

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED MAR 18 1981  
DATE ENTERED MAR 25 1982

**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 Makens Bemont House

AND/OR COMMON Huguenot House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 307 Burnside Avenue

CITY, TOWN East Hartford NA VICINITY OF 1st  
STATE Connecticut CODE 09 COUNTY Hartford CODE 003

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

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

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME East Hartford Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER 840 Main Street c/o East Hartford Public Library

CITY, TOWN East Hartford NA VICINITY OF Connecticut STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. East Hartford Town Clerk

STREET & NUMBER 740 Main Street - Town Hall

CITY, TOWN East Hartford STATE CT

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE State Register of Historic Places

DATE 1981  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Connecticut Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN Hartford STATE CT

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

## CHECK ONE

## CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE 1971

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Makens Bemont House, or Huguenot House, is a small 1½-story gambrel roofed house dating from 1761. It sits far back from the road and, with a war memorial and an 1821 schoolhouse brought to the site, marks the entrance to Martin Park. The house was moved to the site in 1971 from its original location on the opposite side of Burnside Avenue, some 2500' to the west. A new underpinning was poured, but the original brownstone-block foundation and steps were repositioned on top of it. The house has a narrow brick walkway in front and a few closely trimmed shrubs along its foundation. Though still undergoing restoration, the house serves as a museum for the East Hartford Historical Society.

The facade or north side is five bays wide with a central entrance. The later 19th-century panelled door is flanked by very narrow sidelights, old though probably not original, and the whole is surrounded by a wide, molded frame which splays out near the top, suggesting a stone lintel. Windows have their original board frames with beaded inner edges and replaced twelve over eight sash. Bed moldings beneath the cornice overhang form breaks over the windows, creating molded caps. Spaced along the lower slope of the wood-shingled roof are three hipped-roof dormers. The large brick stack has recently been rebuilt mostly using the old bricks. The exterior is covered with narrow clapboards modelled on a few which remain under the eaves to the left of the entrance. These show evidence of red paint, but the rest of the exterior has been stained dark brown.

Throughout the interior are wide-board floors of hard pine, though another layer of flooring conceals them in two first-floor rooms. The southwest front room, in which the original floor can be seen, also shows the house's heavy framing, with summer beam, flared corner post and girts enclosed within beaded casings. When the fireplace wall was opened up, evidence of a small diagonal fireplace was discovered, and the brownstone walls were located in other parts of the house (one was being used as a step) and found to fit. The sidewalls are scored in imitation of brick laid in Flemish bond. The northwest room has a similar fireplace on its west wall, but the brick effect imitates common bond. A simple Federal-style mantel has been installed there. The plaster walls and ceiling conceal the framing members, and the moldings in the northwest room are from the Greek Revival period. The kitchen occupies almost the whole of the rear of the house and has three walls with their original, wide feather-edged wainscotting. The kitchen fireplace is being rebuilt to its original size and probable configuration, with a new bake oven, and will have a simple mantel and panelling added.

The front stairs are very narrow, owing to the adjacent full-height closet. The hall is almost entirely original. In addition to the raised-panel closet door, there is the stairway with its simple rail, square balusters, and applied scroll decoration on the sides. The chambers above are quite plain: the north room only has a small fireplace. The south room has a large walk-in closet sheathed inside with wide beaded boards. The dormers are finished inside with a round vaulted soffit done with plaster and lath. Interior doors are of two types: 18th-century doors with two narrow panels over a third wide panel, and early 19th-century doors with heavier moldings and two long panels. Hardware is mostly reproduction, but there is an old forged latch on the back door.

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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

Makens Bemont House  
"Huguenot House"  
East Hartford, CT  
**CONTINUATION SHEET**

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE 1

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Owner (continued):

4

The land upon which the house is located is owned by the town:

Town of East Hartford, Connecticut  
740 Main Street - Town Hall  
East Hartford, CT 06108

### Surveys:

The house was included in a survey of historic buildings in East Hartford which has just been completed by the East Hartford Historical Society. The records will be deposited with the Connecticut Historical Commission, Hartford, CT.

# 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES      1761 - built      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      N/A

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Makens Bemont House, also known as the Huguenot House, is a major historical landmark in East Hartford. Although it has been relocated and has had to have considerable interior reconstruction, it is one of few remaining 18th-century houses in the town. East Hartford for over 75 years has been undergoing intense commercial, industrial, and residential development, and what few historic buildings remain have mostly been altered beyond recognition or have had to be moved from their sites. The Bemont House is a typical small dwelling from the 18th century (Criterion C), and as such is an important part of the town's heritage, an importance recognized by the broad-based preservation effort which saved the house from destruction.

Built in 1761, the Bemont House exhibits many of the typical characteristics of its period: a central chimney plan, five-bay facade with the entrance in the center, and a heavily framed structure visible in the interior as protruding girts, summer, and posts. The gambrel roof and hipped dormers are less common than the usual gable roof, but the gambrel shape is nevertheless a frequent variant found on small houses. The house incorporates many of the usual 18th-century building practices: breaks in the molded cornice to form caps over the windows, beaded window frames, feather-edged wainscotting in the rear room, and beaded casings on the visible structural members.

At the same time, the house has several features which make it distinctive: Instead of a rubble underpinning, the Bemont House sits on brownstone blocks, a local stone used extensively in the Connecticut Valley but rarely found elsewhere in the 18th century. Brownstone also appears in the entrance steps and the walls of the fireplaces, two of which have a highly unusual trompe l'oeil effect imitating brick sides. The hipped roof dormers, with their rare vaulted interiors, illustrate how even a small, relatively plain house often has unusual details that set it apart from its neighbors. Lastly, the Bemont House is noteworthy because of the size and number of closets included. Most 18th-century families stored their things in chests, on pegs, and in cupboards, but the Bemonts apparently preferred real closets, paying a price with the very narrow front stairway and small hall or porch.

The house was built in 1761 by Edmond Bemont and sold four years later to his son Makens.<sup>1</sup> Makens Bemont lived in the house till his death in 1826. He was a saddle-maker by trade, and is said to have supplied the Revolutionary army. Although he was an artisan, he accumulated considerable property in his lifetime, including many shares in the Hartford Bridge and in local banks. He held office as the tax collector for East Hartford, and was one of only a few citizens to own and use a carriage. This house, built at the start of his career, is small and unpretentious and probably is an accurate reflection of the social status of the 18th-century craftsman.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Commemorative Biographical Record of Hartford County. Chicago: J.H. Beers, 1901, 517.  
 Goodwin, Joseph O. East Hartford, Its History and Traditions. Hartford: Case, Lockwood and Brainard, 1879.  
 Hartford Land Records, 10:235 (1761); 10:73 (1762); 11:417 (1765).  
 Hartford Probate Records, Estate of Makers Bemont, 1826.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**  
**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME Hartford North

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24 000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1, 8 | 6, 9, 7, 3, 6, 0 | 4, 6, 2, 7, 4, 0, 0  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B [ ] | [ ] | [ ]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C [ ] | [ ] | [ ]

D [ ] | [ ] | [ ]

E [ ] | [ ] | [ ]

F [ ] | [ ] | [ ]

G [ ] | [ ] | [ ]

H [ ] | [ ] | [ ]

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property includes the house, owned by the East Hartford Historical Society, in Martin Park, and a perimeter of 25' of land.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Bruce Clouette, Consultant


ORGANIZATION Connecticut Historical Commission DATE August 20, 1980  
 STREET & NUMBER 59 South Propsect Street TELEPHONE (203) 566-3005  
 CITY OR TOWN Hartford STATE CT

# 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE   
 TITLE Director, Connecticut Historical Commission DATE February 5, 1982

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

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

William H. Braitham DATE 3-25-82  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: Patrick Andrews DATE 3/25/82  
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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

Makens Bemont House (Huguenot House)  
East Hartford, CT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

### Significance (continued):

The house was moved in 1971 from its original location nearby. Facing imminent demolition, the house was saved by local citizens who arranged for its relocation at the entrance to a nearby park, a site which contributes to the house's public visibility. They also raised money to restore the house to a realistic 18th-century appearance. Interior paint, clapboards, woodwork and sash were all matched to remnants of the original, which in most cases were left in place. While much of the interior hardware, chimney stack, mantels, panelling, and kitchen fireplace are or shortly will be reconstructed, a great deal of authentic, original material remains, including some clapboards, molded window frames, interior beaded beam casings, floors, old doors, fireplaces, the front stairway, closets, and extensive wainscotting. This historical material makes the Makens Bemont House a valuable architectural resource for the people of East Hartford.

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<sup>1</sup>The name "Huguenot House" is derived from a family tradition, recorded in 1900 (Beers), that Makens Bemont was a French Protestant emigré. Records show, however, that Makens and his family even back to 1654 were all born near Enfield, which was then part of Hampshire County, Massachusetts. In the 19th century the family began using the spelling "Beaumont" and it is undoubtedly as a Romantic embellishment that the Huguenot tradition took form.