

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCERS use only

received JUL 28 1981

date entered AUG 27 1981

1. Name

historic GRANITE KEYSTONE BRIDGE

and/or common GRANITE BRIDGE

2. Location

street & number Granite Street (Route 127) at the "Cut" not for publication

city, town Rockport vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state Massachusetts code 025 county Essex code 009

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
☐ district	☒ public	☒ occupied	☐ agriculture ☐ museum
☐ building(s)	☐ private	☐ unoccupied	☐ commercial ☐ park
☒ structure	☐ both	☐ work in progress	☐ educational ☐ private residence
☐ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	☐ entertainment ☐ religious
☐ object	☐ in process	☐ yes: restricted	☐ government ☐ scientific
	☐ being considered	☒ yes: unrestricted	☐ industrial ☒ transportation
		☐ no	☐ military ☐ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Public Works

street & number 100 Nashua Street

city, town Boston vicinity of state Massachusetts

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Essex County Registry of Deeds, South District

street & number 32 Federal Street

city, town Salem state Massachusetts

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

History of Historic Assets of
title the Commonwealth has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1974 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Massachusetts Historical Commission

city, town Boston state Massachusetts

7. Description

Granite Keystone Bridge

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☒ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Granite Keystone Bridge, the bound between Rockport and the village of Pigeon Cove, is a part of Route 127 to Annisquam and Gloucester. Built in 1872, the bridge is constructed of dressed and coursed granite blocks taken from the adjacent quarry. Beneath the bridge is a short roadway connecting that quarry with the Granite Pier on the ocean side of Route 127.

The single arch of the Granite Bridge spans 65 feet and is 32 feet wide. Several contemporary newspaper accounts remarked on the massive construction and appearance of this bridge, which remains in its original condition, as follows.

The "Rockport Gleaner" of September, 1872 reported that: "The seven huge trusses of the Granite Company's stone bridge at Pigeon Cove have been put in position, and already the courses of heavy blocks of stone (native granite from the nearby quarry) are gradually creeping upward at each end to unite in the centre forming the strongest and most graceful structure known to architecture."

The Cape Ann Advertiser of October 4, 1872, had this to say: "A Nice Piece of Workmanship. The stone bridge over the Granite Company's tunnel is nearly completed, the last key-stones of the arch having been adjusted last Saturday. The arch presents a very fine appearance, and when it shall hang unsupported, will please the eye with its curve of beauty and strength. It is the widest span of stone arch ever constructed by its experienced builder, Mr. [Jonathan] Pratt, and one of the largest in the State, being a span of sixty-five feet. A stereoscopic picture is to be taken of it, from the entrance to the cut, which will be quite an addition to the already large stock of Cape Ann views."

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
☐ prehistoric	☐ archeology-prehistoric	☐ community planning	☐ landscape architecture	☐ religion
☐ 1400–1499	☐ archeology-historic	☐ conservation	☐ law	☐ science
☐ 1500–1599	☐ agriculture	☐ economics	☐ literature	☐ sculpture
☐ 1600–1699	☐ architecture	☐ education	☐ military	☐ social/
☐ 1700–1799	☐ art	☒ engineering	☐ music	☐ humanitarian
☒ 1800–1899	☐ commerce	☐ exploration/settlement	☐ philosophy	☐ theater
☐ 1900–	☐ communications	☒ industry	☐ politics/government	☐ transportation
		☐ invention		☐ other (specify)

Specific dates 1872 **Builder/Architect** Jonathan Pratt of Quincy, Massachusetts

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Granite Keystone Bridge possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship. It is a notable reminder of Rockport's early, industrial base and a locally significant accomplishment of late-nineteenth century civil engineering, and thus meets criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the town of Rockport was widely known for its granite quarries. Cut granite from Rockport was used in buildings, public structures, and street paving in cities all along the country's eastern and southern coasts. The Flat Ledge Quarry, behind the Granite Bridge, was one of the largest areas exploited by the local granite industry; it was worked by owner William Torrey as early as 1830. The granite was hauled by oxen down hill to the Knowlton pier at the corner of Beach Street for shipment. Later, the Rockport Granite Company built the Western Wharf and the long pile (now known as Granite Pier) on the ocean side of Granite Street opposite the quarry. Here vessels of all sizes -- from sloops, scows, and lighters to three-and-four-masted schooners--were able to moor immediately adjacent to the piles of stone gathered for transport. On the wharves were sheds in which the stone was cut and prepared, and nearby were the stone crusher and the boiler which furnished steam for the hoisting engine.

During the 1860's business had increased to such an extent that the Rockport Granite Company needed to prepare a quick means of conveying granite from the quarry to the piers. Around 1868 the "cut" under the highway (the main route from Rockport to Pigeon Cove) was started, and in the Spring of 1872 the road was turned to the west and the old roadbed cut away. About August 1, 1872, the stone-arch bridge over the "Cut" was begun under the direction of Mr. Jonathan Pratt of Quincy, "an experienced expert in stone arches and bridge building."

By the end of September, the last key-stones of the arch were in place, and the bridge appeared as "a graceful and pleasing structure," with a span of 65 feet, "one of the largest in the State." The final touches were applied during the last week of October, the entire process taking only eleven weeks from start to finish. The Cape Ann Advertiser of October 25, 1872, commented: "It will stand unharmed by the ravages of time and centuries hence, when the enterprising traveler shall explore the ruins along this coast, he will pause and wonder at this symmetrical structure, and when it was built, and what unknown race constructed it."

Tourism has long since replaced quarrying as the leading business in Rockport, heightening the visual and historical importance of the still-functional Granite Bridge. Preservation of this impressive structure -- complementing a few other, adaptively re-used buildings and structures of the Rockport Granite Company built nearby--is a major goal of National Register listing.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Rockport Gleaner, September, 1872; October 4 and October 25.
Massachusetts D.P.W. Office, Danvers, MA; Mr. Donald Horgan
Town of Rockport D.P.W. Office; Mr. Donald Atkinson
Rockport Granite Company Records - Sandy Bay Historical Society & Museum, Inc.

10. Geographical Data

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre.

Quadrangle name Rockport

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 1 9 3 6 6 7 6 0 4 7 2 4 9 0 0
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Granite Keystone Bridge is located on Route 127, Granite Street, between Rockport and Pigeon Cove, linking the two villages at the John Swan Quarry on the left and Wharf Road down to the pier on the right. The nomination is confined to the bridge itself.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Wendy Frontiero, Preservation Planner with
Lura H. Phillips, Rockport Historical Commission

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date May 11, 1981

street & number 294 Washington Street telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state Massachusetts

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Patricia L. Weslowski date 7/14/81

title _____ date _____

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the

National Register

date

8/27/81

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

DUE after 8/26/81 - 9/11/81

dnr-3

Name Granite Keystone BridgeState, County MA, EssexWorking Number 7.28.81.264

Fed Nom or Request-Agency _____

Federal Register Date 2.2.82

☒ Nomination
☐ Determination of Eligibility
☐ On Nomination Form

☐ Bldg(s)
☐ Site
☐ Object
☒ Structure
☐ District

Within:
☐ Multiple Resource Area
☐ Thematic Group

Maps 1
 Photos 2

Entered in the

Nomination prepared by:

☒ State Staff
☐ Local
☐ Other

Action: National Register

☒ ACCEPT 8/27/81
☐ RETURN _____
☐ REJECT _____

Check if Appropriate:

☐ State Request for Review
☐ Keeper's Decision to Review
☐ 2nd Return

I. Evaluation of Resource (cont. on back if necessary)

II. Evaluation of Nomination

	Good	Adequate	Poor	Comments
1. Descriptive Statement Short Format ☐ Yes ☐ No				
2. Significance Statement Short Format ☐ Yes ☐ No				
3. Concepts/Integrity				
4. Concepts/Criteria				
5. Concepts/Boundaries				
6. Contextual Evaluation				

General Comments (cont. on back if necessary):

Reviewer/Date _____

See Attached _____

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior



Neg. No. 7 Pack No. _____
File No. _____ Date _____
Photographer ANGELO RESTIVO

OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH
Comm. of Mass.
Dept. of Public Works

ROCKPORT, MA
Granite Keystone Bridge

Angelo Restivo, 1980
Negative with Mass. DPW,
Danvers

Looking north
Photo 1 of 2

Essex County

JUL 28 1981
AUG 27 1981



Neg. No. 11 Pack No. _____

File No. _____ Date _____

Photographer _____ **ANGELO RESTIVO**

OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH

Comm. of Mass.

Dept. of Public Works

ROCKPORT, MA
Granite Keystone Bridge

Angelo Restivo, 1980
Negative with Mass. DPW,
Danvers

Looking east
Photo 2 of 2

AUG 27 1981

JUL 28 1981

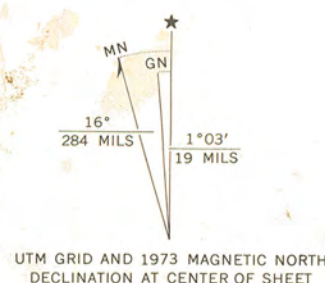
Essex County

Granite Keystone Bridge
Rockport, MA

UTM Reference
19/366760/4724900



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Massachusetts Geodetic Survey
Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1939. Topography by planetable surveys 1942. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1972. Field checked 1973
Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS
243 (1973) and 1206 (1972). This information is not
intended for navigational purposes
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Massachusetts coordinate
system, mainland zone
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 19, shown in blue.



SCALE 1:24 000
1 1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
1 KILOMETRE
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 8.6 FEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Unimproved road, hard surface
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

ROCKPORT, MASS.
N4235—W7031/7.5
1973
AMS 6869 II NE—SERIES V814

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

~~MASSACHUSETTS~~

STATE

Date Entered **AUG 27 1981**

Name

Location

Granite Keystone Bridge

**Rockport
Essex County**

Common Burying Ground at Sandy Bank

**Malden
Middlesex County**

Salem Street Burying Ground

**Medford
Middlesex County**

Intermediate Building

**Wellesley Hills
Norfolk County**

Baxter Mill

**West Yarmouth
Barnstable County**

Honorable Paul E. Tsongas

Also Notified

**Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
Honorable Nicholas Mavroules
Honorable Edward J. Markey
Honorable Margaret M. Heckler
Honorable Gerry E. Studds
Mid-Atlantic Region, NPS**

**State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Patricia L. Weslowski
Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
294 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108**

NR

Eady/bjr/9/1/81

For further information, please call the National Register at (202) 343-6401.

272-3504