



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

The attached property, the Knapp Tavern, in Fairfield County, Connecticut, reference number 77001389, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper of the National Register on 09/15/1977, as evidenced by the FEDERAL REGISTER/WEEKLY LIST notice of Tuesday, February 6, 1979, Part II, Vol. 44, No. 26, page 7440. The attached nomination form is a copy of the original documentation provided to the Keeper at the time of listing.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

2/19/2009  
Date

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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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 **Knapp Tavern**  
AND/OR COMMON **Putnam Cottage**

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER **243 East Putnam Avenue**  
CITY, TOWN **Greenwich** VICINITY OF **Fourth** CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
STATE **Connecticut** CODE **09** COUNTY **Fairfield** CODE **001**

**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<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"/> 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 **Israel Putnam House Association**  
STREET & NUMBER **243 East Putnam Avenue**  
CITY, TOWN **Greenwich** VICINITY OF **Connecticut** STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. **Greenwich Town Hall**  
STREET & NUMBER **Greenwich Avenue**  
CITY, TOWN **Greenwich** STATE **Connecticut**

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE **CT State Inventory of Historic Resources**  
DATE **1975** FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL   
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS **CT Historical Commission, 59 South Prospect St.**  
CITY, TOWN **Hartford** STATE **CT**

# 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

Incorporated into the main block of Knapp Tavern is a one-room house which predates 1692. However, the building had successive enlargements and remodellings until 1900. The extensive on-going restoration which began in 1968 has resulted in the removal of mid and late 19th century features and the reconstruction of 18th century style fabric. The house now appears to be a simple mid-18th century Connecticut frame dwelling with a later Federal Period stone wing.

This building's informally landscaped lot with handsome trees is situated on the north side of East Putnam Avenue in Greenwich. It has a suburban setting with institutional neighbors. A picket fence separates the building's front (south) yard from the sidewalk, while another wood fence screens the parking lot at the east. A stone wall is located in the rear yard.

The building functions as a museum house and has a number of reconstructed outbuildings and landscape features. At the northwest is a circa 1860 frame barn which was rehabilitated in 1975. Also in the rear (north) yard are dwarf fruit trees and a woodshed erected in 1975-76. North of the stone wing is a fenced herb garden and rope beehives. Nearby is a small frame privy erected in 1975. Just southwest of the house is a 20th century flagpole and a well erected in 1975 over an 18th century cistern.

The two-story frame main block of the house has a stone foundation and massive stone central chimney laid in coursed rubble. The chimney stack above the roof is a recent restoration. Most of the front (south), east, and west walls of the main block are covered with large shingles with semi-circular butts. These shingles are an important feature since many appear to date from the 18th century. Some, particularly where alterations have been removed, are recent restorations. The walls above the gable overhangs of the east and west ends are covered with clapboards. The rear (north) wall is also covered with clapboards which are not old. All siding has recently been painted Spanish brown (red). All of the existing 6/6 double-hung window sash of the main block are recent replacements, except that in the east gable. The original windows had been replaced in the 19th century. Only the 3 bay main facade is regularly divided into bays. The existing main entrance with 4-light transom and cornice is a recent reconstruction. The door is made from old wood.

Attached to the northeast corner of the main block is a small 1½ story stone wing with walls of coursed rubble. Like the main block, it has a gable roof covered with restoration shingles. The stack of its inside end chimney is brick and was restored about 1965. Some of the double-hung window sash probably dates from the erection of this wing about 1790-1820.

Exterior features changed since the beginning of restoration in 1968 include: removal of one-story Greek Revival porch across the front of the building, removal of a shed attached to the rear of the main block, removal and replacement of 19th century window sash and doorway, restoration of chimney stacks, painting siding Spanish brown, and restoring shingle roofing.

See Continuation Sheet

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE 1

Knapp Tavern, Greenwich, CT.

**7. Description**

Today Knapp Tavern has the plan of a two-room, central chimney house with rear lean-to and east wing. The southeast room and the stair-hall of the first floor of the main block are thought to be the pre-1692 house as indicated by the presence of original cellar stairs and framing for an outside door. The existing close-string stair with plain balusters and simple brackets appears to be 18th century. The west and rear additions and the upper story of the main block were probably added in the mid-18th century.

In the 19th century the interior of the house was extensively remodelled. The ceilings of the first and second story rooms of the west portion of the main block and of the second floor room of the east portion were raised. Since 1968 these ceilings have been lowered and 19th century woodwork removed. The first floor front rooms have been restored in a 17th century style with exposed beams and mantle-less field stone fireplaces. While both rooms today have summer beams, only that in the southeast room is original. However the back-to-back fireplaces are largely original and are unusual due to their joined bake ovens. The existing proportions of the southwest room are awkward since it was earlier two rooms. The small rooms at the rear of the main floor and the large room in the stone wing are currently being restored by adding a great deal of 18th century style woodwork.

The southeast second floor room has a simple panelled fireplace wall with rectangular panels. This panelling is original to this room although heavily restored. The similar panelling on the wall of the southwest second floor room is from another house and placed here since 1968. The flared cornerposts were uncovered during the restoration. The panelling around the fireplace of the rear central room of the second floor is a recent reconstruction.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 Pre 1692, mid 18th c.  
c. 1800 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Knapp Tavern is a restored example of early regional Connecticut architecture which has a connection with the Revolutionary War. Shingle siding was typical on early Connecticut houses only in the areas around Milford and Stratford, and this house is unusual in that it retains most of its 18th century shingles with semi-circular butts. The building was erected in 1692 as a one-room structure. By 1754 its main block probably had taken its current form of a three-bay wide, two-story house with a central chimney. After 1754 Israel Knapp operated a tavern here which was General Israel Putnam's headquarters for a time in 1779. Putnam is said to have begun from here a daring ride to escape the British. However most historians believe the story of Putnam's ride to be largely legend.

In 1692 Timothy Knapp, the son of one of the earliest settlers in Greenwich, bought land from Whepley which included a one-room house, the east front room and stairhall of the existing building. In 1729 this property was deeded to Israel Knapp. Knapp was a soldier in the colonial wars and a mason. He had probably enlarged his house by 1754 when he received a license to keep a tavern. The location along the Post Road between New York City and Boston was an advantageous one for a tavern. Knapp tavern was the headquarters of General Israel Putnam of the Continental Army for part of 1779. In addition, the local Masonic lodge, Union Lodge # 5, met here from 1780- 84.

Israel Knapp's son, Israel Jr., died in 1790 and the tavern came into the possession of Knapp's son-in-law, David Wood. Wood probably added the stone wing attached at the east. In 1814 Wood sold the property to Hezekiah Tracey and the Tracey family owned the building until about 1901. During their ownership the building was remodeled including the addition of a one-story porch across the front, raising the heights of interior rooms, the installation of new window sash and of new woodwork. In the early 20th century the house came into the possession of the Putnam House Association and was dedicated as a historic site on June 14, 1906. Since 1968 it is being restored to its circa 1800 appearance including the reconstruction of gardens and a number of outbuildings. Robert Carter is currently architect for this on-going restoration.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Interview with Robert Carter, July 7, 1976. Notes in files of TRBrown.  
 Interview with Mrs. Konstance Kirkpatrick, June 15, 1976. Notes in files of TRBrown.  
 Konstance Kirkpatrick, Rules of Knapp Tavern, no publisher or date. Brochure available at Knapp Tavern.  
 H. F. Randolph Mason, Historic Houses of Connecticut Open to the Public, 2nd ed. Essex, Ct.: Pequot Press, 1966, p. 1.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY about 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	6,16	0,50	4,5	4,3	5,5,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				
C							D			
	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

T. Robins Brown Consultant in Architectural History

ORGANIZATION

Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE

July 1976

STREET & NUMBER

59 South Prospect Street

TELEPHONE

203-566-3005

CITY OR TOWN

Hartford

STATE

Connecticut

# 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

SHPO

DATE

12/27/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER