

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name MARINERS' HOUSE

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 11 North Square not for publication

city or town Boston (North End) vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Suffolk code 025 zip code 02113

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Judith B. McDonough 10/30/99

9/30/99
Date

Signature of certifying official/Title Judith B. McDonough, Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
- ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register
- ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ☐ removed from the National Register
- ☐ other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Edson H. Beall

Date of Action

11.12.99

Mariners' House
Name of Property

Suffolk, MA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

building

sites

structures

objects

1

Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/hotel (boardinghouse)

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/hotel (boardinghouse)

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MID 19th CENTURY/Greek Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation granite

walls brick

roof asphalt shingle

other brownstone trim

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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7. DESCRIPTION

The four-and-one-half-story, red brick building at 11 North Square sits immediately at the sidewalk facing east on the west side of the square. In the middle of an attached row of buildings, it is irregular in plan and slightly raised on a brick and granite foundation. Built in 1847 and designed in the Greek Revival style, the Mariners' House consists of the main block, which sits at the street, is irregular in plan and retains its original height, attached to a four story ell that projects at an angle from the northwest corner of the main block. The ell appears to have been original to the building, but it was initially three stories in height. The fourth story was added to the ell between 1885 and 1895.

The granite trabeated entrance and oversized window openings at the first story have no ornament. At the upper stories, the window openings are trimmed with brownstone sills and lintels and the brick walls rise to a flush tall brick frieze topped by a simple brick cornice. The five-bay building has a shallow-pitched side gable roof, which is pierced by five pedimented dormers on the east slope. At the ridge, an octagonal cupola rises at the center of the building. Unlike the simple eaves at the main block, the eaves of the cupola are enlivened with numerous brackets. The roof is sheathed with asphalt shingle on the east slope and roll roofing on the west slope. Windows are double-hung wood sash with six-over-six lights. The windows at the upper stories were replaced in 1940 replicating the original number of lights. The sash at the third, fourth, and fifth stories were replaced again in 1998, retaining the correct number of lights.

The granite trabeated main entrance is surmounted by a plain granite pediment and trimmed at the interior of the opening with a fluted surround and bull's eye cornerblocks. Set within a paneled recess, three granite steps lead up to a pair of wood raised panel doors. One of the panels is glazed in one door. A fanlight with bold tracery lights the vestibule within. On either side of the entry, the granite posts are painted with a sign that says Mariner's No. 11 House. The entry is flanked by two large multi-light tripart windows with glazed transoms and a wood panel skirt set in a wooden frame. Each window is set within a plain granite trabeated opening.

All double hung sash, four of the five dormer windows contain one-over-one lights while the center window retains earlier sash with six-over-six lights. Wood sash at the fourth story and attic were replaced in 1972. The window sash in the cupola have six-over-six lights and below the windows, the cupola is clad in metal. Original window sash are still located in the office at the rear of the main block and in one window in the dining room, on the first floor. Other features on the facade include a flag pole flying an American flag centered over the main entrance and a painted anchor projecting from the facade at the second story between the third and fourth bays.

Also built of red brick, the rear ell and the rear elevation of the main block are trimmed with a granite water table and brownstone lintels and sills. Windows are six-over-six double hung wood sash. At the north bay adjacent to the ell on the rear of the main block, the window sash are eight-over-eight lights. Three

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pedimented dormers are visible on the west slope of the main roof. The roof of the ell is flat. Between the third and fourth stories of the ell, the brick projects slightly from the plane of the facade, indicating the top of the original three-story ell. A wood porch with steps leading down to a rear yard has been attached to the rear of the main block. A large iron fire escape is attached to the south elevation of the ell.

As you enter the building from North Square, the entrance vestibule is finished with raised wood panels leading to a second set of double wood panel doors topped by a transom with tracery. The vestibule floor is ceramic tile. The central corridor leads to the rear of the main block. On either side there are large wood panel doors set in simple paneled surrounds topped by a shallow, paneled pediment. At the end of the hall on the south side, a similar surround frames an opening filled with a grill which opens into the office beyond. Two steps lead down to the floor level in the office in the south west corner.

The reading room and smoking room on either side of the corridor at the front of the building are entered from a door on either side of the corridor. The Reading Room on the south side of the corridor has a vinyl or rubber tile floor, a pressed metal ceiling, the walls are flush vertical boards and a wood cupboard and book case has been built along the west wall of the room. Similar in finish, the smoking room on the north side of the corridor has a bench built in the northwest corner of the room, flush horizontal wainscoting and a pressed metal ceiling.

The main corridor is L-shaped in plan, turning north at the west end of the building. At the north end of the corridor, an open curved stair with winders installed in 1971 replaces an earlier stair at the same location.

A door in the west wall at the north west corner leads to the rear ell which is attached at an angle to the north west corner of the building. The dining room and kitchen occupy the first floor of the ell. Originally, most of this space served as a dining room. Evidence of this remains in the pressed tin ceiling with cornice, which continues unbroken through the space. The partition wall was probably added in 1934 when the kitchen was moved from the basement to the first floor. At the east end, the dining room wall is curved and the two doors at this end of the room are also curved to follow the curve of the wall. The paneled, pedimented door and window surrounds match those in the main corridor in finish and scale. A suspended ceiling has been installed in the dining room but the pressed metal ceiling is still visible in the kitchen, which is located at the west end of the ell.

The stair in the north west corner of the main block leads from the first to the top floor. Below this a stair also leads down to the basement. Across the front of the building at the second floor is a large room that was opened up early in the twentieth century to serve as the chapel. It was also used as a public meeting and entertainment space. The windows across the south wall of the room are set in paneled, splayed recesses framed by a paneled surround. Although shutter pockets are visible, no shutters remain. Louvered shutters do appear in early twentieth century photographs of the space. Some of the lower wood panels have been replaced or covered with plywood. Six columns near the center of the room support two ceiling beams that

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run east-west. The room is otherwise trimmed with a simple cornice at the ceiling and a flush horizontal wainscot below a chair rail. At the south end of the room there is a wood stage with one step at the front and paneled sides. Enlarged ca. 1905, the chapel has changed little since that time. Clerestory windows in the west wall, which let light into the adjacent minister's office, have been filled in. The large entry into this space has also been blocked down to accept a pair of flush wood veneer doors. The entry previously consisted of a pair of the large Greek Revival doors similar to those found elsewhere in the building. The doors were surmounted by a multi-light operable transom, which is now infilled with sheetrock.

The minister's office located in the southwest corner of the second floor is accessible by a door in the west wall of the chapel and by a door directly from the corridor. In the office, above the suspended ceiling, there is a remnant of a broad, flat cornice molding which appears to be the original.

At the second floor at the northwest corner, a door leads into a long corridor that runs along the north wall of the ell. Resident rooms and offices are entered from the west side of the corridor. At the west end of the ell, an enclosed half-turn stair with winders runs from the basement to the fourth floor. At the corridor entries, surrounds consist of a tall, plain wood door and transom surround, although the transoms have all been filled. All corridor doors have been replaced. Inside the rooms, there is no molded trim. The third floor is similar to the second except that boarding rooms are located in the main block as well. All rooms have plaster walls and no significant trim. Entries at the second and third floor typically had transoms and at the fourth and fifth floor, they had narrow vents above the door. The stair continues up to the fifth floor in the northwest corner of the main block. The stair to the cupola is a steep wood stair located along the south wall of the corridor in the main block.

Although the use of the building has changed little since it was constructed, some changes to the building were executed since the nineteenth century. Measured drawings completed in 1937 for the Society by G.K. Downer, Architect, indicate that little has changed since that time. Downer's drawings and building permits indicate that changes had been made to the building in 1934 and 1936. The dates of other alterations can be estimated from photographs. Originally, two storefronts with recessed splayed entries had been located on either side of the central main entrance. The Seamen's Reading Room was located north of the entry and the Store for the Seamen was located in the south storefront. Steps led up from the street level to the raised first floor. By 1899, as indicated in a sketch in the *Mariners' Advocate* of that year, the south storefront had been filled with a window flush with the facade that is similar to the existing. The glazing consisted of a large multi-light tripart window that was rimmed around the perimeter by small panes of glass, typical of a Queen Anne sash. Double entry doors to the building and to the north storefront had been brought forward to the plane of the facade by that date as well. The north storefront had been replaced by a similar, but slightly different window by 1923. The present oversized multi-light windows with insulating glass are relatively recent. There have been other minor changes to the building. The roof sheathing on the main block in 1937

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had been slate. The roof on the front of the building was replaced in 1979. The original three-story ell also had a slate roof. Two brick south wall chimneys are visible in photographs of the building and appear in the 1937 drawings. Both chimneys have been removed. A single brick chimney in the north wall is still extant. Unlike the rest of the building, the rear dormers contained casement sash in 1937.

At the second floor, there had been a small chapel and the manager's office at the front of the main building. It seems that walls have been removed and columns inserted to create one large room across the building for use as a chapel ca. 1905. According to the 1937 drawings, the second floor of the ell contained the Superintendent's Quarters, consisting of a living room, bedroom, dressing room, dining room and a room for storage behind the west stair.

Work conducted in 1971 appears to have included replacement of the main stair, filling all of the transoms with sheet rock, covering the corridor and stairwell walls with sheetrock and replacing the doors into the corridors. Fortunately, the original doors were retained at the first floor.

Flag poles have appeared in images of the building atop the cupola, at the central window on the 4th story and in the present location at the second story. In the past, the building also has had painted wood signs across the facade above the main entrance, above the storefronts and above the second story windows. The anchor first appeared in its existing location in a photograph in the 1923 Annual Report.

Enclosed by a wall to the south and by surrounding buildings, the rear yard is paved with brick at the center and rimmed by plantings along the wall. The date of the landscaping is unknown, but the paving appears to be of modern vintage. In the south east corner, there is a single headstone with the following inscription:

A FAMILY TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF THE YOUNGEST SON. HENRY K.W. SLACK BORN IN BOSTON, FEB. 27, 1828. DIED AT SEA, MAY 22, 1849. BY FALLING FROM ALOFT WHILE ON A VOYAGE TO THE SANDWICH ISLANDS. "The Sea shall give up her Dead."

Set into a piece of granite, the memorial marker was moved from the Seamen's Bethel, when that building was sold to the Roman Catholic Church in 1884.

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Mariners' House

Name of Property

Suffolk, MA

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

MARITIME HISTORY

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1847-1949

Significant Dates

N/a

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Taylor, Edward Thompson ("Father Taylor")

Cultural Affiliation

N/a

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built in 1847 as a temperance boardinghouse for seamen, Mariners' House possesses integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It is significant as one of the oldest continuously operating sailors' boardinghouses in the United States. In addition, it is still owned and operated by its founding organization, the Boston Port and Seamen's Aid Society. Architecturally, Mariners' House is a fine example of the vernacular Greek Revival-style institutional buildings constructed for sailors' boardinghouses in mid-nineteenth century Boston. Located on one of the most historic streets in the North End, the building stands a few doors north of the Moses Pierce-Hichborn House (29 North Square) and the Paul Revere House (19 North Square), which is the oldest surviving frame house in downtown Boston.

Mariners' House is significant for its association with Boston's maritime history and for its importance in the social development of the North End. It is also significant for its association with Edward Thompson Taylor, the charismatic "Sailor Preacher," who links the house to the great missionary movement of the nineteenth century. Mariners' House meets Criteria A, B, and C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and is significant on the local level.

Mariners' House was built by the Managers of the Port Society of the City of Boston and its vicinity and managed by the Seamen's Aid Society – two organizations that merged in 1867 to become the Boston Port and Seamen's Aid Society. The idea of creating a seamen's boardinghouse, however, is credited to Father Edward Thompson Taylor, minister at the Seamen's Bethel, which was located at 12 North Square opposite Mariners' House at the corner of Sun Court and Moon Street. (The altered building is now Sacred Heart Italian Church.)

The Boston Port and Seamen's Aid Society originated in 1828 when members of the Methodist Episcopal Church formed The Port Society of the City of Boston and its vicinity. The Society's mission was to provide for "the moral and religious instruction of seamen," and its first act was to establish a non-sectarian Seamen's Bethel, which was initially housed in a vacant Methodist chapel in Boston's North End. Because of Father Taylor's popularity, it soon became clear to the Port Society that a larger space was essential. Funds were raised, and by 1833, Father Taylor was in the pulpit of his new Bethel at 12 North Square. (The pulpit now stands in the Mariners' House Chapel.)

To the founders of the Port Society, as expressed in the organization's by-laws, a singularly important feature was the non-sectarian character of its mission. According to Patrick M. Leehey, author of an unpublished history of the Mariners' House prepared for the Boston Port and Seamen's Aid Society in 1995: "a non-sectarian outlook was crucially important in dealing with sailors, as any over-emphasis on doctrine or, even worse, doctrinal squabbling, would be certain to drive away precisely those – the sailors – for whom the organization was being founded." By 1836, in addition to the Bethel Church, The Port Society had established the Bethel Reading Room, Bethel Union, Bethel Temperance Society and the Bethel Nautical School.

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In 1833, a group of Boston women formed the Seamen's Aid Society, which was the women's auxiliary of the Port Society. The purpose of the Seamen's Aid Society was to assist the wives and daughters of sailors while their husbands and fathers were sea. Among their early acts was the creation of a seamen's store in the Bethel. They also established The Free School for Seamen's Daughters where they taught academic subjects and needlework.

Significant members of the two organizations during the building of Mariners' House were John Albion Andrew, Secretary of the Port Society (1846-1867), Albert Fearing, President of the Port Society (1841-1876), and his wife Catherine, President of the Seamen's Aid Society (1842-1867). Andrew, an attorney, served as Governor of Massachusetts from 1861 to 1866. Fearing was a prominent businessman who headed Albert Fearing & Co., ship chandlers, at 1 City Wharf. He was also a founder of the Lawrence Duck Company, manufacturers of sail cloth, in the 1850s.

In 1867, the two organizations merged to become The Boston Port and Seamen's Aid Society. Beyond their work at the Bethel and Mariners' House, the organization was involved in numerous efforts to better the lives of mariners. The Society established the Savings Bank for Seamen (in cooperation with the Seamen's Friend Society), and were active in the movement to create a "Snug Harbor" for retired sailors who had no where to live. Over the years, the Society distributed bibles, established a sailor's library, and supported legislation that would improve the circumstances of sailors. In 1899, they began to publish the Mariners' Advocate, which was delivered free of charge to ships in port.

Edward Thompson Taylor (1793-1871) was born in Richmond, Virginia. Orphaned at a young age, Taylor went to sea at age seven as a cabin boy. He remained a sailor through the War of 1812, during which he was held prisoner in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Taylor began preaching while imprisoned, having experienced his religious conversion in 1811 during a sermon by Rev. Elijah Hedding at the Bromfield Street Methodist Church in Boston. After the war, he traveled through Eastern Massachusetts as an itinerant Methodist preacher, partially supporting himself as a peddler. Settling for a time in Saugus, MA, he bought a farm, learned to read, and conducted Methodist services in a schoolhouse. By 1828 when he arrived in Boston, Taylor was considered an unconventional, but passionate and effective circuit preacher whose maritime experience and use of nautical terminology and metaphors made him an ideal candidate for minister of the new Seamen's Bethel. Basically uneducated and uncultured, Father Taylor was much loved by his seafaring congregation, and he devoted his life to their betterment.

According to Leehey: "Father Taylor's place in the history of Boston is now largely forgotten, but his reputation in his own day was immense. A sailor turned preacher, father Taylor was well-known for preaching to sailors 'in their own language' with great force and eloquence. The extent of his reputation among his contemporaries is difficult to comprehend today, and transcended national boundaries --visitors from Europe, for example, would go out of their way to travel into the relatively run-down North End to

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visit Father Taylor's quaint Bethel and hear him preach. Taylor had an important, and often overlooked, influence on many literary figures of his day. Walt Whitman was one of Father Taylor's great admirers, and may have based some of the rhythms in his poetry on the cadences in Father Taylor's preaching. Herman Melville, another who held Father Taylor in high esteem, probably modeled one of his most memorable characters in *Moby Dick* -- a preacher in New Bedford -- largely on Father Taylor."

In 1819, Taylor married Deborah Millett (1795-1869) of Marblehead. Known as Mother Taylor, she served on the Board of Managers of the Seamen's Aid Society for many years. Father Taylor, who lived at 4 North Square, retired in 1868 due to poor health. The couple are buried in the Port Society plot at Mount Hope Cemetery.

In 1828 when Father Taylor arrived in Boston, the city was the country's leading seaport. The once respectable North End, however, was deteriorating into a tenement slum. Sailors crowded the noisy streets near the crime-ridden waterfront and filled the dance halls, bars, and brothels where they were taken advantage of by a variety of unsavory characters. Of particular concern to Father Taylor and the benevolent societies focused on the plight of seamen was the scandalous "boardinghouse system" operating in major port cities all over the world.

Leehey wrote: "... the keepers of boardinghouses operated in conjunction with saloons, brothels and 'slop shops' [stores outfitting sailors for sea] to separate sailors from their hard earned cash as quickly as possible. The newly arrived sailor would be greeted at the docks by a 'runner' representing a particular boardinghouse who would fill his mind with tales of wine, women and song, and convince him to come to his patron's establishment. Here he would be lodged at exorbitant rates, sold over-priced liquor, and directed to particular 'slop shops' where he would be sold poorly-made clothes at inflated prices, for which the boardinghouse keeper received a kickback from the 'slop shop' owner. Often times such subtle forms of fleecing were abandoned in favor of more direct forms of robbery: the sailor might be given a drugged drink and then set upon and robbed, or he might be lodged in a room with a false wall which would be drawn back as he slept and his possessions and cash stolen."

To provide an alternative to this villainous system, Father Taylor with the support of the Port Society and the Seamen's Aid Society opened his first temperance boardinghouse for mariners. Occupying rented quarters at 226 Ann Street (now North Street), the house opened in 1837. It was operated first by Father Taylor, and later by the Seamen's Aid Society. In early 1845, after learning that 226 Ann Street was scheduled for demolition, the Port Society appealed to the public for at least \$20,000 to erect a new seamen's boardinghouse, which would be rented to the Seamen's Aid Society. By the end of November, funds had been collected and a committee, led by Albert Fearing, was authorized to select a site and purchase the land.

In April 1846, Mr. Fearing exhibited plans for a Mariners' House, which was estimated to cost \$15,000, and he announced an agreement to purchase a site on North Square from the estate of Jacob Gragg. For

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consideration of \$9,500, the 3865.5 square foot Gragg estate was conveyed in May to the Port Society by John Gragg (truckman), William A. Gragg (mariner), and Oliver W. Laire (yeoman) and his wife Maria Louisa Gragg. The following month, Mr. Fearing recommended that the Port Society purchase the Dillaway estate, which adjoined the Gragg parcel on the north. He also exhibited new plans for the Mariners' House "representing the advantages to be obtained by altering the shape & size of the lot...." In July, Charles K. Dillaway (gentleman) and Mary Emma Dillaway (singlewoman) sold their land, including a passageway to Hanover Street, to the Port Society for \$7050.

Combined, the Dillaway and Gragg lots formed a deep irregularly-shaped parcel containing over 7000 square feet of land and about sixty-four feet of frontage on North Square. Ideally located, the site had access from both of the North End's main thoroughfares and was opposite the Seamen's Bethel.

Development had occurred in the North Square area prior to 1640 when the Thomas Clarke house stood in what appears to be the middle of the Square. By 1722, when what is now North Square was named Clarke's Square, the block in which Mariners' House stands was lined with one-and-a-half story gable-roofed houses. In 1846, when the Port Society purchased the Dillaway lot, it contained a three-story attached dwelling house, which had been the residence of the grantors, and a one-story house to the rear of the lot, which had been rented.

By August, construction was underway, and contracts totaling \$19,508 had been signed. This included \$10,359 for the mason, \$7844 for the carpenters and another \$1300 for such incidentals as architect's fees (the architect is unknown), the introduction of gas, and shelving for a new seamen's clothing store that would occupy space in the building's ground floor. It being clear that the cost of the building plus the land exceeded the funds on hand, the Port Society voted to sell any portion of the Gragg estate not needed by Mariners' House and to obtain a mortgage in order to meet expenses. In October, a \$14,000 mortgage was given to the Suffolk Savings Bank for Seamen. The Port Society raised funds to pay off the mortgage, which was discharged in 1851.

Dedicated in 1847, Mariners' House ultimately cost \$35,477. When it opened for business on March 24, 1847, the building contained the Mariners' House Clothing Store and a smoking/reading room on the ground floor, a chapel in one of the front rooms on the second floor, and dormitory rooms on the third, fourth and attic floors. The dormitory rooms were furnished with beds, washstands, linens and blankets donated in response to an appeal from the Seamen's Aid Society. Sponsors were also solicited to maintain individual rooms, which were in turn named for the sponsor.

An advertising circular included in the Seamen's Aid Society's annual report of 1847 described the new Mariners' House as follows:

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"This is a temperance boarding-house, for Seamen, under the care of the Seamen's Aid Society. It is well furnished and well kept. The provisions are of the best quality, and the tables spread with an abundance and variety of all good and wholesome food.

Arrangements are also made for the wants of the mind as well as the body. A pleasant, and in the winter, a well warmed reading-room is constantly kept open, furnished with the daily papers, and useful and entertaining books. In short, every thing is arranged for the comfort and improvement of sailors; and they cannot fail of being happy there, if they conduct well.

Seamen, will you come to the MARINERS' HOUSE, and see what a pleasant and comfortable HOME is provided for you? Board only \$3.50 per week, and no expense for liquors."

The 1849 Annual Report of the Seamen's Aid Society reported that the house held 1625 boarders in that year, and received an income of \$6415. An ad in the same annual report announced that the store carried: "a full assortment of Clothing, Mattresses, Chests... to fit out seamen, or other gentlemen going to sea... Besides ready made garments, many light and fancy articles are kept constantly on hand; such as Silk Handkerchiefs, Satin and Bombazine Stocks, Cravats, Linen Shirt Bosoms, Dickeyes, Gloves, Pencils, Knives, Combs, Brushes.... Also, an excellent assortment of Shoes and Boots, Hats, Caps, Hosiery, &c. &c."

The store, which had begun operation in 1834 on the ground floor of the Bethel, purchased clothing and other goods made by seamen's families, and sold the goods to seamen. This method of operation contrasted with that of the era's typical stores for seamen. Leehey writes: "At the time one of the few ways that the wives and daughters of sailors had to earn an income during the many months their husbands or fathers were away at sea was to sew garments for the "slop shops" that existed for outfitting sailors for voyages. The difficulty was that the "slop shops" paid so little money that even were a woman to work all day sewing garments, she rarely could earn enough to support her family, and was often forced to rely upon outside charity in addition to her hours of labor." The Seamen's Aid Society store, being nonprofit, was determined to pay seamen's wives and daughters wages that supported a modest lifestyle. In addition, they were able to control the quality of merchandise sold to mariners. The store in Mariners' House appears to have operated for about thirty years, disappearing from the Boston directory between 1875 and 1881. In about 1886, the building was altered to change the store into a common room. In the early 1880s, church services that had been held in the Seamen's Bethel were moved into the Mariners' House chapel for a time, and then to Seamen's House at 287 Hanover Street. Attendance at the Bethel Church had declined after the retirement of Father Taylor in the 1860s, and by 1880, the North End was home to Boston's Italian community. In 1884, The Port Society sold The Seamen's Bethel to Societa Cattolica Italiana di San Marco.

By 1899, as reported in the first issue of the Mariners' Advocate, all bedrooms were heated by steam, and a "bath-room" with hot and cold water was available "to inmates on application." The first floor contained a reading room and dining room; the second floor housed the chapel, where a short service was held each

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 8**Mariners' House
Boston (Suffolk Co.), Mass.**

morning. On Saturday evenings during the winter and spring months, the chapel was used to present stereopticon slide-lectures or performances by such entertainers as musicians and magicians. These free events, which were designed as wholesome alternatives to the temptations of the port area, were open to all seamen. Beyond room and board, the seamen who stayed at Mariners' House received care if they became ill, and those in "distressed circumstances [were] provided for, sent home, or helped to employment." The house had sleeping accommodations for fifty-seven seamen at a rate of \$5 per week. For \$0.25, a man could purchase a single meal or one night's lodging. Mariners' House began to offer the optional per diem room rate with a separate charge for meals in the 1890s because sailors had begun to resist the regimented schedule of boardinghouse life, often preferring to eat in restaurants whenever it suited them. By 1909, Mariners' House had 45 rooms and slept 62 seamen, still at a rate of \$5 per week.

The daily management of the house was the responsibility of a resident-superintendent whose job included "the general charge and care of the House, its supplies, stores, and employees, and of all moneys received for board, lodgings, and other items." The superintendent was assisted by his wife, who held the title of matron. Other employees mentioned occasionally in annual reports included a cook, a watchman, and a "store girl." The first superintendent of Mariners' House was William Broadhead, who had held the position at 226 Ann Street beginning in 1844. He was followed in 1851 by Nathaniel Hamilton, who held the position for the next twenty-five years. David Holbrook Baker was superintendent for the next three years, followed by Captain Joseph Perkins Hatch, who was there until 1927. In general, the employees of Mariners' House were extremely loyal, remaining in their positions for long periods of time. William Jacobs, the chef for many years, lived in Mariners' House rent-free after he retired. In 1957, he left the Port Society a \$40,000 bequest.

By the early twentieth century, the role of such facilities as Mariners' House had changed considerably. According to Leehey: "Throughout most of the 1920s working conditions for sailors continued to improve as a result of the passage of reform legislation and of sailors organizing themselves into unions and other associations to advance their own interests. At about the same time, institutions such as the Mariners' House found themselves increasingly out of touch with the new breed of sailors, who were on the whole younger, better paid, better educated, and more aware than their predecessors of the deficiencies in the conditions under which they worked. The younger sailors were also more independent than the older breed of seamen, who tended to accept whatever happened to them as part of the God-given station in life.... The Mariners' House, like most of the older agencies concerned with the welfare of seamen, had been established in a different era, when dining-rooms with scheduled mealtimes and dormitory style accommodations were the norm."

On the heels of these developments came the Great Depression of the 1930s, during which occupancy rates at Mariners' House fell further. Over the course of the twentieth century, shipping activity in Boston declined, and with that the numbers of sailors needing lodging dwindled. In the last few decades, the wharf areas have been re-zoned into residential districts, and upscale condominium developments have contributed to an overall gentrification of the North End.

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 7Mariners' House
Boston (Suffolk Co.), Mass.

Mariners' House weathered all these changes continuing to offer meals and lodging to seafarers, a non-gender specific term that reflects the current policy of serving men and women. On January 16, 1998, the building was closed for a major interior remodeling intended to bring the accommodations up to present-day standards for first class boarding houses. While such public spaces as the chapel and reading rooms are being retained and refurbished, the guest rooms have been reconfigured to provide larger rooms with private baths. Other amenities include a fitness center, elevator, air conditioning and computer ports. These alterations are nearing completion, and the building re-opened in March 1999 with room rates starting at a modest \$35.00 per night.

While the interior of the Mariners' House has undergone significant alteration in order to insure its survival as a boarding house, the exterior is architecturally significant in that it retains the distinctive characteristics of its era. Mariners' House is a well-preserved example of a Greek Revival-style institutional building. Although the original storefronts and entrance doors have been altered, the granite posts and lintels framing the storefronts remain, as does the trabeated main entrance with its original slightly pitched triangular pediment. The upper floors retain their simple Greek Revival details including flat brownstone sills and lintels, a tall brick freeze beneath a plain brick cornice, and gabled attic dormers ornamented with triangular pediments. The octagonal cupola with bracketed cornice that is centered on the side-gabled roof is a transitional feature designed in the then forward-looking Italianate style. The cupola, which was lit at night, served as a beacon to attract the mariner.

A search of the Massachusetts Historical Commission's data base of historic structures in the North End, reveals that Mariners' House is the only identified Greek Revival-style structure that was constructed as a boarding house. Of the sixty-seven properties listed most are contiguous rows of commercial and/or apartment blocks, warehouses, and manufacturing buildings.

A recent marketing brochure describing Mariners' House as "A Newly Renovated Inn for Professional Mariners," states: "The new Mariners' House offers affordable lodging, meals and community with fellow seafarers to all who can verify active maritime service." The mission of the Mariners House and its parent organization, The Boston Port and Seamen's Aid Society, has changed little since the Mariners' House opened in 1847. As written in the brochure the mission is: "...to improve the moral, religious, and general condition of seamen and their families: to offer aid and encouragement to the poor and industrious seamen and to promote the education of seamen's children."

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Mariners' House
Boston (Suffolk Co.), Mass.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Leehey, Patrick M. "A History of the Mariners' House, 11 North Square, Boston, Mass." Prepared for the Boston Port and Seamen's Aid Society, August 31, 1995. (The author is Coordinator of Research at the Paul Revere House. Twenty copies of his unpublished paper were distributed, including one to each of the Society's board members.)
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Maps and Atlases (1640, 1722, 1852, 1867, 1874, 1890, 1895, 1898, 1908, 1922, 1938).
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Records of the Boston Port Society. 1832-1867. (Available from the Boston Port and Seamen's Aid Society).
Seamen's Aid Society Annual Reports, 1844 and 1849. (Available at the Massachusetts Statehouse, Special Collections Library)
Suffolk County Registry of Deeds: 562/231, John Gragg to Boston Port Society, May 1846; 564/231 Charles K. Dillaway to BPS, July 1846; 568/74, BPS to Suffolk Savings Bank for Seamen, October 1846.

(end)

Mariners' House
Name of Property

Suffolk, MA
County, State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6000 sq. ft

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 19 330900 4692000
Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Leslie Donovan/Karen Davis, consultants, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date September 1999

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name managers of the Boston Port and Seamen's Aid Society / R.R. Bagley, secretary - treasurer

street & number 11 North Square telephone

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02113

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1

**Mariners' House
Boston (Suffolk Co.), Mass.**

10. GEOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is the legal lot on which the property stands, represented on the City of Boston assessor's map as:

Ward three, parcel 3262

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the entire parcel upon which the Mariners' House stands.

(end)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

Mariners' House
Name of Property
Suffolk County, MA
County and State

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 99001302

Property Name: Mariners' House

County: Suffolk County

State: MA

Multiple Name:

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

12/5/11
Date of Action

Amended Item in Nomination

This SLR is issued to make the following substantive correction:

Section 8

According to a contemporary newspaper account when the building was constructed (*Boston Daily Journal* April 16, 1847), the architect for this building was Gridley J.F. Bryant. Add Bryant's name under Architect/Builder. Under the Statement of Significance add the following:

Gridley J.F. Bryant (1816-1899) was one of the leading Boston architects in the mid-nineteenth century and was familiar with the latest architectural fashions. The traditional character of the design with Greek Revival style elements reflected the context of the North Square neighborhood and the limited budget for a benevolent organization such as the Boston Port Society.

The State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

Distribution

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Mariner's House
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Suffolk

DATE RECEIVED: 10/07/99 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/21/99
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/06/99 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/21/99
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 99001302

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 11/12/99 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



MARINER'S
No 11
HOUSE

MARINER'S
No 11
HOUSE

MARINER'S HOUSE
BUILT BY MARINER
1700-1710
REBUILT BY MARINER
1710-1720
REBUILT BY MARINER
1720-1730

iners' House
North Square
Boston, MA

Photographer: Leslie Donovan

January 1998

Negative @ Tremont Preservation Services
123 South St Boston MA 02111

neg. No. 9802-1 #5

ext
~~ext~~ elevations, main entrance

010-035 000 020 0 082
JUMETO 98 001 N 00 48



Mariners' House
11 North Square
Boston, MA

Photographer: Leslie Donovan

February 1998

Negative @ Tremont Preservation Services
123 South St Boston MA 02111

Neg. No. 9802-2 #15A

Rear elevations: South elev. ell to the left
West elev. main block to the right.



Mariners' House
11 North Square
Boston, MA

Photographer: Leslie Donovan

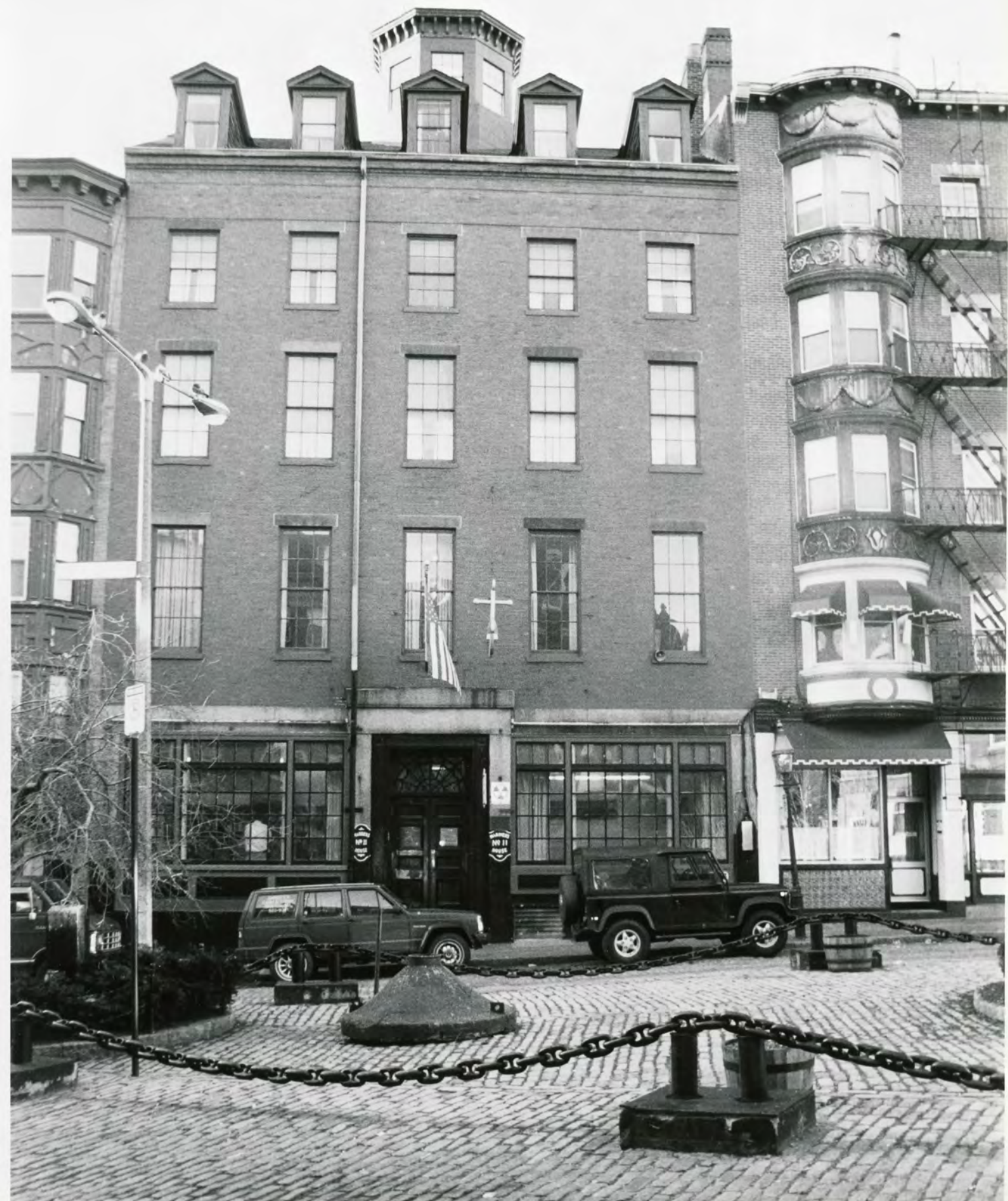
February 1998

Negative @ Tremont Preservation Services
123 South St Boston MA 02111

Neg. No. 9802-2 #5A

Trabeated First Story - East elevation

JUN 21 79 001 N 00 34
036-035 000 000 0 007



Mariners' House
11 North Square

Boston, MA

Photographer: Leslie Donovan

Date: ~~Feb~~^{Jan.} 1998

Negative: C123 South St. Boston, MA 02111

Negative No: 9802-1/4

View looking east across North Square, showing mail facade.



iners' House
North Square
Boston, MA

Photographer: Leslie Donovan

January 1998

Native & Tremont Preservation Services
123 South St Boston MA 02111

Proj. No. 9802-1 #24

Apel second floor looking southeast

JUNE 10 78 001 N 000 50
000-015 000 000 0 087

1506

1506

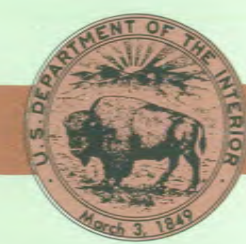
INFORMATION ON THIS PLAN IS
APPROXIMATE AND FOR ASSESSING
DEPARTMENT USE ONLY





Mariners' House
North Square
Boston, MA

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names



1987 453000

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE
OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 2.9 METERS

CONVERSION TABLE DECLINATION DIAGRAM ADJOINING MAPS

Meters	Feet
1	3.2808
2	6.5617
3	9.8425
4	13.1234
5	16.4042
6	19.6850
7	22.9659
8	26.2467
9	29.5276
10	32.8084

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808

To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048

UTM grid convergence (Gauss) of 1987 magnetic declination (MN) at center of map
Diagram is approximate

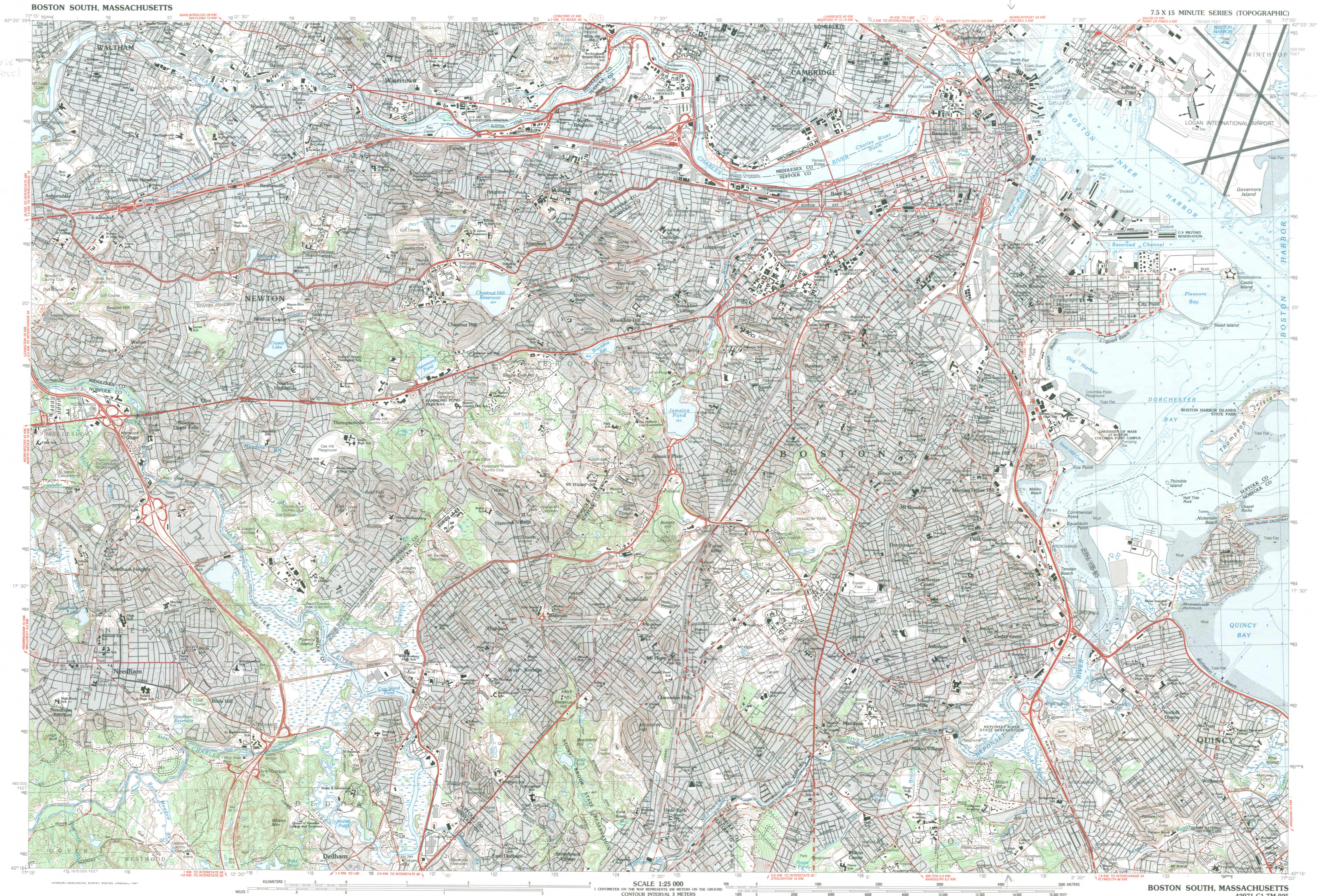
1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

- 1 Maynard
- 2 Boston North
- 3 Lynn
- 4 Framingham
- 5 Hull
- 6 Medfield
- 7 Norwood
- 8 Weymouth

ISBN 0-607-00135-6

Primary highway, hard surface	
Secondary highway, hard surface	
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	
Unimproved road, trail	
Route marker: Interstate, U. S. State	
Railroad: standard gage, narrow gage	
Bridge, drawbridge	
Overpasses; flyovers; overpasses	
Build-up areas: only selected landmark buildings shown	
Houses; barn; church; school, large structure	
Boundary	
National, with monument	
County, parish	
City township, precinct, district	
Incorporated city, village, town	
National or State reservation; animal park	
Land grant with monument; found section corner	
U. S. public lands survey: range, township, section	
Range, township, section line: location approximate	
Fence or rail	
Power transmission line, located tower	
Dam; with lock	
Cemetary; grave	
Cemetary; picnic area; U. S. location monument	
Windmill; water well; spring	
Contour; spring; aspect; outcrop or cave	
Contour: north arrow; east; vertical elevation; spot elevation	
Contour: inset; intermediate; supplementary; depression	
Soundings: depth; strip mine, lake, sand	
Disturbed land and stream; intermittent lake and stream	
Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small	
Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp	
Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland	
Small megalum	
Orchard; vineyard	

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth

September 30, 1999

Massachusetts Historical Commission

Ms. Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Mail Stop 2280, Suite 400
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Mariner's House, 11 North Square, Boston (Suffolk), Mass.

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property in the Certified Local Government community of Boston were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 60 to 90 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Capt. William H. Doherty, Boston Port and Seamen's Aid Society
John Bowman, Chair, Boston Landmarks Commission
Leslie Donovan, Preservation Consultant
Hon. Thomas Menino, Mayor, City of Boston
Ellen Lipsey, Boston Landmarks Commission