

PHO 682608

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AUG 21 1970

DATE ENTERED

373

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

William Harris House

AND/OR COMMON

Joseph Caruso House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

VT 9
State Route 9 (140 Western Ave.)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Brattleboro

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Vermont

VICINITY OF

CODE

50

COUNTY

Windham

CODE

025

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"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Norman B. Chase

STREET & NUMBER

Brookside

CITY, TOWN

Brattleboro

STATE

Vermont

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Office of the Town Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Brattleboro

STATE

Vermont

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Vermont Historic Sites and Structures Survey

DATE

1978

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

CITY, TOWN

Montpelier

STATE

Vermont

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 Joseph Caruso House in Brattleboro, Vermont is 1½-stories, of post and beam construction, clad in clapboards with a gabled roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. The house rests on a low stone foundation which has a modern concrete facing. The Cape Cod style house, 41' x 31', retains its original central chimney and dates from 1768, thus making it one of the earliest remaining houses in the State of Vermont.

The original front entry to the house was on the east side, presently the rear. The door has been replaced by a window with the same styling and proportions as the four flanking windows. The removal of the front entrance was done before the twentieth century and appears as a minimal alteration. The window sash are 8/12 and appear original. The window openings are unadorned and are asymmetrically placed.

The north (left) gable end of the house, which faces Route 9, has 3 unadorned asymmetrically placed windows at the first floor level which have 8/12 sash. The two windows in the gable are paired and also have 8/12 sash. The raking eaves have a slight molded overhang and cornice returns. A louvered vent is in the gable peak, a minimal modern addition.

What was originally the rear (west) elevation, which on most Cape Cod style houses in Vermont would be oriented towards the north to protect it from the cold weather and to allow the opposite front elevation of the house to admit more radiant sunlight, is now the main front of the house. In the typical Cape Cod style house this side would be treated as the rear and have an attached shed. In this case the original back door is presently utilized as the front door and is flanked on the north (left) by two 12/12 windows and on the south (right) by one 12/12 window. The right window of the northern grouping has been altered to 3/4 length because of its location over a modern kitchen sink. The alteration is minimal and does not significantly affect the appearance of the house. The door is sheltered by a pedimented gable entry.

The south (right) gable end of the house has been altered by the addition of a large multi-paned picture window on the east of the first floor level. Above this, at the second floor level, is another large window with 8/8 sash. These windows were altered to permit additional sunlight and to provide a view of the meandering Whetstone Brook. There is also an exposed brick chimney for the furnace and a screened in porch. These alterations, except for the top of the chimney, are not visible from the roads or existing buildings and, therefore, do not affect the visible historic character of the house. This gable end of the house has no raking eaves overhang and has two small square windows at the eaves line.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Contrasting with the horizontal emphasis of the house and its low sloping gable roof is the massive central chimney which pierces the roof ridge at its center. The chimney provides the flues for the three fireplaces, bake oven, and smoke chamber. The brick chimney and fireplaces rest on a 17' x 12' dry wall foundation constructed from river rock and rubblestone. The functional portions of the chimney are all located at the first floor level. The large kitchen fireplace has a brick hearth, stone lintel and is flanked on the south side by a large "beehive" bank oven. The north chamber fireplace, a shallow reflecting type, also has a brick hearth; the wood paneling surrounding the fireplace brest may not be original. The south chamber fireplace, also of the shallow reflecting type, has a brick hearth, stone lintel, and a simple wooden mantelpiece. The original front hall on the east side is where the smoke chamber is located. The fireplaces are functional and have been well maintained; the top of the chimney has a flat vented cap to prevent rain and snow from entering.

The interior of the house remains mostly intact with original room placement, molded window and door surrounds, floors, doors, and hardware. The date "1768" is chiseled into a beam above the original door and appears to have been done at the time of the building's construction.

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 checked="" 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 1768

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Caruso House, apart from possibly being the oldest extant house in Brattleboro, is a good example of a typical early center-chimney Cape Cod house. Although its environment has changed significantly with the passage of 210 years, the building's original design and architectural details have been only slightly altered.

Brattleboro, originally Brattleborough, was granted its first charter in 1753 by New Hampshire's Royal Governor Benning Wentworth. Before this, however, in 1724, Massachusetts built Fort Dummer in present day Brattleboro, which was the first white settlement in eastern Vermont. The first settlements away from the protection of the fort were not undertaken until after 1763 when the French and Indian War was over. The Caruso house was reputedly built by William Harris who came from Holden, Massachusetts in 1768 to settle in Brattleboro on a 100-acre lot. He came with his wife and nine children and were among the first settlers of this frontier town. The land was conveyed to Harris by Samuel Wells, who settled Brattleboro in 1762, and the deed conveyed the land "together with all edifices thereon." It is doubtful that the present house was built by Wells for the date "1768" is chiseled on a plate above the original entrance. Brattleboro today is one of the larger communities in the state and the village of Brattleboro has grown to include the original farm and house of William Harris.

The house is known locally as the Joseph Caruso House, as the house was owned by him in the 1950's. Mrs. Caruso was a stand-in at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York.

The Cape Cod Style house type was once frequently seen on the Vermont landscape and was the most commonly built house type up until the 1830's. With the advent of wood stoves, and later central heat, most of these houses lost their most identifying feature -- the massive central chimney. Once the chimney was removed, rooms could be rearranged, windows were changed, dormers added, bay windows attached, and porches applied. The Caruso house retains its original central chimney with 3 fireplaces, bake oven, and smoke chamber; original room placement; and roof line.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Cabot, Mary R. Annals of Brattleboro, 1681 - 1895, (Brattleboro, VT: E.L. Hildreth and Co.), 1921.
 Swift, Esther Munroe. Vermont Place-Names, Footprints of History, (Brattleboro, VT: The Stephen Greene Press) 1977.
 Historic American Buildings Survey, VT, form dated 1/3/1956.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Scale: 1:62500
 Map: Brattleboro, VT-NY

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1+
 UTM REFERENCES

A	18	69,70,50	47,46,7,7,5	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Coextensive with the acre upon which the house is located.

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

John P. Dumville

ORGANIZATION

Vt. Division for Historic Preservation

DATE

May 1978

STREET & NUMBER

Pavilion Building

TELEPHONE

828-3226

CITY OR TOWN

Montpelier

STATE

Vermont

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. Pinney

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

August 11, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

12-18-78

ATTEST

Maria M. Dwyer

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12/15/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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The house has been maintained and stands as an architectural symbol of Vermont's early settlement. It is the oldest houst in Brattleboro and one of the earliest remaining structures in Vermont.

Although its location immediately adjacent to Vt. 9 has become increasingly detrimental in recent years, and may become worse in the future, the house itself stands as a remarkable survival of one of Vermont's earliest settlements.