

JAN 02 1990

79

Area Letter Form numbers in this Area

F

(see District Data Sheet)

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02116

Swansea, Mass. MRA

Town

Swansea

Name of Area (if any)

The Colony Historic District

Present Use

residential

General Date or Period

1896-ca. 1930

General Condition

good

Acreage

4.31 acres (approx.)

Recorded by

Preservation Plus/K. Broomer

Organization

Swansea Historical Commission

Date

March 1988/November 1989

Photos (3"x3" or 3"x5" black
& white) Indicate on back
of each photo street addresses
for buildings shown. Staple to
left side of form.

Sketch Map. Draw a general map of the
area indicating properties within it.
Number each property for which individual
inventory forms have been completed.
Label streets including route numbers, if
any. Indicate north. (Attach a separate
sheet if space here is not sufficient).

(see attached map)

UTM REFERENCE

A 19 316610 4619690

B 19 316330 4619580

C 19 316390 4619770

USGS QUADRANGLE

Fall River, MA-RI 1971/1979

SCALE

1:25000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

The Colony, a cohesive waterfront cluster of late 19th and early 20th-century cottages, retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association and is significant on the local level. The Colony meets Criterion A for its association with summer resort and later suburban development in the shoreline areas of Swansea, and Criterion C as a well-preserved grouping of Shingle and Colonial Revival style cottages.

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

The Colony (Photo #1) covers a small area of approximately 4.31 acres at the southeastern tip of Gardner's Neck in South Swansea. Passive and active use of adjacent water resources--Mt. Hope Bay to the south and Lee's River to the east--was a factor in the development of the cottage cluster. The district consists of seven cottages on parcels ranging from one-third of an acre to one acre in size, at the end of Gardner's Neck Road and on both sides of Mattapoissett Avenue, a private road from Gardner's Neck Road to the shoreline. Two of the residences are noncontributing, one due to alterations and another due to its construction date. Two parcels in the Colony remain vacant, as does the eastern edge of the development immediately on the water.

Five contributing residences were built between 1896 and ca. 1930. The character of the district is determined by the compatible designs of the cottages, the most notable feature being the broad gambrel roofs. Other common features include the single-family use and small scale. The district's architectural significance lies in the distinctive characteristics

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain historical importance of area and how the area relates to the development of other areas of the community.

Arch. Sig. (cont'd): of the Shingle and Colonial Revival styles as they were popularized and adapted to seaside residential construction in the northeastern (see continuation sheet)

Hist. Sig.: The Colony's historical significance lies in its association with resort and ensuing suburban development in Swansea at the turn of the 20th century, a time when residents of neighboring industrialized cities such as Fall River sought alternatives to urban living. Early owners of these homes were mostly Fall River businessmen.

The land upon which the Colony was built was known in the late 17th century as Mattapoissett. Purchased from King Philip of the Wampanoags by the Brentons of Newport, the territory was conveyed in 1693 to Samuel Gardner and Ralph Chapman. The Gardner family farmed much of the southern portion of the territory--now known as Gardner's Neck in South Swansea--until construction of the Fall River & Providence Railroad across the Neck in 1865. With the railroad accessibility came subdivision of farms for the construction of summer homes in the last quarter of the 19th century. Greater accessibility generated by later transportation improvements such as the streetcar and the automobile contributed to steady suburbanization of the Neck beginning in the early 20th century.

In 1883 David Anthony, a founder of the Swift Meat Packing Company of Fall River, purchased Bay Point, or the southern tip of Gardner's Neck along Mt. Hope Bay. He operated a farm on

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.
Scully, Vincent J., Jr. The Shingle Style. Yale University Press, 1955.
Wright, Otis Olney. History of Swansea, Mass. 1917.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: SWANSEA, MA.	Form No:
Property Name: THE COLONY	

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

Architectural Significance (continued)

states. This is an intact complex of residences and is unique in Swansea. The houses are evocative of the simplified and informal life at the shore, at that time, a newly evaluated condition of American living.

Although the character and the significance of this district is in the similarities of the cottages, there are a few variations within the gambrel roof theme. Built in 1896, No. 28 Mattapoissetts Avenue (F-148) was the first residence of the Colony. It is a two-story, three-bay structure which is distinguished by its gambrel roof with dormers, a wrapped porch with plain columns, an offset single chimney, and the unifying wood shingle exterior. Neighboring No. 15 Mattapoissett Avenue (F-147) was built in 1898. This is also a two-story gambrel, however, with four-bays and a three-sided porch, part of which is typically enclosed. There is a triple shed dormer with two over two lights, echoing the other windows. This cottage was designed and built by its owner, A.T. Marvel from Fall River. Nos. 28 and 15 Mattapoissett Avenue are two of the most preserved cottages of The Colony as they are still summer residences.

The third cottage built in The Colony in 1905 was No. 1536 Gardner Neck Road (F-152) and retains all the regular features such as two-story, gambrel roof, open and enclosed porch and shed dormers. However, it has a center gable under which is an enclosed porch that is directly over the front porch.

Built in 1920, No. 1562 Gardner Neck Road is the southernmost cottage directly on Mt. Hope Bay. Visually cut off from the other cottages of The Colony with dense landscaping, this residence has departed from the design of the typical Colony cottage, having undergone extensive rebuilding due to the 1938 and 1954 hurricanes.

Another cottage of the 1920s is No. 35 Mattapoissett Avenue. The original was larger but now retains the large garden to the east of the cottage as well as a six-stall garage/stable of original fabric. The residence is a modest structure not unlike the others in size and setting, however, it is a Dutch Colonial that diverges from the characteristic Colony house in that it has no porch and is not shingled.

A vernacular Colonial Revival cape at 45 Mattapoissett Avenue is also compatible with the earlier houses in size, scale, and materials but features a broad, low-pitched gable roof rather than the gambrel roof of the other cottages. The house at 1550 Gardner's Neck Road is a contemporary cottage built ca. 1950.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

SWANSWA

Form No:

see DDS

Property Name: The Colony H. D.

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

Historical Significance (continued)

the western end of the property until 1895, when he built a large Queen Anne house, now 98 Bay Point Avenue (1895, MHC #F149). Anthony's house is one of the earliest summer homes on Gardner's Neck. In 1896 Anthony sold "four acres across from his farmhouse", the present Colony property, to Robert A. Wilcox and Eric Borden. The parcel was divided into eleven lots with a private road (Mattapoissett Avenue) extending from Gardner's Neck Road to the river. Unique to this development was the fact that the owners were deeded certain rights in common: use of the private road, right-of-way to the beach and boat landing area, and use of the well water then drawn from two of the lots.

According to plot plans, seven families purchased lots in the development for the construction of summer homes between 1896 and 1902. At least two of the original houses, the vernacular Shingle Style cottages closest to the Lee's River, are extant. One cottage belonging to Abner P. Davol, owner of a Fall River mill, is 28 Mattapoissett Avenue (1896, MHC #F148). This residence was built by J.M. Darling of Fall River, and may have been designed by Edward Marvel, a local architect then active in the development of the Neck. The second cottage, 15 Mattapoissett Avenue (1898, MHC #F147), was owned by Annie P. Marvel and designed by Edward Marvel. Shingle Style houses, though comparatively rare in the immediate region, were typically associated with this type of coastal resort development in the 1880s and 1890s. [MHC, 147]

The district's remaining houses reflect the steady suburbanization of Gardner's Neck in the early decades of the 20th century. The gambrel-roofed Colonial Revival at 1536 Gardner's Neck Road (ca. 1905, MHC #F152), is typical of local suburban construction of its period in Swansea. Later but visually compatible houses include the Dutch Colonial Revival H. M. Prescott House (ca. 1920, MHC #F165), built on the site of an earlier house of ca. 1902, and the vernacular Colonial Revival cape at 45 Mattapoissett Avenue (ca. 1930). It is unclear whether this cape, an altered Colonial Revival anchoring the southern end of the development at 1562 Gardner's Neck Road (ca. 1920, MHC #F164), and the contemporary house at 1550 Gardner's Neck Road (ca. 1950), were built on sites of earlier summer cottages in the Colony. Severe hurricanes in 1938 and 1954 account for the extensive rebuilding of #1562 and possibly the new construction at #1550, as these two lots have direct water frontage. Nonetheless, the lots and cottages at this southeastern tip of Gardner's Neck retain their identity as the Colony seaside community of South Swansea.

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The Colony Historic District consists of all lots comprising the 1896 subdivision known as the Colony. Although two of the original lots support contemporary or noncontributing buildings, the development maintains its identity as a single unit. See attached assessor's map for boundaries.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

SWANSEA, MA.

Form No:

Property Name: THE COLONY

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

Bibliography and/or References (continued)

Assessors Records - Swansea

Deeds - Bristol County Registry of Deeds, Fall River, MA.:

- D.M. Anthony to Robert A. Wilcox and Eric Borden - 1896, Book 31, p. 287.

Plans - Bristol County Registry of Deeds, Fall River, MA:

"The Colony" by Robert A. Wilcox and Eric Borden - 1901, Plan Book 3, p. 19.

Massachusetts Historical Commission State Survey Team. Historic and Archaeological Resources of Southeast Massachusetts. Boston: MHC, 1982.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

District Data Sheet
The Colony Historic District, Swansea, Massachusetts

<u>Map #</u>	<u>MHC #</u>	<u>Historic Name</u>	<u>Street Address</u>	<u>Date of Construction</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Resource</u>
40/1	F152	--- stone wall	1536 Gardners's Neck Rd.	ca. 1905 ca. 1950	C NC	Colonial Rev. ---	B St.
40/2A	---	---	1550 Gardner's Neck Rd.	ca. 1950	NC	---	B
40/3B	F164	---	1562 Gardner's Neck Rd.	ca. 1920	NC	alt. Col. Rev.	B
40/4	F147	A. T. Marvel Hse. garage	15 Mattapoissett Avenue	1898 ca. 1950	C NC	Shingle Style ---	B B
40/5	F148	A. P. Davol House	28 Mattapoissett Avenue	1896	C	Shingle Style	B
40/6	F165	H. M. Prescott Hse. garage	35 Mattapoissett Avenue	ca. 1920 ca. 1902	C C	Dutch Colonial ---	B B
40/7	---	---	45 Mattapoissett Avenue	ca. 1930s	C	Colonial Rev.	B

Key: Map # = sheet number of assessor's map/property number in district
Capital letter at end of property number denotes noncontributing property

C = contributing NC = noncontributing B = building Si. = site St. = structure O = object

	contributing	noncontributing
Buildings	6	3
Sites	0	0
Structures	0	1
Objects	0	0
Total	6	4

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Swansea MRA
Bristol County, MASSACHUSETTS

Date Listed

Cover

~~Substantive Review~~Accept *Peter L. Savage* 02-16-90
Cover

1. Anthony, David M., House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Nelma Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

2. Anthony, Harold H., House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Nelma Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

3. Bark Street School

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Nelma Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

4. Barneyville Historic District

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Nelma Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

5. Bend of the Lane

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Nelma Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

6. Brown, John, IV, House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Nelma Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

7. Buffington, Deacon, John, House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Nelma Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

8. Church of Christ, Swansea

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Nelma Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

9. Cole, Benjamin, House

Entered in the
National RegisterKeeper *Nelma Byers* 2/16/90

Attest _____

10. Colony Historic District

~~Substantive Review~~for Keeper *Peter L. Savage* 02-16-90

Attest _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Colony Historic District
NAME:

MULTIPLE Swansea MRA
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Bristol

DATE RECEIVED: 1/02/90 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/18/90
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 2/02/90 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 2/16/90
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 90000079

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: Y SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 2/16/90 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Well-preserved enclave of
Colonial Revival and Shingle Style
cottages reflective of late 19th-century to
early 20th-century summer resort and
suburban residential development.*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A & C
REVIEWER Savage
DISCIPLINE Architectural History
DATE 02-16-90

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/(N) see attached SLR Y/(N)

CLASSIFICATION

☐ count ☐ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

☐ historic ☐ current

DESCRIPTION

☐ architectural classification
☐ materials
☐ descriptive text

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

☐ acreage ☐ verbal boundary description
☐ UTM's ☐ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

☐ sketch maps ☐ USGS maps ☐ photographs ☐ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Phone _____

Signed _____

Date _____



1536 Gardner's Neck Road } photo right
28 Mattapoisett Road }
15 " " } photo left
35 " " }

The Clam Historic District
Swansea, MA ^{MRA} Bristol Co

Kay Flynn
March, 1988

Swansea Public Library
East View

#1



LEGEND
PARCEL NUMBERS 1
ADJACENT MAPS 2
MATCH LINE
HYDRANT

KEY
② = number corresponds to Map# (-#) on DISTRICT DATA SHEET
▽ = Vacant lot of land
= Photo
A = letter is noncontributing property

COLONY HISTORIC DISTRICT 1/1

PROPERTY MAP
TOWN OF SWANSEA
BRISTOL COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS
JAMES W. SEWALL COMPANY
SCALE 1 INCH = 100 ± FEET
OLD TOWN, MAINE
FOR ASSESSING PURPOSES ONLY 40

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000296