

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NOV 24 1980
DATE ENTERED

**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

Darling Inn

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Depot Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Lyndonville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Vermont

__ VICINITY OF

Vermont

CODE
50

COUNTY
Caledonia

CODE
005

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER: former hotel
and convalescent home

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Darling Inn Company/North Star Housing Corporation (general partner)

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 387

CITY, TOWN

St. Johnsbury

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Vermont

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Lyndon Town Clerk's Office

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Lyndonville

STATE

Vermont

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Darling Inn is a brick, gable-roofed, three-and-one-half story former hotel, designed in a restrained expression of the Federal Revival architectural style. The symmetrical plan of the building is "U" shaped with the central element of the main block facade flanked by gabled pavilions relieved 2 feet at either end, each with partial pediments. The pavilions, 35 feet in width, are three bays wide, while the main block (115.5 feet overall) has five bays, including the projecting center entrance. The principal (north) elevation is articulated by a one-story entry porch, five bays in width. Constructed of wood, the porch has classical detailing including paired Tuscan columns with plinths, a full entablature with patera adornments in the frieze, and a pedimented center entry pavilion supported by flanking clustered columns. The porch floor is of poured concrete with the edges trimmed in brick in rowlock fashion.

The building rests upon a foundation of poured concrete painted white, with a water table. The wall plane of the facade beneath the porch is punctuated with full-height, round-headed windows with patterned lights. The main entrance has glazed double-leaved panelled doors surmounted with a fanlight with patterned glass. The three bays in the two pavilions each have a single round-headed window flanked with smaller rectangular window apertures. The latter are adorned with relieved decorative rectangular cast-concrete keystones retaining the brick semi-circular arches. Windows on the first floor of all elevations of the main block have recessed decorative wooden panels beneath the sills. Rectangular sash are all operable and are uniformly of eight over eight configuration. Splayed arches with molded brick laid in rowlock fashion articulate each of the rectangular window openings, while sills are of cast-concrete. Concrete keystones appear above the gable windows of the flanking pavilions and on the second story above the front entry. All trim is painted white and 90 percent of the original wooden shutters remain in position on the north, east and west elevations.

The upper levels of the building are visually differentiated from the first floor by a decorative cast-concrete belt course which is carried around the building. Smaller, narrow rectangular windows with two over four sash serving upper story lavatories flank the center bay of the main block and define the center bay of the pavilions. The medium pitch of the roof plane is punctuated with five dormers. The center dormer has a triangular pedimented roof while the balance have pediments composed of segmental arches. Dormer sidewalls are sheathed with clapboards and painted white. The partial entablature of the main block carries a (damaged) galvanized eave gutter and is partially returned on the facades of the flanking pavilions. Downspouts and leaders are located beneath the valleys of the twin pavilions where they intersect the main roof plane. The raking eaves of the pavilions are adorned with boxed cornices. Rectangular chimnies of brick with cast-concrete caps are situated flanking the ridge in the end position, at the east and west ends of the building. All roof surfaces are covered with asphalt shingles.

Details on the east elevation repeat those of the facade but with parapeted design treatment of the gable peak. Paired rectangular end chimnies rise from the gable piercing the raking eaves, forming a broken gable pediment. The rectangular window in the center bay position is adorned with a semi-circular wooden fan and embellished with a keystone in the brick arch. On the first floor there is a blind arch in the center bay position also with a keystone, which serves the decorative function of maintaining the rhythm of the three-bay wall plane.

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Extending south from the main block is the one-story kitchen wing, also constructed of brick. This utilitarian structure has a low-pitched roof and splayed arches over paired, fixed nine-light sash. This structure, while subordinate in scale and massing to the main block, clearly derives its character from the principal building and shares both a common foundation and chimney stack. The chimney, with a massive rectangular brick stack, is part of a transitional design element formed by the gabled three-story pavilion projecting from the rear (south) of the building, from which the kitchen is extended. The transition between the structures is facilitated by the extension of the belt course of the main block as a cornice across the eaves of the kitchen roof. A small, one-half story clapboarded shed with gable roof is also attached to the south wall of the kitchen.

The west elevation of the building, which fronts on Elm Street, bespeaks more formal and integrated design. Details of the gable end of the main block replicate those mentioned in the aforementioned counterpart, with the exception that an iron three-story fire escape is appended to the wall plane within the center bay, where each of the openings on the three levels contain glazed, panelled doors with nine lights each. A three-and-one-half story residential wing, four bays in width with a gable roof, is attached to the south wall of the main block and completes the second leg of the "U" shaped plan. These structures share a common foundation and water table and the decorative belt course is carried around to the rear of the wing. Because the site slopes slightly to the south, basement windows and wells are evident at ground level on both this and the eastern elevation. Four matched roof dormers with pedimented gables and clapboarded sidewalls appear above the cornice over each of the bays. A basement entrance vestibule of woodframe construction with pedimented gable roof and sheathed with clapboards, stands near the center of this elevation. This entrance formerly served a basement taproom/cocktail lounge when the property was operated as a hotel.

The south (rear) elevation of the Darling Inn is dominated by the gable end of the southwest wing described above. Like its counterpart, the pavilion linking the kitchen with the main block, the southwest wing bears minimum architectural detail. The belt course carried around from the facade is continued across this elevation but in corbelled brick. All of the solid shutters with the shamrock motif have been removed and window sills are of brick, rather than cast-concrete. The painted foundation and water table with basement window openings form a strong visual element, one which is balanced by the long horizontal shed dormers located on the roof of the main block and east pitch of the southwest wing. Finished with white clapboards, these elements repeat the fenestration of the wall planes below. Projecting above the dormer on the roof of the main block is a square one-half story tower which serves to house cable and pulley equipment for the building's main elevator. This structure, which has a flat roof, contains one window which faces south, is sheathed with shingles and is trimmed with a crown cornice molding.

There are three entrances to the building on the south elevation, the most prominent of which is the doorway to the southwest wing which has a classical wooden portico with stairs. Adjacent to this element at ground level is a cellar bulkhead entrance, covered with wooden frame and doors. The second entry is located in the corner formed where the southwest wing joins the main block. This portal serves the rear of the main lobby and office. The third entrance

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is contained within an ell with porch attached to the west wall of the kitchen wing. This structure, of slightly smaller proportions than the kitchen, is one bay wide and four bays deep with a shed roof. This utilitarian structure reflects the consistent treatment of architectural detailing throughout the entire building. The wooden porch, with exposure to the south and west, is screened and has a plain balustrade. Steps noted at each of the entrances are necessitated by the change in elevation from the entrance at-grade on the facade.

The site, bounded by Depot Street on the north and Elm Street on the west, is delineated by a narrow concrete paved service way on the south and a paved drive on the east. Important landscape elements contributing to the visual significance of the property include three mature shade trees (maple) located at the northeast, northwest and southwest corners of the property. Well maintained lawns fill the interstices between the building's perimeter and the sidewalk or street right-of-way. The courtyard in the rear (south elevation) is paved with concrete, an extension of the service corridor. The Darling Inn sign, an internally illuminated metal unit fabricated with classical design references, projects streetward from the main entry portico and quietly identifies the parent structure.

Many of the original interior features of the Darling Inn remain intact and in good condition. A panelled interior vestibule with classical details and a crown molding defines the entrance to the foyer. Glazed and panelled double-leaved doors open to the panelled, oak-topped main desk and office at the rear. To the right, Federal Revival Style details accent the spacious formality of the high ceiled lobby, in near original condition with rough-textured plaster walls painted a light buff in color. This space is naturally illuminated by the tall, round-arched sash on the north and west and is articulated with deep boxed and panelled ceiling girts supported by an imposing line of panelled piers oriented on an east-west axis across the center of the room. A chair rail, double-beaded baseboard and ceiling crown molding comprise additional architectural details circumscribing this space. Piers and woodwork were originally ivory tint in color.¹

The grand stairway, with turned balusters and hardwood rail, is located adjacent to the original cage-style elevator (F. S. Payne Company, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1500 lb. capacity) next to the main desk. The main stair hall also leads to the rear entrance of the main block, previously described. To the west, beyond the grand stair is the former lounge area of the lobby. Double-leaved doors lead from the south wall of this room to the guest rooms in the southwest wing. (The first floor of the wing was originally the summer apartment of the hotel manager.)² The focal point of the lounge area is a brick fireplace centrally located on the west wall. Stylistically accurate, this brick edifice is trimmed with Federal details and a large panelled chimney breast. All floors are of polished hardwood. Small electric chandeliers with hurricane globes and suspended from the ceilings with chains remain extant. The building is steam-heated and cast-iron radiators are located beneath several of the windows. An exposed sprinkler system is also evident throughout the interior of the building.

¹Source: Vermont Union Journal, June 6, 1928.

²Source: Ibid. April 6, 1927.

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Directly east of the foyer is the Ladies Parlor and behind this the hall corridor leading to the dining room. The Ladies Parlor is a small, intimate square room with plastered walls and ceiling, raised panelled doors and Federal door trim. A narrow, simple crown molding defines the perimeter of the ceiling and a relatively plain chair rail divides each of the wall planes at waist height. The room is naturally lighted by a pair of round-arched windows on the north wall which flank the room's most salient feature, the original seven-foot wall mirror. The east door of the room is panelled mahogany with a crystal knob and opens into the main dining room. The original color scheme of the room was light green on the walls with a slightly lighter green ceiling.³

The hall corridor to the dining room is undistinguished architecturally with the exception of panelled double-leaved glazed doors opening into the dining area. Two doors along the south side wall of this corridor permit access to rear service rooms related to the kitchen. A small octagonal white ceramic water fountain is located alongside the entrance to this corridor. The original paired doors near the lobby have been replaced with fire-rated solid core units with steel frames.

The main dining room is the most formally designed of the public spaces on the first floor of the Darling Inn. Designed under the direct supervision of Elmer A. Darling, the plan of the room is focussed upon the large and ornate Federal Revival Style fireplace which adorns the east wall, over which hangs the Darling coat-of-arms. This element consists of a brick fireplace and hearth with a simple Federal surround flanked by paired colonettes with capitals executed in the Tower of the Winds pattern. A full entablature supports a slender mantel with cornice molding. The frieze is decorated with urns and swags surmounted by dentils and egg and dart molding. The chimney breast is divided into three rectangular raised field panels, the side panels bearing electrified elliptical wall sconces.

The principal visual axis within the room is formed by two massive boxed girts spanning the ceiling from the fireplace to the hall entrance. This entrance is enframed with Federal trim and surmounted with a broken swan's neck pediment with dentils and a pulvinated frieze. A heavy crown molding circumscribes the ceiling edge of the entire room. The walls of this room were originally painted with opalescent Kraft work.⁴ Round-arched windows on the north and east provide ample natural lighting and highlight the details of the original patterned black and white rubber tile floor. Supplementing this are six ceiling chandeliers of sterling silver, each with five lamps and an escutcheon on the ceiling. The walls are finished with panelled wainscoting with a mahogany chair rail and baseboard. Rectangular plaster panels are also found above the windows on the north wall. Three of the corners of the room are embellished with half-height, non-structural columns with Tower of the Winds capitals and full classical entablatures. These were apparently used for supporting busts, flowers or other artistic arrangements. The south wall of the room is punctuated with two door openings which provided service access to the main kitchen, a function which occupies the entire one-story rear wing. The doors are covered with padded Moroccan leather on the dining room side.

³Source: Vermont Union Journal, June 6, 1928.

⁴Source: Ibid.

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The kitchen is a single, large open room with a full complement of what appears to be original equipment (Proctor-Morandi, Boston).⁵ A large gas range is connected to the furnace chimney which rises between the kitchen and main block. Door and window trim is hard pine with standing finish. This portion of the building is of utilitarian design and lacks the formal details found in the public rooms. Wall and ceiling finish are plaster and doors are solid hard pine with panels. Two porches already described with the exterior, are appended to the west elevation of the kitchen. The rearmost porch is screened while the inner one is of brick with double-hung sash and serves as a vestibule for the rear exit stair to the upper levels of the hotel.

The guest rooms on the upper three floors of the Darling Inn, used in recent years for convalescent facilities, are designed around an "L" shaped plan with two long, narrow corridors. Several of the rooms are suites, sharing a common bathroom. Architecturally, there are no distinctive or unusual design features found on these levels except the newell posts and delicate turned balustrade of the main stair which is carried to the fourth floor. Floors are hard pine, naturally finished, as are the doors, casings and window trim. Walls and ceilings are painted plaster and have seen some modification with the installation of fire safety equipment, specialized power outlets and bath facilities associated with hospital use. A nursing station adapted from a single room is situated near the main stairwell on the second floor. Handrails have been installed along both sidewalls of the hall corridors. All rooms are fully sprinkled.

The basement of the property is expansive and is unfinished except for the former taproom on the west end which is panelled with matched vertical pine boards with natural finish. The steam heating system consists of twin boilers and is located beneath the rear of the dining room pumps, electrical service and storage areas occupy the balance of the space.

⁵Source: Vermont Union Journal, March 28, 1928.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 Built 1927-1928

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Architects: Wells & Hudson, Hanover NH; Builders: Rowe Construction, Woodsville, NH

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Darling Inn is of significance for exemplary architectural design and for its role as a landmark in local community life. Designed in the Federal Revival Style, of which few formal examples exist in Vermont, the building is thought to be the last major, high-style expression of the Colonial Revival architectural idiom in the state, built prior to the onset of the Great Depression. The Darling Inn replaced the former Lyndon Hotel which burned on January 21, 1924. The site had been continuously occupied by hostleries, reputedly of lesser quality than the Darling Inn, since before the great fire of 1894. These establishments included Chase's Hotel and Webb's Hotel, the latter having been rebuilt twice. Lyndonville was a planned community whose origin dates to 1866 when a severe fire in the railroad yards in St. Johnsbury (Vermont) caused the Connecticut and Passumpsic Railroad to remove its operation six miles to the north and develop a 334 acre site for railroad and commercial/residential use. In February, 1927, agreeing upon the need for respectable lodgings and a space for formal assemblies in the community, a building committee of public spirited citizens was formed and chaired by O. D. Mathewson. A corporation, the Lyndonville Hotel Company Inc., was later formed to manage the property. Elmer A. Darling, 30 years of age in 1928 and a member of the building committee, contributed the two lots upon which the inn is now situated. Mr. Darling, a native of East Burke, Vermont, had had a distinguished career in hotel management and was remembered as the former manager of the exclusive Fifth Avenue Hotel in New York City. Darling personally designed the interior of the main dining room which seated 88 and was in part responsible for the hotel's reputation as the most luxurious lodging in the State of Vermont when it opened on June 7, 1928. William C. Roberts of Greenfield, Massachusetts was the first manager of the 55-room facility. For many years the Darling Inn was the focal point of both large and intimate community functions and was patronized by the Rotary Club as well as visiting executives of the Canadian Pacific Railroad. Surviving a series of ownerships after 1942, including an 11-year period of management by retired U.S. Army Sergeant Alfred H. Darling (1945-1956), the hotel was converted for use as a convalescent and retirement home in 1964 under the ownership of Andrew Janis of Manchester, New Hampshire. The hotel's former reputation and elegant visual contribution to the streetscape of Lyndonville lent itself well to the adaptive use so that as late as 1972, newspaper accounts still referred to the property as "a Gem in the Green." The building has been vacant since its termination as a retirement/nursing facility in 1977.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- 1) Interview: Dr. Venila Shores, Lyndon Center, Vermont, May 8, 1980.
- 2) Vermont Union Journal, Lyndonville, Vermont; 2/6/27; 4/6/27; 3/28/28; 5/30/28; 6/6/28; 6/13/28; 11/14/28; 11/11/31; 5/29/42; 9/28/45.
- 3) Caledonia Record, St. Johnsbury, Vermont, 3/22/56; 10/17/63; 1/14/64; 11/15/72.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA Lyndonville (and Burke) Quad., 15' Series

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.53 approximately

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 8	7 3 8 0 0 0	4 9 3 5 3 5 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED
UTM NOT VERIFIED

See Continuation Sheet 10-1.

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

Christopher W. Closs, Community and Preservation Planning Consultant

ORGANIZATION

DATE

August 10, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Four Bicentennial Square, Third Floor

603-224-6714

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Concord

New Hampshire 03301

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

William B. Timney

TITLE Director/Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 09/18/80

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Anna M. Powell
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 11/24/80

ATTEST *Patrick Andrews*

DATE 11/19/80

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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"Drill hole at corner of Depot Street and Elm Street, then run south 41 degrees, 03 minutes west 140.00' to an iron pipe; then run south 48 degrees, 13 minutes east 167.06' to an iron pipe; then run north 41 degrees, 41 minutes east 25.74' to a brass screw; then south 54 degrees, 52 minutes east 6.8' to an iron pipe; then north 41 degrees, 24 minutes east 113.50' to an iron pin; then north 48 degrees, 13 minutes west along Depot Street 174.80' to a drill hole.