

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

For NPS use only

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

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic USS Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. (DD-850)

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number Battleship Cove \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Fall River \_\_\_ vicinity of

state Massachusetts code 025 county Bristol code 005

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name USS Massachusetts Memorial Committee, Inc.

street & number Battleship Cove

city, town Fall River \_\_\_ vicinity of state Massachusetts 02721

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds

street & number 441 North Main Street

city, town Fall River state Massachusetts 02721

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title National Register Nomination Form has this property been determined eligible?  yes \_\_\_ no

date 1976 \_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records National Park Service, Interagency Resources Division

city, town Washington state DC 20013-7127

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# 7. Description

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

N/A original site  
 moved date .....

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

USS Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. (DD-850) is a World War II Gearing class destroyer. She was built by the Bethlehem Steel Company at Quincy, Massachusetts. She was launched on July 26, 1945, and commissioned on December 15, 1945.

The Gearing class destroyers represented the ultimate development in wartime US destroyer design. They were Summers lengthened by 14 feet to increase fuel capacity and, at the same time, reduce wavemaking resistance and so restore some speed. They were sometimes referred to as "long hulled Summers." <sup>1</sup> Otherwise they were similiar to the previously designed Allen M. Sumner class of destroyers.

Specific ship data concerning USS Joseph P. Kennedy is:

Length:	391 feet
Beam:	41 feet
Design Displacement:	2616 tons
Full Load Displacement:	3460 tons
Boilers:	4-Babcock & Wilcox
Turbines:	2-shaft General Electric
Fuel Oil Capacity:	740 tons
Maximum Speed:	37 knots
Armament:	Six 5-inch/38 caliber guns (3 x 2), Ten 21-inch Torpedo Tubes, depth charges and various combinations of antiaircraft guns.
Crew:	336 wartime

In 1961 USS Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. was extensively modernized into an ASW (anti-submarine warfare) destroyer. The torpedoes were replaced by guided missile equipment (ASROC launchers) and a remote control Dash Helicopter (no longer extant) was installed on the after deck.<sup>2</sup>

USS Joesph P. Kennedy, Jr. is in good condition and, although modified, retains much of her World War II integrity.

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# 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	X ___ music	___ humanitarian
___ 1800-1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
X ___ 1900-	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation
		___ invention		___ other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1945 **Builder/Architect** Bethlehem Steel Company

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

General Statement: The role of the Destroyer in World War II

The destroyer had its origin in the late-19th century with the development of the first self-propelled torpedo. Navies quickly developed small fast torpedo boats designed to attack and sink larger battleships and cruisers. As a counter against torpedo boats, navies built a slightly larger ship, armed with torpedoes and heavier guns. These 900-ton ships were known as torpedo boat destroyers. World War I showed these ships suited to protecting larger ships against surface, submarine, and air attack. Also, they proved more effective offensively than torpedo boats, and assumed the attack role. By the end of World War I, they were simply known as "destroyers."<sup>3</sup>

The destroyer during World War II continued in this role as an all-purpose ship ready to fight off attack from the air, on the surface, or from below the sea. It could be called upon to give fire support to troops, deliver mail and people to other ships, rescue pilots who had been forced down at sea, and to serve as the distant early warning eyes of the fleet in hostile waters.<sup>4</sup> Destroyers did not have the glamour of a battleship or an aircraft carrier, but without them the aircraft carrier and battleship would be helpless against enemy submarines. They were all-purpose ships whose support of general fleet operations was vital. No aircraft or battleship ever proceeded into enemy waters without an escort of destroyers.

USS Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. represents American destroyers that fought against Japan in World War II for the following reasons:

1. USS Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. is a World War II Gearing class destroyer. Although none of the Gearing class was built in time to see much World War II service the class represented the ultimate stage in World War II destroyer design. Knowledge gained from the construction of the previous Fletcher and Allen M. Sumner classes was incorporated into the Gearing class. All of the Gearing class destroyers remained in service after the war. In later years many of them were converted into specialized ASW ships. All of the Gearings were eventually subject to FRAM reconstruction and modernization. USS Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. is the sole example of this class that is preserved today. A few of the class remain extant in foreign navies and in USN reserve fleets.

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70%

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property N/A

Quadrangle name Fall River

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	9	3	2	10	10	12	10	4	16	1	19	1	17	10
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

E 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

F 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

G 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

H 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

### Verbal boundary description and justification

### 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 Harry A. Butowsky

organization National Park Service

date May 1985

street & number Division of History

telephone (202) 343-8168

city or town Washington

state DC 20013-7127

# 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 \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

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

date \_\_\_\_\_

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet

Item number

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2. USS Joseph P. Kennedy was named for the eldest son of former Ambassador and Mrs. Joseph P. Kennedy. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. was a Navy aviator who was killed off the coast of Normandy on a secret bombing mission. Joseph Kennedy's brother, Robert F. Kennedy served on the ship as a radarman, and President John F. Kennedy watched the America Cup races in 1962 from the second deck of the ship.<sup>5</sup>
  
3. USS Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. served with distinction during the Korean conflict and during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. She earned two battle stars for her service in Korea.

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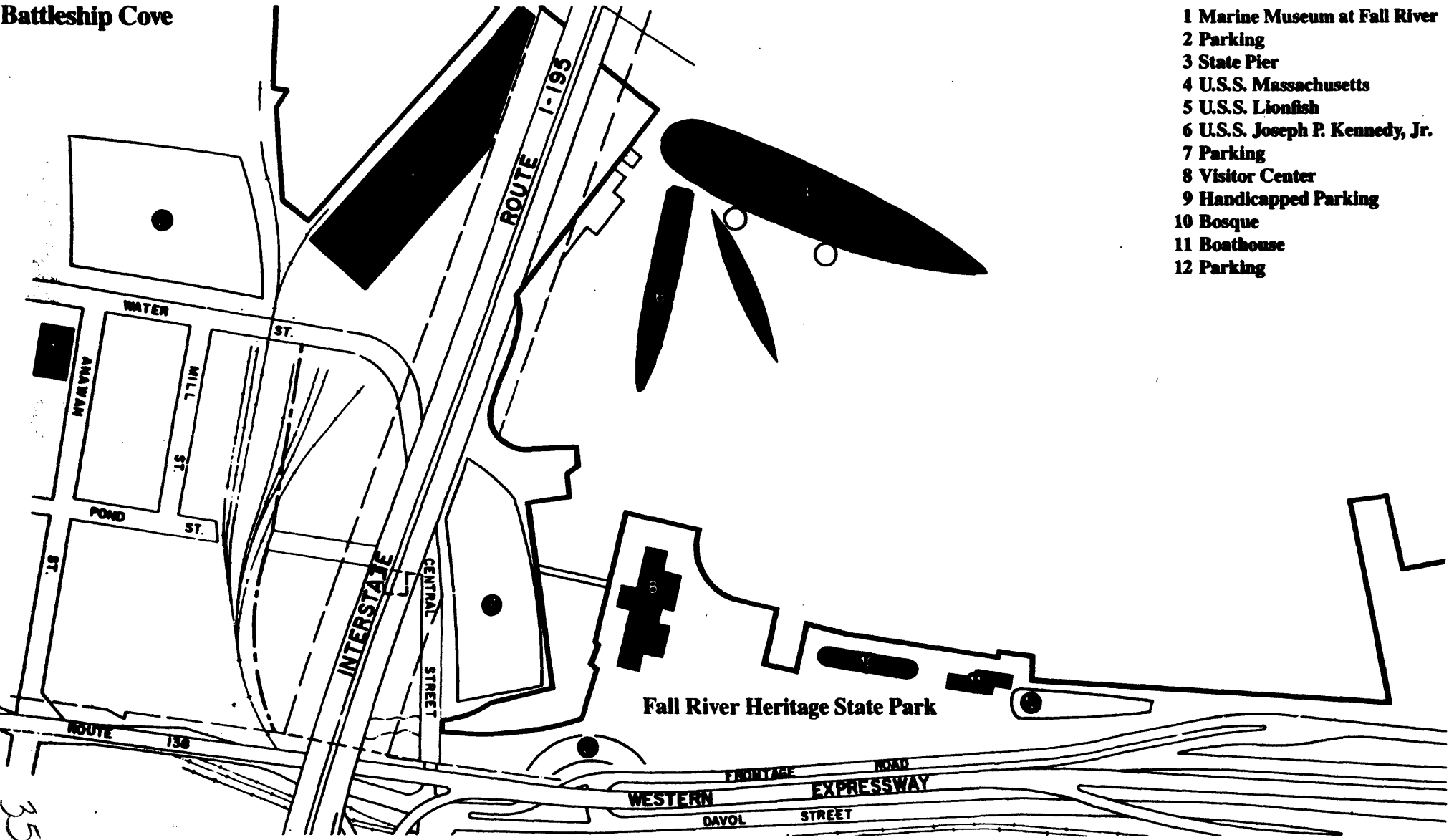
350

10/10

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**Battleship Cove**

- 1 Marine Museum at Fall River
- 2 Parking
- 3 State Pier
- 4 U.S.S. Massachusetts
- 5 U.S.S. Lionfish
- 6 U.S.S. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr.
- 7 Parking
- 8 Visitor Center
- 9 Handicapped Parking
- 10 Bosque
- 11 Boathouse
- 12 Parking



Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management  
 100 Cambridge Street  
 Boston MA 02202

Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
 Michael S. Dukakis  
 Governor