DA	19	30,19,1010	46,38,2010	B	19	30,20,0810	46,33,0170
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	19	30,20,190	46,38,1140	C	19	31,01,8610	46,33,01810
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Richard B. Harrington, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

DATE

Sept. 7, 1974

STREET & NUMBER

Old State House, 150 Benefit Street

TELEPHONE

401-277-2678

CITY OR TOWN

Providence

STATE

Rhode Island 02903

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.

SIGNATURE

Frederic Williams

4/1/75

TITLE

Director

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

NOTICE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

11/20/75

ATTEST

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

NOV 20 1975