

**HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY
BUILDING AND STRUCTURES**

HST-6 REV 6/83

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION
59 SOUTH PROSPECT STREET, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
(203) 566-3005

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			
Town No.:		Site No.:	
UTM	18	370520	4575400
QUAD:	Niantic		
DISTRICT		IF NR, SPECIFY	
<input type="checkbox"/> S	<input type="checkbox"/> NR	<input type="checkbox"/> Actual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Potential

IDENTIFICATION	1. BUILDING NAME (Common) (Historic)		Rocky Neck Pavilion		Rocky Neck Pavilion	
	2. TOWN, CITY		VILLAGE		COUNTY	
	East Lyme		Niantic		New London 011	
	3. STREET AND NUMBER (and/or location)					
	Lands End Point in Rocky Neck State Park					
	4. OWNER(S)					
	Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private					
	5. USE (Present) (Historic)					
	Recreational Recreational					
	6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exterior Visible From Public Road <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interior Accessible <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If Yes, Explain					
during summer season						
7. STYLE OF BUILDING DATE OF CONSTRUCTION						
Rustic 1934-36						
8. MATERIALS (Indicate use or location when appropriate)						
<input type="checkbox"/> Clapboard <input type="checkbox"/> Asbestos Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Brick <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Siding <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fieldstone <input type="checkbox"/> Board & Batten <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco <input type="checkbox"/> Cobblestone <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Type: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cut stone Type: _____						
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM						
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood frame <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Post and beam <input type="checkbox"/> balloon <input type="checkbox"/> Load bearing masonry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structural iron or steel <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____						
10. ROOF (Type)						
<input type="checkbox"/> Gable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flat <input type="checkbox"/> Mansard <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor <input type="checkbox"/> sawtooth <input type="checkbox"/> Gambrel <input type="checkbox"/> Shed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hip <input type="checkbox"/> Round <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ (Material)						
<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Roll Asphalt <input type="checkbox"/> Tin <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Slate <input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt shingle <input type="checkbox"/> Built up <input type="checkbox"/> Tile <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____						
11. NUMBER OF STORIES APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS						
3 356' x 80'						
12. CONDITION (Structural) (Exterior)						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated						
13. INTEGRITY (Location) WHEN? (Alterations) IF YES, EXPLAIN						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On original site <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No						
14. RELATED OBJECTS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES						
<input type="checkbox"/> Barn <input type="checkbox"/> Shed <input type="checkbox"/> Garage <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other landscape features or buildings (Specify) Steel arch bridge <input type="checkbox"/> Carriage house <input type="checkbox"/> Shop <input type="checkbox"/> Garden						
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Open land <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woodland <input type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Scattered buildings visible from site <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input type="checkbox"/> High building density						
16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS						
Dramatically sited atop the rocky bluff overlooking Long Island Sound.						

(OVER)

DESCRIPTION (Continued)

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (Continued) Rocky Neck Pavilion is dramatically sited on the rocky outcrop at Lands End overlooking Long Island Sound. Built to conform to the curving contour of the land, the two-story pavilion has steel joists carried in part by the stone ledge on the southern portion and huge stone piers in the basement. The basement houses the mechanicals and refrigeration rooms as well as some food preparation areas. Originally, diesel-fueled generators provided electricity and operated the water pumps for the building.

The central 23-bay, two-story section of the pavilion, set with tripartite wooden casement windows and giant order cobblestone piers, is flanked by flat-roofed, single-story pavilions. A nicely detailed (See Continuation Sheet)

SIGNIFICANCE

18. ARCHITECT
Russell F. Baker

BUILDER
FERA, CWA

19. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE
The Rocky Neck Pavilion, an imposing 356'-long cobblestone structure, is the most ambitious of all the Depression-era construction projects undertaken in the state's parks and forests. Built between 1934 and 1936 with materials quarried on the site, the massive project was started by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and completed by its administrative successor, the Civilian Works Administration (CWA). Like the Civilian Conservation Corps, which was primarily concerned with forest development, the FERA and CWA operated as work relief programs designed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to put Americans back to work between 1933 and 1942. Nowhere in Connecticut was the impact of the federal programs greater than in the development of the state parks and forests, which benefited tremendously from the influx of men, materials, and money. Rocky Neck (see continuation sheet)

SOURCES

Park & Forest Commission. Biennial Report to the Governor. 1930-44.
DEP. Bureau of State Parks & Recreation. Historical File: Rocky Neck.

PHOTO

PHOTOGRAPHER	DATE
Mary E. McCahon	5/85
VIEW	NEGATIVE ON FILE
Exterior, Interior	CHC DEP 85:15/33-6

Place
Photograph
Here

COMPILED BY

NAME	DATE
Mary E. McCahon	6/85
ORGANIZATION	
Connecticut Historical Commission	
ADDRESS	
59 S. Prospect Street Hartford, CT 06106	

20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS

N/A

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE

- None known Highways Vandalism Developers Other _____
- Renewal Private Deterioration Zoning Expropriation _____

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Item number: 17 Date: _____ Rocky Neck Pavilion

pent roof on Japanese brackets accents the pavilions. A flagstone terrace wraps the three principal facades. Extremely handsome wrought-iron door hardware was made by the CWA craftsmen.

The rear elevation is finished with shingles above a cobblestone-faced foundation. An arched underpass in the foundation on the eastern end permits vehicular passage at the ground level.

The interior echoes the awesome scale and rustic styling of the exterior. The main level is one large open hall running the entire 356' length of the building. Flooring is 2" x 4"s set on end and bent to conform to the curved shape of the structure. Tree trunks (three across) are used as posts to carry the second level of the central section. The rustic flavor of the interior is enhanced by the massive stone chimneys that punctuate the hall (two freestanding and one at either end). Handsome laminated wood tables and benches are set in the southernmost bays. The second level is similar in styling and has access to the roof decks at the eastern and western ends. Kitchens and bathrooms are set on the north wall of both levels. Access to the public areas is via ramps rather than stairs.

The steel arch bridge across the shoreline railroad right-of-way linking the pavilion to the parking lot is set with fieldstone pylons and has a solid plank balustrade (modern).

The building survives in basically unaltered condition. Changes are restricted to updating mechanicals and plumbing.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Item number: 19 Date: _____ Rocky Neck Pavilion

Pavilion construction was funded almost entirely by federal funds (\$215,383 of the \$239,999 total).

The massive rustic pavilion was built of natural materials, as were most CWA and FERA structures in parks and forests. Stone is from the park; terrace flagstones were from Devil's Hopyard State Park in East Haddam; and the interior tree posts were felled in the various state parks and forests. The structural steel was salvaged from a fish oil processing and fertilizer plant that stood on the point below the pavilion and operated until about 1915. The labor-intensive construction, done by relief labor and state employees is representative of the high-quality masonry work that distinguishes the better CWA projects. The building was turned over to the state in the fall of 1936. Access was always the problem that hampered development of the dramatic site until the steel arch bridge across the railroad track, which is located immediately north of the pavilion, was built in 1934. The pavilion was designed by Hartford architect Russell F. Barker (1873-1961). He was trained in the office of prominent Hartford architect George Keller and operated his own practice for most of his career. He is noted locally for designing several public schools in West Hartford. The pavilion is Barker's most impressive work.

The building survives virtually unchanged and continues to function as a seasonal pavilion. Daily public access is limited to the main level, with private functions held on the second level. Concessions (dining) in the building were eliminated in 1983.

The park was acquired by the state in 1931 after the trustees of the Rocky Neck Trust Fund purchased the property in 1929 and held it until the General Assembly appropriated funds to secure the 557-acre tract for public ownership. The eastern end of the beach was privately operated as a public beach prior to state ownership.

Rocky Neck is the quintessential example of the federal, state, and private partnership that produced the state park system. Without the dedication of the private-sector Connecticut Park and Forest Association, which initially purchased and held the land for later public acquisition, the park would have been lost. The federal involvement, through its make-work programs in the 1930s, made possible construction of a park facility that is renowned northeast. For its part, the state has maintained and preserved the park for use by the public in an area where public beach access is severely limited.

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Item number: _____ Date: _____ Rocky Neck Pavilion

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The pavilion is located in a 710-acre state park. The nominated acreage includes the building situated in the center of a circle with a 400' radius which provides a representation of its historic setting.

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Item number 19 Date: August 21, 1986

Addendum: Connecticut State Park and Forest Depression-Era Federal Work Relief Programs Structures Thematic Resource

East Lyme: Rocky Neck Pavilion

Acreage: 6.5 acres

Correction: Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The pavilion is located in a 710-acre state park. The nominated acreage includes the building situated in the center of a circle with a 300' radius which provides a representation of its historic setting.

This correction has been made because it was determined that the reduction of acreage would adequately represent the historic setting of the subject property.

Rocky Neck Pavilion
East Lyme
Niantic Quad
18/370520/4575400
730535

