

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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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 South Boston Boat Clubs Historic District  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 1793-1849 William J. Day Boulevard not for publication  
city or town Boston (South Boston) vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state Massachusetts code MA county Suffolk code 025 zip code 02127

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.)

Betsy Friedberg National Register Director 7/14/05  
Signature of certifying official/Title Celia H. Metz, State Historic Preservation Officer Date  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

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

Patrick W. Andrews

Date of Action

9/1/2005

South Boston Boat Clubs HD  
Name of Property

Suffolk, MA  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>6</u>		building
		sites
<u>2</u>		structures
		objects
<u>8</u>		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**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION & CULTURE/outdoor recreation

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION & CULTURE/outdoor recreation

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne Shingle Style Italian Renaissance  
Revival Colonial Revival Tudor Revival  
Bungalow/Craftsman

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation wooden pilings, stone  
walls wood shingles wood trim  
roof asphalt shingles  
other iron and brick (front yard fence)  
granite block (sea wall)

**Narrative Description**

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

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

South Boston Boat Clubs HD  
Boston/South Boston (Suffolk), MA

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### Description

The South Boston Boat Clubs Historic District is located in the City Point section of South Boston, Massachusetts. Separated from downtown Boston by the Fort Point Channel, South Boston is a peninsula that projects from the northeast corner of Boston's Dorchester neighborhood. Reading from west to east, the clubhouses include the **Boston Yacht Club (BYC)**, now the **Boston Harbor Yacht Club (BHYC)** at **1793-1805 [William J.] Day Boulevard**, the **Puritan Canoe Club (PCC)** at **1819 Day Boulevard**, the **Columbia Yacht Club (CYC)** at **1825-1829 Day Boulevard** and the **South Boston Yacht Club (SBYC)** at **1849 Day Boulevard**. The clubhouses are situated on landfill composed of household ashes and soil excavated from various construction sites, including that of South Boston High School at nearby Dorchester Heights [NRDIS]. In addition to the clubhouse buildings themselves, other features integral to the historic character of the district include the one-story, gable-roofed wooden locker buildings located to the west and east of the BHYC and CYC respectively. Significant landscape elements include the BYC's west lawn, the iron fence enclosing the area on its western, northern, and eastern sides as well as the massive granite block retaining wall protecting the clubhouse from erosion by the waters of Dorchester Bay. Also included within the district are replacement piers and floats. The four boat club parcels encompass 400,649 square feet.

Architecturally, the buildings are significant as an unusually extensive node of late Victorian era clubhouses dating from 1898-1901 (reportedly, the nucleus of the BYC dates to the 1870s). Although individual yacht clubs of this vintage are scattered along the New England coast, a node of four late Victorian buildings of this type situated on contiguous lots is unique within the region, if not the entire nation. Despite mid-20<sup>th</sup> century alterations such as the enclosure of porches, removal of balconies, and the installation of picture windows, these buildings remain remarkably intact in terms of their form, fabric, elements, and siting. Clubhouse forms range from the modest domestic architectural style of the PCC; through the picturesque, asymmetrical massing of the BYC and the compact, rectangular, hip-roofed form of the CYC; to the substantial, rambling SBYC.

In terms of fabric, these clubhouses provide evidence of the wood shingle's post-1880 ascendance from lowly roofing material deemed suitable for modest dwellings and outbuildings to the fashionable uniform covering of choice for seaside mansions and clubs in resort communities from Newport, Rhode Island to Bar Harbor, Maine. The rare departure from smooth wood

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shingle sheathing is in evidence at the BYC's stucco-parged, half-timbered center gable; the gable's surface treatment reflects the influence of the Tudor Revival style.

#### Boundaries

The South Boston Boat Clubs are located on public parkland under the care of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), bordered by the [William J.] Day Boulevard on the north and the waters of Dorchester Bay on the south. The northern edge of the property extends eastward from points opposite O and P streets' intersection with Columbia Road. Included within the historic district's boundaries are four boat clubs bordering Day Boulevard, including the BYC, PCC, CYC, and the SBYC.

#### Architectural Overview

With the exception of community cultural resource surveys, the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century American yacht or boat club as a building type has received little in the way of architectural historical documentation despite the fact that at least a half-dozen examples of late Victorian yacht clubs survive in eastern Massachusetts alone. The reasons for this dearth of documentation are probably due to the fact that an interest in the design of boats rather than buildings has been the focus of numerous books devoted to American maritime history. Given that the boat clubs at City Point, South Boston either equal or only slightly exceed the scale of late Victorian coastal residences, a consideration of buildings of this type and vintage must necessarily be viewed within the context of coastal domestic architectural design of the time. Indeed, with the noteworthy exception of the sprawling, hotel-like SBYC, these buildings are comparable in scale to late Victorian era seaside residences. All of the buildings are covered with wood shingles, a sheathing material prized beginning in the late 1870s for its ability to impart a rustic, informal appearance to residences located in inland suburban, as well as coastal, communities.

#### Member Activities Shaped Interior Plans of the Boat Clubs

Despite the fact that a clubhouse, to a certain degree, serves as "a home away from home" for an extended family of members, there are, of course, marked differences in usage regarding private residences vs. yacht club buildings. Interior plans, to a great degree, were dictated by the need to accommodate a variety of social and recreational activities as well as utilitarian purposes. The clubhouses' architects designated rooms for club business and meetings, indoor recreational activities such as card playing, bowling and dining as well as the stowing of yachting gear and in some cases the seasonal storage of small craft.

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As from core rooms analogous to the parlors, libraries, and solariums of private residences, a sizeable percentage of the clubhouses' square footage is devoted to the storage of boating gear. In each clubhouse, small rooms the size of office cubicles originally intended for the storage of boating paraphernalia are located within all of the buildings. Lockers are placed within the clubhouse plans in a variety of ways.

At the PCC, for example, small rooms open directly onto the large common rooms of the lower and upper floors. At the South Boston Yacht Club, thirty or more lockers per floor border long hallways located within the west wing while a dozen or more lockers border the hallways of the less extensive east wing. At the BYC and CYC, lockers are contained within separate, ancillary structures as well as in the clubhouses themselves. Porches also figure importantly within the design of the yacht club buildings and are located to take advantage of spectacular views of Dorchester Bay and the Boston Harbor Islands as well as affording vantage points from which to view boat races. Over time, a high percentage of the clubs' originally open porches have been enclosed and in the case of the CYC completely removed from the waterside elevation.

### **South Boston Boat Clubs: Overview of Historic Architectural Style**

The designs of the four clubhouses reflect the influence of late 19<sup>th</sup> and nascent early 20<sup>th</sup> century American architectural styles. In terms of the remaining clubhouses, the boulevard and water facades are of more or less equal importance. Although at first glance the clubhouses seem to be characterized by a uniformity of design, due in part to their boxy, geometric forms and smooth wood shingle sheathing, closer inspection reveals buildings possessing a variety of approaches to massing, fenestration, and elements. To a great degree, the designs of boat clubs illustrate the persistence of the picturesque, asymmetrical massing of the Shingle and Queen Anne styles as well as the rising influence of the boxier, more compact and symmetrical Colonial Revival and Craftsman/Bungalow styles. Indeed, much of the design interest of the South Boston boat club buildings lies in understanding the degree to which each building is stylistically old fashioned or au courant – or both simultaneously – relative to their place and time.

Eastern Massachusetts witnessed the birth of the Shingle Style as the result of the innovative residential designs of H.H. Richardson, William Gibbons Preston, and other talented architects working for clients in coastal communities. Synthesizing influences drawn from the domestic architecture of Medieval England and First Period New England, a new, uniquely American architectural mode was born during the 1870s and 1880s. Decades after its introduction, the new

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mode became known as the Shingle Style. First appearing in coastal resorts such as Newport, Rhode Island, Marion, Massachusetts, and Mount Desert, Maine around 1880, the rustic charms of the Shingle Style appealed to a new breed of moneyed and sophisticated summer vacationers. Once relegated to the lowly status of roof covering for modest dwellings, the smooth wooden shingle was deemed a suitable sheathing material for stylish and substantial residences. Of the four boat clubs, the PCC, with its smooth wood shingle sheathing, sweeping west roof slope, and stone chimney, exhibits the same scale, form, and elements as many Shingle Style residences of the period.

The Queen Anne style, as expressed at the BYC, and to a lesser degree at the PCC, represents a late Victorian manifestation of self-consciously picturesque styles such as the Carpenter Gothic of the 1840s along with the Swiss Cottage and Stick styles of the 1860s and 1870s. Reliant on irregular, sometimes towered, forms along with saw-cut ornament for design interest, the wooden, suburban manifestation of the Queen Anne style as expressed at the boat clubs is very different from urban, masonry buildings designed in this style. The urban expression of the Queen Anne in the Back Bay and other neighborhoods is rooted in the 1860s British revival of late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-Dutch architecture. By the time the boat clubs were built along the Strandway (now Day Boulevard), the suburban Queen Anne style was fading from popularity as the Colonial Revival and Craftsman styles came to the fore. All of the boat clubs' designs attest to the impact of the Colonial Revival. For example, with the exception of the PCC, all of the boat clubs possess Palladian windows. Here and there, cornice-headed surrounds for entrances and windows (i.e. at the BYC) reference mid-18<sup>th</sup> century elements.

Like the Shingle style, Craftsman style relies on simplicity of form and rustic effects for maximum visual impact. Emanating from upstate New York and California, the Craftsman style is evident in the compact, boxy wood shingled-sheathed volumes of the CYC and SBYC. Additionally, their deep eaves and hip roofs, and particularly the CYC's eyelid dormer anticipate the great impact that the Craftsman Bungalow style had on American architecture during the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

That the SBYC's design (and originally that of the CYC) incorporates a monumental waterside loggia is owed in part to the impact of the Classical and Renaissance Revival styles on the design of public buildings at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. Situated on the shores of Lake Michigan and encompassing pools, canals, and fountains, the Fair's white-hued buildings and watery setting made an indelible impression on the imaginations of the architects nationwide. Clearly

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the SBYC's bayside façade was designed to be the most significant of all its elevations, rendered in a manner not unlike *palazzos* bordering the canals of Venice.

**Architectural Description: The Boston Yacht Club, 1793-1805 Day Boulevard**

Set back behind an iron fence of undetermined origin, the main entrance to the Boston Yacht Club is located just to the west of the clubhouse. Marked by red brick piers ornamented with rock-faced stone banding and capped by dentil-accented Doric capitals composed of concrete, a lantern is suspended from the ornamental iron arch that rises from the west gate's piers (**fig. 1**). The BYC's fence is part of the continuous iron fence that encloses the eastern, western, and northern edges of the proposed South Boston Boat Club Historic District.

Stylistically, the BYC is an interesting hybrid of the Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Tudor Revival architectural styles. Of all the South Boston boat clubs, the BYC possesses the most picturesque form and surface treatments by virtue of its southeast octagonal corner tower and the street elevation's Tudor Revival half-timbered façade gable. Possessing an I-shaped form, the building rises three stories from solid ground to an intersecting hip and gable roof. Rising from the street façade's roof slope to the east of the gabled wall dormer is an original brick chimney with a tapered upper shaft. At the BYC, asymmetrical massing and a towered component lend a Queen Anne-stylistic sensibility to the building while its stucco-parged, half-timbered gable at the street elevation strikes a Tudor Revival note (**fig. 2**).

The influence of the Colonial Revival is also evident in the treatments of the front porch and west elevation's well-proportioned Palladian window (**fig. 3**). At first glance the BHC has the appearance of a clubhouse that was built all of one piece when, in fact, the building has had a more complex evolution. The midsection of the building (**fig. 4**) apparently represents part of the original 1874 Stick Style building which was reportedly moved to its boulevard-bordered parcel in 1898. If this is indeed the case, late 1890s wood shingle sheathing and fenestration have obscured all exterior signs of the original Stick Style clubhouse. On the interior, the narrow, darkly stained, vertical boards of the walls of the midsection's second story hall indicates that fabric from the 1874 clubhouse is still extant. Shortly after its move to the Strandway (Day Boulevard) in 1898, the building was modified and enlarged by the addition of its towered Queen Anne octagonal component (**fig. 4**) and two-story porch components at the water elevation. Additionally, the half-timbered Medieval Revival and Colonial Revival component on the

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boulevard side of the building dates to ca. 1898-1900. The street façade (**fig. 2**) is characterized by a high degree of symmetry with most of its design interest focused on the center entrance bay. Treated as a center pavilion with flanking wings, an open Colonial Revival entrance porch at the center of the street façade displays square posts and slender pilasters that support a flat roof (**fig.3**).

Access to the porch is gained via short flights of wooden steps at the eastern and western edges of the porch's platform. The front door is fully enframed with raised moldings in the Georgian revival manner and is flanked by multi-pane sidelights. Located at either side of the entrance porch are pairs of windows exhibiting cornice headed Colonial Revival lintels. In general, the main block's windows contain 6/1 double hung wood sash. Above the porch is a shallow projecting bay exhibiting a cornice-headed, tripartite multi-pane window. Flanking the tripartite window are large, boldly rendered wood shingle-sheathed brackets. The center entrance bay culminates in a half-timbered front-gabled wall dormer containing a bank of four narrow windows with diamond-shaped panes.

The windows rise from small square apron panels, which in turn surmount a molded cornice. Flanking the center gable are small gable-roofed dormers with return eaves and semi-circular arches above the dormers' windows. Each dormer window contains a small square window containing diamond-shaped wood sash. Dormers identical to those of the main façade are in evidence at the roof slopes of the main block's narrow side walls. A narrow secondary entrance and a standard size window pierce the main block's east wall (**fig. 4**). Projecting from the second story is a polygonal oriel window.

Probably representing an alteration to the original fenestration, the west wall's first story elevation (**fig. 6**) exhibits a secondary entrance flanked by small square windows. In evidence at the second story is a handsome Palladian window whose upper, demi-lune window contains Gothicized muntins while diamond-shaped panes enliven the flanking windows. The Palladian window opens onto an extremely shallow balcony evidently designed to be more ornamental than functional. The underside of the balcony is accented with exposed joist-like elements. The balcony railing's mid section is composed of turned Georgian Revival balusters flanked by solid, wood shingle-covered railings.

Linking the main block with the towered bayside component, the clubhouse's midsection (**figs. 4 and 5**) rises from a high basement to a gable roof. The BYC's midsection was part of the T-shaped, 2½ story Stick Style clubhouse built in 1874.

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An 1890s postcard from the collection of the Boston Public Library shows the old clubhouse shortly after it was moved to the Strandway, before uniform surface treatments masked the midsection's original appearance. More specifically, the BYC's middle structural component represents the long, end gable arm of the old T-shaped clubhouse which was perched on wooden pilings.

At the east elevation of the three-bay mid section (**fig. 4**), two tiers of porches rise from a high basement. Four narrow windows open onto a recessed porch with high solid porch rails supporting a pair of square posts. The posts, in turn, rise to the underside of a second story porch featuring a railing with turned balusters flanked by solid, wood shingle covered segments; a railing treatment that echoes that of the balcony at the main block's west elevation. The mid section's eastern roof slope exhibits a pair of gable roofed dormers identical to those of the main block.

The midsection's west wall (**fig. 7**) has been altered by the addition of a projecting, flat-roofed one-story component which extends from the main block's south wall to stairs providing access to the first story's enclosed bayside porch. Reading from north to south, the one-story component's basement wall is pierced by a small, square window, a transom-surmounted door, a modern sliding glass door, a tripartite window, a small double window followed by a door.

The aforementioned doors presumably open into gear lockers for club members. The fenestration of the west elevation's second story appears to be the least altered. Here, the wall is pierced by seven small square windows. Each window is fully enframed and contains four panes. At the southern end of the first story, at the top of the flight of wooden stairs is a sidelight-flanked door; a door that is sheltered by the third story's encircling bayside entrance porch. The west elevation's third story has been altered by the addition of four large picture windows. Like the east elevation, the west elevation's roof slope exhibits three small dormers containing small square windows enlivened by diamond shaped panes. The windows are surmounted by steeply pitched gable roofs with broken pediments.

At the BYC's bayside (south) elevation (**fig. 5**), the basement wall is devoid of windows. Originally possessing open porches, the south wall's first and second stories are enclosed by modern picture windows. The most distinctive aspect of the bay side elevation is the octagonal towered component at the building's southeast corner. Sheathed with a smooth shingle skin, the

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towered component is devoid of corner boards. A pyramidal roof cap with overhanging eaves and a molded wooden cornice encloses the tower. A remnant of a copper finial is in evidence at the apex of the tower's roof.

**Boston Yacht Club: Interior Plan and Noteworthy Features**

The aboveground basement was not viewed for the purposes of this nomination but apparently contains gear lockers and utility rooms. The first story consists of three rooms: the main block's reception area, the midsection's meeting hall, and the enclosed porch overlooking the bay. While the center meeting hall and porch room exhibit modern floor and wall treatments, the reception hall on the north side of the building exhibits a stairway (**fig. 8**) leading to the second story with millwork elements dating to the early 1900s.

On the second story, lockers border the halls of the main block and mid section. The wooden walls of the midsection may represent fabric from the earlier building. These walls are pierced by four paneled doors providing access to gear lockers. The midsection's second floor hall leads to a large enclosed, solarium-like sun porch. Presumably more lockers are located in the attic of the main block and mid section.

**Boston Yacht Club: Gear Locker Structure**

Adjacent to the BYC's west lawn is an extensive one-story wooden shingle-clad structure built to contain lockers for stowing yachting gear. Situated at the northwest corner of the BYC lot and running parallel to Day Boulevard, this utilitarian structure has five components, including a long, rectangular five-bay by five-bay gable-roofed structure which has an east-west orientation (**figs. 9 and 10**).

The east-west component's rear wall is contiguous with four long and narrow hip-roofed ells which extend southward to the bay like the prongs of a comb, separated from each other by narrow paths leading to the entrances of individual lockers. Each of the north-south structural components measures the equivalent of five-bays by a single bay. Further research is needed on the evolution of this structure during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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**Architectural Description: The Puritan Canoe Club, 1819 Day Boulevard**

Possessing the scale of a mid-sized Shingle style summer cottage, the Puritan Canoe Club is the most modest of the four clubhouse buildings in the District. Sheathed entirely with wood shingles painted brown, the PCC's rectangular form measures four-bays by four-bays (fig. 11). Like the other clubhouses, the PCC's headquarters rises directly from solid ground rather than a belowground basement. A roof with a distinctive Shingle style gambrel/gable configuration shelters the building (fig. 12). The dramatic descent of the gambrel's western roof slope to a lean-to extension at the first story alludes to one of the Shingle style's primary influences: the domestic architecture of New England during the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. In addition to wood shingle materials and distinctive roof configurations, the picturesque appearance of the clubhouse is evident in the variety of window shapes (circular, diamond-shaped, as well as standard size) and the western roof slope's chimney (fig. 13) which is composed entirely of large stones.

The PCC's north elevation displays an off-center entrance. Set within a broad arched recess, the front door opens onto a porch sheltered by the modified hip roof of the open porch (fig. 12). The porch's roof projects from a molded cornice which extends from the eaves of the gambrel's lower slope to the intersection of the western roof slope's intersection with its lean-to extension. The porch's roof is supported by square narrow posts which rise from either end of a railing ornamented with three steering wheels composed of iron. "Wilcox, Crittendon & Co. Inc. U.S.A." appears in raised lettering on each of the iron wheels.

To the right of the entrance is a pair of standard size windows. Articulated by raised moldings, these windows possess 6/1 double hung window sash. To the right of these windows, a small, circular window exhibits interlocking semi-circular and diamond-shaped wood sash; sash configuration that is repeated in the circular window to the left of the front door. Four wooden keystones enliven the surrounds of both circular windows.

Above the first story's entrance bay, three standard size windows exhibit molded enframements and contain 6/1 double-hung sash. Just below the apex of the street elevation's gable is a diamond-shaped, keystone-accented window containing large center panes set off on four sides by small square panes (fig. 13). Four standard size windows and four small square windows pierce the clubhouse's east and west walls, respectively. Rising from the eastern and western

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roof slopes is a single shed-roofed dormer and a pair of pedimented dormers, respectively. Each dormer exhibits a standard size window with 6/1 double-hung wood sash. The roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles.

An early 20<sup>th</sup> century photograph in the collection of the PCC shows three rectangular, transom-surmounted doors at the first story of the PCC's south elevation (**fig. 14**). Each transom possessed three panes. Presently only the waterside elevation's westernmost entrance remains (**fig. 15**). The other two were replaced by a wide, multi-panel sliding door installed to facilitate winter storage of small craft on the first floor (**fig. 16**). The rectangular transom contains three window panes. To the left of the remaining entrance is a single, square window containing 1/1 double hung wood sash. Projecting from the PCC's south wall is a low, open modern deck. Devoid of railings, the porch overlooks a small lawn as well as Dorchester Bay.

Above the waterside entrance is a shallow, projecting entablature-like element that is covered with wood shingles and surmounted by a wooden molded cornice accented with exposed rafters underneath (**fig. 15**). To the right of the cornice is a projecting and recessed second story porch. The porch's door is set back within a broad and deep segmental-arched recess (**fig. 17**). Standard size windows containing 6/1 double hung wood sash flank the porch's door. Near the apex of the roof slopes is a small triangular louvered opening.

**The Puritan Canoe Club: Interior Plan and Noteworthy Features**

The PCC possesses a simple, straightforward interior plan, which is repeated on both floors. Each floor possesses a large central room which extends from north to south and is bordered by four rooms on its east and west sides. These rooms were originally intended to serve as lockers for boating gear. All of the interior walls are noteworthy for their dark tongue and groove woodwork and the exposed rafters of the ceiling (**fig. 18**)

**Architectural Description: The Columbia Yacht Club, 1825-1829 Day Boulevard**

Of the four South Boston boat clubs, the Columbia Yacht Club is the most difficult to categorize stylistically. Built in 1899, the wooden clubhouse's appearance alludes to at least three vernacular design trends evident in American architecture at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The clubhouse's design acknowledges the waning influence of the Queen Anne/Shingle Style with its asymmetrical form, sweeping roof lines and variety of window shapes, the rise in popularity of

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the Craftsman/Bungalow style with its emphasis on compact, boxy forms and low-pitched hip roofs as well as the formality of the Colonial Revival style in its main façade's Palladian window and interior oval reception hall's curving stairway. Although completely sheathed with wood shingles, the clubhouse's compact three-story form eschews the rambling 1½ - 2½ story forms widely seen in early Shingle Style buildings of the 1800s and early 1890s. Instead, a new Craftsman Bungalow aesthetic is evident in the building's more contained rectangular form with only vestigial wings at its eastern and western elevations to serve as a reminder of the Shingle Style's predilection for more extensive eills. Another indication of Craftsman influence is the low intersecting hip roofs of the main block and towered components along with deeply overhanging eaves. Typical of bungalow residences is the eyelid dormer located at the center of the street façade's roof slope.

The symmetrical three-story main or north façade (**fig. 19**) along with its second-story entrance bay's Palladian window documents the impact of the Colonial Revival style on American domestic and institutional architecture. Additionally, the CYC originally possessed porches with Colonial Revival elements including a front porch with paired Tuscan columns. Balconies with Georgian Revival elements were originally in evidence at the dormer windows of the eastern and western elevations.

Possessing a rectangular form, the CYC's dark brown wood shingles contrast with white wooden trim. Measuring three-bays by four-bays, the main body of the three-story building is enclosed by a broad, low-pitched hip roof. The smaller hip roofs of the main elevation's towered components intersect with the main block's hip roof. Additionally, the gable roofs of the single and paired wall dormers at the eastern and western elevations project from the main block's hip roof (**figs. 19, 20**).

The CYC's three-bay main elevation is characterized by a two-story midsection flanked by three-story hip-roofed towered components. At the center of the main façade, a replacement front porch with square and narrow posts supports a gable roof. Standard size windows flank the main entrance. In general, the building's windows are fully enframed and contain 1/1 double hung wood sash.

At the second story entrance bay a well-proportioned Palladian window is composed of a center window containing 1/1 double hung wood sash flanked by narrow tripartite windows. A solid,

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keystone-accented demi-lune panel tops the center window. Flanking the Palladian window are standard sized windows. The deep eaves of the main block's hip roof shelter the Palladian window. Striking a picturesque note, a low, arched dormer window rises from the center of the main elevation's roof slope.

At the five-bay east elevation (**fig. 21**), a double window is located near the northeast corner at the first and second stories while the three remaining windows are standard size. At the third story, a single gable-roofed wall dormer rises from the center of the elevation and is flanked by small square double windows.

The five-bay west wall (**fig. 20**) has been altered to meet fire codes. Dominating the west wall are three-story metal fire stairs added at an undetermined date. The west elevation's first story exhibits two double windows interspersed between three standard size windows. Visible at the upper stories, doors partly obscured by wooden panels lead to fire escapes. At the third floor, a pair of gable roofed wall dormers are perched atop deeply projecting eaves.

During the late 1950s, the CYC's south elevation (**fig. 22**) was radically altered by the removal of a two-tiered Renaissance Revival *loggia* that is shown in an early 1900s post card on the collection of the Boston Public Library. Additionally, an open balustrade-encircled porch was originally located atop the roof of the second story *loggia*. In place of the *loggia* is an open, concrete-paved terrace sheltered by a deeply projecting second story enclosed porch addition. At the five bay first story, changes to fenestration included two picture windows and a back door. Five modern multi-pane windows pierce the second story's façade. At the first story, a trio of broad segmental arches provided access to a recessed porch. At the second story, paired columns rose to a flat roof, which, in turn supported the railing of the third story porch.

Situated on top of the projecting second story addition is a porch enclosed by slat-work railings. Overlooking the porch is a pair of gable roofed wall dormers.

**Columbia Yacht Club: Interior Plan and Noteworthy Features**

The CYC's first floor contains a central oval entrance hall flanked on its east and west sides by short corridors bordered by lockers. The side halls lead back to a large common area. A similar allocation of space is in evidence at the second story. Projecting from the south wall of the second story is a large, modern enclosed porch added during the late 1950s. Almost all of the

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clubhouse's significant historic interior features are located in the formal, two-story oval stair hall. Particularly noteworthy is a handsome, curving Georgian Revival stairway (fig. 23). A small room located under the stairs may have originally served as a cloakroom and presently contains a telephone. Also in evidence in the stair hall are oak benches and small, fully enframed rectangular windows set high on the walls (fig. 24).

**Architectural Description: Columbia Yacht Club's Gear Locker Facility**

Situated on the east side of the CYC is a separate, one-story, gear locker structure. Standing close to the front fence and representing the short arm of this early 1900s T-shaped structure, this structure's gable-roofed northern component (fig. 25) possesses an east-west orientation. Measuring the equivalent of five-bays by a single bay, the northern component is constructed of wood, sheathed with wood shingles, and is enclosed by an asphalt shingle-sheathed hip roof. At the structure's narrow west wall, a flight of wooden steps provides access to the structure's interior. A single, standard size window pierces the east wall.

The long "arm" of the T-shaped storage facility (fig. 26) was probably added during the 1910s. Measuring ten-bays by three-bays, this one-story gable-roofed structural component was originally enclosed by a flat roof. The three-bay south elevation originally culminated in a low, wood shingle covered parapet.

The interiors of the gear locker structure are very intact, exhibiting wooden tongue and groove walls as well as single, standard size windows. These small rooms are located on either side of long corridors enclosed by wooden and groove walls (fig. 27). Still intact on the multi-panel doors of the northern and southern components are metal room identification numbers and letters, respectively. The northern component houses 48 gear lockers while the 14 lockers of the southern component are lettered A through N. Indeed, it is the locker facilities throughout these properties that have been subjected to the least change. With their darkly stained millwork intact and rhythmic repetition of doors bordering extensive corridors these utilitarian storage facilities convey a palpable sense of age.

**Architectural Description: The South Boston Yacht Club, 1849 Day Boulevard**

Set back from Day Boulevard behind an iron fence, the South Boston Yacht Club is bordered by a narrow front yard on the north, public park land on the east, a granite block sea wall and the

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waters of Dorchester Bay on the south, and the Columbia Yacht Club locker building on the west. By far the largest of the clubhouses by virtue of its sprawling, complex three-story form, the SBYC was built between 1899-1901 from designs provided by the Boston architectural firm of Maginnis, Walsh and Sullivan. The easternmost of the four clubhouses, the SBYC's design blends elements of the Queen Anne, Shingle, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman styles. The imposing, monumental Renaissance Revival arcade or *loggia* at the center of the south wing's waterside elevation is its most memorable feature.

The SBYC's design reflects American design in a state of flux at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with more formal treatments such as the seaside *loggia* tempered by the rustic informality of unadorned wood shingle surfaces. Radiating from the hip roofed main block are four boxy structural components, including extensive south (bay side) and west wings as well as a short east ell. Running along the full length of the west wing's waterside elevation is a projecting, T-shaped ell; an ell that is fairly shallow with the noteworthy exception of a deeply projecting dining hall. The dining hall's bayside elevation is bowed and contains a curved bank of six windows.

The SBYC's main block exhibits massing similar to that of the Columbia Yacht Club. Like the CYC, the SBYC's street façade (**fig. 28**) is treated as a center entrance bay with flanking hip-roofed tower components. Instead of a projecting porch, as is the case at the CYC, the SBYC's center entrance is flush with the wall of a horizontal, shed-roofed ell running between towered components.

The shed-roofed component's wall exhibits banked fenestration with pairs of fully enframed, standard size windows flanking the front door. At the SBYC a broad segmental arch molding surmounts the front door and flanking windows. In evidence above the entrance is a well-proportioned Palladian window. At the SBYC, the entrance bay's second story exhibits three windows surmounted by an ornamental semi-circular sunburst panel, a design evocative of the distinctive form of a Palladian window. A bank of four windows in evidence at the recessed entrance bay's third story echoes the banked fenestration of the first story.

At each story of the main block's principal façade, the towered components exhibit a double window. In general, the clubhouse's windows are standard size, fully enframed, and contain 6/1 double-hung wood sash. Both the main block and towered components are enclosed by hip roofs. Striking a Craftsman Style note are the exposed rafters of the building's hip roof components.

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Projecting from the center of the hip roof is a metal pipe that ventilates the third story meeting hall. Partially obscured by the contiguous east ell and west wing, the main block's east and west elevations exhibit a single standard-size window at each story.

The SBYC's east ell (**fig. 29**) measures three-bays by a single bay. Clad with wood shingles, the east ell rises three stories to a hip roof. The east ell's street elevation exhibits two pair of double windows and a single window at each story. At the center of its east elevation is an entrance with a standard size window at each of the upper stories.

Contiguous with the main block's south wall is a full-length wing overlooking Dorchester Bay. At the center of the south elevation is a three-story arcade (**fig. 30**). This exhibits square, three-story wood shingle-sheathed Doric columns with culminate in wooden Doric capitals. Round keystone arches spring from the columns and side walls. The arches are accented with narrow wooden moldings painted white. Above the arches, raised wooden letters read "SBYC" with flanking wall segments containing three multi-pane picture windows at each story. Set back behind the arcade's arches are three picture windows at the first and second stories while the third story is devoid of windows.

The arcade is flanked by three-bay wall segments exhibiting doors set off by multi-pane slide lights. The doors open onto decks accessed via broad flights of stairs and are flanked by picture windows. Shed-roofed open porches shelter the picture windows at either end of the first story. A flat roof that is encircled by a metal railing shelters the south wing. The twin gables of the main block rise above the northern edge of the south wing's flat roof. Doors providing access to the south wing's roof pierce the gable's walls.

The water side of south elevation of the west wing (**fig. 31**) extends westward ten bays from the main block to a point only a few inches away from the property line shared with the CYC. At the west wing's first story is a one-story ell that runs the entire length of the water side elevation. With the noteworthy exception of an off-center, deeply projecting, bowed south ell containing a dining room, the first story's ell measures only a single bay in width. The dining room ell (**fig. 32**) exhibits a pair of double windows at its eastern and western elevations. A curving bank of six windows pierces the bowed south wall. Planar wood shingle-sheathed surfaces and single and double standard size windows characterize the second and third stories of the west wing's bayside elevation.

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The west wing's street or north elevation (**fig. 33**) measures ten bays in length. The planarity of its great sweep of wood shingle-sheathed wall is relieved by three, two-story square, shallow oriels. In evidence at the west wing's first story, near its intersection with the main block is a single square window and a double standard window. The remainder of the west wing's first story's walls is devoid of windows. The oriels exhibit three windows at their second and third stories. At the third stories of the oriels the three windows are sheltered by the overhang of a modified hip roof which is supported by a pair of Colonial Revival columns. Wall segments flanking the oriels at the first and second stories exhibit three windows per segment. A trio of small dormers enclosed by low-pitched hip roofs rise from the asphalt-shingle covered street elevation's roof slope.

**South Boston Yacht Club: Interior Plan and Noteworthy Features**

The rooms of the SBYC's main block are ranged around a central staircase leading to the public rooms of the second story. To the right and left of the entrance hall are small offices. Elements of architectural interest at the first story are confined primarily to the main block's wooden stairway with its intact, original newel posts, balusters, and railings. Framed photographs and memorabilia in evidence on the center hallway's walls illustrate the club's history. On the south side of the center stair hall is a more formal stair hall (**fig. 34**) that is housed within the south wing. The south wing's stair hall links the administrative offices of the first story with the primary recreation rooms and auditorium of the second and third stories, respectively.

The south wing's stair hall is noteworthy for its darkly stained floors, tongue and groove walls, as well as the wooden elements of the staircases at the eastern and western ends of the hall (**fig. 34**). Additionally, hanging nautical lights provide appropriate overhead lighting.

The windows of the south wing's waterside elevation open onto a loggia whose monumental columns and arches clearly mark the water side of the clubhouse as the principal façade. While the water elevation was once the principal faced at the CYC before the removal of formal porches, the main facades of the PCC and BYC are oriented toward the street.

The main block's second story contains public rooms on the east, north, and west sides of the central stairway. The lounge on the east side of the stairway contains furnishings that appear to be original to the clubhouse's 1899-1901 construction including a tall case clock and oak bench

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(fig. 35). On the north side of the stair hall, built-in bookshelves apparently date to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The meeting room on the west side of the stairway is particularly noteworthy for its ornate mantelpiece (fig. 36).

The third story is devoted to a large auditorium or meeting hall space flanked by anterooms accessed via tall arched openings at the east and west walls. The auditorium contains built-in seating around the periphery of the room, wooden tongue and groove wainscoting (fig. 37) and a bank of five multi-panel doors at the south wall (fig. 38). Particularly noteworthy is the auditorium ceiling's wooden truss-work system as well as circular cast iron ventilation duct covers at the eastern and western ends of the ceiling.

On each floor of the three-story east ell, an L-shaped corridor is flanked by approximately one dozen multi-panel doors leading to gear lockers.

The south wing's stair hall is noteworthy for its darkly stained floors, tongue and groove woodwork at the first story of the long rectangular west ell, a corridor flanked by small rooms leads from the main block's center stair hall to a lounge and bowling alley. The west ell's second and third stories contain remarkably intact fabric and room configurations with long corridors bordered by approximately 35 lockers per floor. Near the western ends of the hallways are back stairs with intact wooden elements, including newel posts and slat-work railings (fig. 39). The walls and ceiling of the hallways are faced with tongue and groove woodwork.

The one-story addition at the waterside of the west ell contains dining room and kitchen facilities. The basement of the SBYC contains lockers, a wide center hall and a dining hall called the Dutch Room located on the east side of this floor. In general, the basement seems to retain its original room configuration.

(end)

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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
- Entertainment/Recreation
- Maritime History
- Social History

**Period of Significance**

1898-1955

**Significant Dates**

1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1962

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Gen. Benjamin Butler, Nathaniel Herreshoff

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Albert C. Fernald J. O'Brien  
Maginnes, Walsh and Sullivan

**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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**Significance**

The Boston Yacht Club (BYC), Columbia Yacht Club (CYC), Puritan Canoe Club (PCC), and South Boston Yacht Club (SBYC) all have significant historical associations with the glory years of New England yachting and recreational boating during the period between the Civil War and the Great Depression. Before the 1890s ascendance of Marblehead, Massachusetts as the most important yachting center in New England, South Boston was the focus of considerable recreational boating activity. In the estimation of C. Bancroft Gillespie in the Illustrated History of South Boston (1900), City Point, South Boston during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was "the greatest yachting center in the world." Bounded on the south and north by the waters of Dorchester Bay and Boston Harbor, City Point "offered grand natural facilities for yachting and the summer pastime of yacht racing." In 1888, M.F. Sweetser in King's Handbook of Boston noted that Dorchester Bay was a mooring place for a variety of small craft, observing that "Among the yachts are sloops, schooners, steam-launches and many convenient and swift little cat boats."

The South Boston boat clubs and particularly the BYC are rich in historical associations with early members who figured prominently within the realms of commerce and politics as well as yacht design and construction. Among the celebrated yachting figures associated with the clubs are Gen. Benjamin Butler, financier Francis Peabody, yacht designers Nathaniel Herreshoff and Joseph E. Doherty, as well as yacht builder and boatyard owner George F. Lawley. Additionally, yachts with ties to the South Boston clubs competed successfully in late 19<sup>th</sup> century America's Cup races.

Although the early, post-Civil War memberships of these clubs were characterized by an elite clientele, by 1880 the fashionable yachting world was beginning to bypass South Boston in favor of moorings in the harbors of Newport, Rhode Island, Marion, and especially Marblehead, Massachusetts. Henceforth, the officers and members of South Boston boat clubs would be drawn from all walks of life. After 1900, sailing for pleasure rather than transportation became increasingly more of a democratic leisure activity in South Boston. Club members were drawn from the Irish as well as Protestant families, and from the building trades and city departments as well as from banking, medicine, and the law.

The clubhouses of the South Boston Boat Clubs Historic District are significant as an unusually intact, detailed, and extensive collection of the late Victorian era boat clubs and ancillary storage facilities which survive from the earliest phase of the Strandway's late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century

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development. Built between 1898 and 1901, these clubhouses are the only survivors from the original picturesque collection of bayside recreation buildings located within the Strandway and adjacent Marine Park. Original buildings once located within the aforementioned parkland included Marine Park's Head House (1897), Edmund March Wheelwright's Medieval Revival masterpiece; and the Strandway's second facility of the L-Street Bath House (1901, **Appendix A.6**). In addition, an "aquarial garden," proposed as early as 1889 for Marine Park was finally realized in 1912 upon the completion of a William Downer Austin-designed Classical Revival building. The Head House, L-Street Bath House complex and the aquarium succumbed to fire, demolition, and neglect, respectively. A fifth clubhouse constructed around 1900 for the Mosquito Fleet Yacht Club (**Appendix A.7**) was located just to the west of the L-Street Bath House, near the foot of K Street. Remnants of this clubhouse's wooden pilings protrude from the sand and are visible at low tide.

The quartet of boat clubs bordering Day Boulevard (the present name of the Strandway), however, survive to recall the South Boston shoreline as an early 20<sup>th</sup> century recreation area for summer strollers, swimmers, sailor, and picnickers intent on escaping the heat of the city. Although the present clubhouse buildings were not constructed until the late 1890s, the pre-Strandway histories of the boat club organizations are an important part of the proposed historic district's significance; a history that is rooted in the rise of yachting or sailboating as a popular American recreational activity. The clubhouses and ancillary buildings of the proposed South Boston Boat Clubs Historic District satisfy criteria A, B, and C of the National Register of Historic Places at the local level.

#### **The Impact of the Strandway's Creation on the South Boston Boat Clubs**

For a variety of reasons discussed below, the creation of the Strandway for the purposes of public seaside recreation was viewed as a positive development by both local residents as well as city dwellers living beyond South Boston's borders. Paul E. Shanahan in The Boston: A History of the Boston Yacht Club, 1866-1979, provides a sociopolitical context from which to understand the Strandway's creation, noting that "Things were changing in Boston again. The Irish had long since capture City Hall and were about to gain control of the school committee. The Yankee exodus from the center of the city was in full swing. Brookline, Melrose, Belmont and Newton were now appropriate addresses for the upper middle class...The city politicians had decided to improve the waterfront in South Boston whose shoreline was marked by an incongruous mixture of coal wharves, yacht clubs, ice docks and boat yards. The residents wanted the waterfront

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cleaned up. The solution for the southern shoreline's beautification was the Strandway – a landscape boulevard with beaches and boat clubs. Without commercial obstructions, the residents wanted to swim in, walk and drive along the Old Harbor (Dorchester Bay).” Financing the Strandway's creation was delayed by the Panic of 1893, a nationwide economic crisis that occurred early in President Grover Cleveland's second term. In 1895, the state legislature voted to appropriate funds for the creation of the Strandway, eventually home to an extended Columbia Road and William J. Day Boulevard, sandy beaches, landscaped areas as well as yacht clubs or “boat houses.”

Between 1896 and 1897, the Strandway landfill was undertaken by the Boston Parks Department. According to Nancy Seasholes in *Gaining Ground*, “Although it had always been assumed that the Strandway would be filled with material dredged hydraulically from Old Harbor (Dorchester Bay), both the Strandway and Columbia Road were apparently filled with dirt brought by cars from construction sites including that of South Boston High School, which were being built that that time, as well as with some household ashes.”

In 1898 a thirty-foot granite block sea wall extending from points opposite O and P streets was built by the Boston Street Department to protect the landfill that would soon accommodate the lots of the new boat clubs. While most of the clubs were built in 1899, the Boston Yacht Club (later the Boston Harbor Yacht Club [BHYC]) had a head start in its construction thanks to the removal of the 1874 clubhouse to its new Strandway site in 1898. Filling of the Strandway and Columbia Road was completed in 1903. By 1905, Columbia Road and the Strandway were officially opened, linking Marine Park with the other parks in Olmsted's system.

#### **The Pre-Strandway History of the South Boston Boat Clubs at City Point**

Prior to the 1890s land making activities that resulted in the Strandway, the first yacht club buildings bordered the original, irregular shoreline of the peninsula known to Native Americans as Mattapanock and to 17<sup>th</sup> century Puritans as Great Neck and Dorchester Neck. The waters of Boston Harbor and Dorchester Bay lap the northern and southern shores of the South Boston peninsula, respectively.

The first generation of boat clubs were situated on piers projecting from the original, pre-landfill shore line, extending along the water side of East 6<sup>th</sup> Street from K to P streets. Here, pre-Strandway clubhouses rubbed elbows with a motley collection of coal yards, boat yards, seasonal

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hotels, and facilities owned by a street railway company. Several yacht club buildings were built as early as the late 1860s (see the history of the BYC and SBYC).

From the late 17<sup>th</sup> century until the Civil War, City Point, east of O Street, was almost exclusively the domain of the Blake family. For centuries, only persons conducting business at "The Castle" or Fort Independence on Castle Island ventured through Blake-owned lands to the fort's ferry landing at the eastern tip of City Point. A Blake homestead dating to the mid 1830s survives on a lot now obscured by three-decker housing on the south side of Broadway, near P Street. The Blakes were long able to maintain their splendid isolation at the Point, in part because their land was separated from the more populous western precincts of South Boston by a node of city-owned institutional buildings located in the vicinity of Independence Square between Fourth Street and Boston Harbor. Constructed during the 1810s and closed during the mid 1850s, these buildings were dedicated to the care and rehabilitation of the indigent, insane, and criminal underclass.

The presence of society's unfortunates housed on a campus called the City Lands, discouraged residential construction at City Point for decades, despite the area's proximity to the picturesque shores of bay and harbor. By the late 1870s, mostly modest new construction at City Point indicated that the area was not destined for development as an exclusive residential enclave of the very wealthy. By the time that City Point began to be intensively developed during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the three-decker housing of trolley commuters and not the seaside villas of the city's elite bordered the streets of the area. With the noteworthy exception of the BYC, this state of affairs accounts, in part, for the broader membership demographic represented at the South Boston boat clubs.

In the meantime, the creation of Frederick Law Olmsted's Emerald Necklace park system, begun in 1878, continued apace. Meandering from the Fens, via Jamaica Pond, the Arnold Arboretum, and Franklin Park to Dorchester Bay via Columbia Road the connected parks reached Dorchester Bay by the late 1880s. After Congress passed an Act in 1890 granting Boston the use of Fort Independence on Castle Island, the final jewel in the necklace was in place with a wooden draw bridge serving as a temporary link to the Fort until a permanent causeway was created during the 1920s. Containing over 2,000 acres and incorporating 15 miles of roadways, Olmsted's park system was one of the most massive public projects ever undertaken by the city.

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By the early 1890s, plans to obliterate the original Dorchester Bay shoreline via the creation of a new recreation area at City Point called the Strandway threatened the existence of the boat clubs. By that time, boat club buildings, however modest in the beginning, had been part of the City Point landscape for almost 25 years. A change of venue for the clubs to the north side of City Point or to some other coastal location was evidently out of the question due to the heavily industrial character of the Boston Harbor side of the peninsula as well as the expense of relocation. The Strandway's creation was spurred on by recent transportation improvements in South Boston. Around 1890, the electric streetcar began to convey passengers out to the most remote parts of the peninsula. Historian Thomas H. O'Connor notes in South Boston: My Home Town, "Now that the trolleys had become electrified, the "Bay View" trolley would travel along Eighth Street alongside Dorchester Bay, turn up K Street, and then move along Sixth Street until it reached its terminus at City Point."

The Boston Parks Department compensated the clubs for the loss of East Sixth Street sites by providing them with parcels on the new Strandway that the organizations would then lease from the City. The Boston Park Commissioners were empowered by Chapter 365 of the Acts of the year 1897 to "lease lands or buildings under their control for boat-houses and other purposes." The clubs leased the land from the city for the token payment of one dollar per year. Each boat club had to agree to erect a clubhouse within two years of the lease agreement and the clubhouse could not cost less than \$1,000, a restriction evidently intended to insure at least a modicum of quality design. The size of the club buildings was dictated by the square footage of the parcels allotted to these organizations by the Boston Parks Department. Buildings were enlarged to accommodate growing memberships with adequate space for meetings, recreational activities, and locker facilities.

The plans of the clubhouses had to be approved by the Board of the Park Commission. The Board insisted "that any signs, fences or structures" erected on the premises be approved by the Board. The clubs had to be amenable to occasional inspections by board members or their agents to make sure that the premises were being maintained in reasonably good condition. Furthermore, the clubs had to agree to insure their buildings for no less than \$1,000. Toomey and Rankin in their History of South Boston (1901), described the new land following the completion of its landfill during the late 1890s: "The Strandway, as planned, extends from Marine Park to Columbia Road, the distance being some two miles, following the shore the entire way. As designed, it is a beautiful shore drive with a total width of 110 feet, including a broad road, wide walks, and planted spaces, besides a wide strip of clean sandy beach."

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Gillespie noted that "the decision of the park commissioners to permit the use of the south shore for pleasure yachting met with general approval." He added, however, that there was some opposition to "the removal of the yacht clubs from the original shoreline to the man-made fill area known as the Strandway." Opponents maintained that the relocated, "robs that costly strandway skiting [sic] the shore, of the artistic beauty that would otherwise be produced." Thanks to the talents of their architects and builders, the construction of the clubhouses resulted in an aesthetically pleasing cluster of wood shingle-sheathed buildings whose distinctive forms and rustic treatments have, indeed, imparted "artistic beauty" to City Point's shores.

**The Boston Yacht Club and the Early History of Yachting, 1866-1898**

The BYC's building is both the oldest and the newest boat club on Dorchester Bay. The BYC owned this building from the time of its completion in 1898 until the organization sold the building to the newly-formed Boston Harbor Yacht Club (BHYC) in 1962.

The boat club building with the strongest physical link to this early history is the present BHYC clubhouse whose nucleus is reportedly part of the old BYC clubhouse of 1874. Originally perched on a pier projecting from East Sixth near P Street, the BYC is the second oldest yacht club organized in Boston, and is the oldest continuously operating yacht club of its kind in New England, tracing its roots to the formative period of American yachting that commenced after the Civil War

A.B.C. Whipple in The Racing Yachts observes that "Racing around in yachts was a novel idea to most Americans before the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Few could afford to build large pleasure craft, and those who could were too busy compounding their fortunes to think of yachting." Robert G. Albion in New England and the Sea notes that "The degree of leisure and wealth so essential to the development of yachting was not attained by the citizens of the Atlantic seaboard until after the first third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and even then there were not many nautical minded sportsmen who could take the needed time. On the other hand, many seaside residents, owners of small craft employed in commercial pursuits, often used their boats for a pleasant afternoon sail.. Thus quite early there was a distinction between yachting and boating."

Whipple defines organized yacht racing as "carefully monitored contests between vessels designed and built primarily for speed." Looking back to an even more distant time in yachting history, sailing for sport rather than transportation did not appear until the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Holland

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and from there it was taken up in England by Charles II. The world's first yacht club was founded in 1720 in Ireland as the Water Club of Cork Harbor.

The earliest yacht owner in America (with the possible exception of several Colonial era Royal Governors) is generally identified by maritime historians as George Crowninshield, a Salem merchant who was one of the nation's first millionaires. He owned the 22-ton sloop *Jefferson* (1801) as well as the more famous *Cleopatra's Barge* (1816). The latter vessel made the first trans-Atlantic crossing by an American yacht. Crowninshield's *Cleopatra* was built and outfitted at the then enormous cost of \$50,000. The original cabin of *Cleopatra's Barge* may still be visited at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem.

Founded in 1844, the New York Yacht Club is the oldest continuously existing yacht club in the United States. The most important benchmark in the early history of American yachting was the Hundred Guinea Cup race of 1851 in England; a competition which led directly to the America's Cup, the oldest and most prestigious event in international sailboat racing. Offered as part of the festivities surrounding the Crystal Palace Exhibition in London, the Hundred Guinea Cup race intrigued American yachtsmen. The New York Yacht Club sent the schooner *America* across the Atlantic to compete in this celebrated race. Returning to New York in triumph with a trophy or "cup," the *America's* great victory launched the America's Cup sailboat race that, 150 years later, is still the premier competition of its kind. The BYC, once housed in the building now owned by the BHYC, would figure significantly in America's Cup races during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The yacht club concept remained dormant in Boston until the founding of the BYC in 1866. The club traces its origins to what is technically America's first yacht club, a short-lived organization called the Boston Boat Club, later the Dreamers Club. Organized in 1834 by "exuberant young men who enjoyed boating and playing pranks," the club's first Commodore was the 30-year old China trader captain Robert Bennet Forbes. The group's original "squadron of row boats" was greatly augmented by the *Dream*, a graceful 46-foot schooner purchased by club members at a cost of \$2,000.

The Dreamers Club disbanded three years after its founding, possibly a casualty of the Panic of 1837. In 1845, the town of Nahant, located on two islands eventually connected to Lynn by a causeway, staged a regatta for local "runabouts" and fishing craft, but by all accounts, organized yacht racing began in New York.

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Founded in 1866, the BYC was "the first organization of its kind chartered in Massachusetts within ten years of its founding." The beginnings of the BYC lie in the desire on the part of "three Dartmouth alumni" to establish a venue for yacht racing that would provide "that spirit of comradeship, of courtesy and rivalry, of sympathetic joy in a common sport." Originally housed in rented rooms at Pemberton Square, Boston, the purpose of the BYC was "to promote a social feeling among yachtsmen." The founding of the BYC in 1866 was just the beginning of a movement that resulted in the organization of five Boston area yacht clubs between 1866 and 1870. In June, 1867, the BYC held its first regatta. Granted a charter by the Commonwealth in 1868, the BYC began with 90 original members. Within nine years of its founding, its membership nearly tripled in size to 250 people and 80 yachts.

According to Paul E. Shanabrook, Benjamin Dean, the Commodore of the BYC during the early 1870s, directed the organization's focus away from socializing in comfortable club rooms in downtown Boston "to a club that is well run and more focused on water races." Dean served in the 45<sup>th</sup> Congress and lived in a great stone castle-like mansion (since demolished) that once stood in the center of the block of Broadway between P Street and Farragut Road.

General Benjamin F. Butler (1818-1893) was one of the BYC's celebrated early members. Born in Deerfield, NH, Butler was educated in local school, later practicing law in Lowell and Boston. He was the scion of an affluent family whose wealth was derived from his family's United States Cartridge Company at Lowell, MA. Possessing "an expansive and aggressive personality," Butler commanded Union troops during the Civil War. As military governor of Louisiana in 1862, Butler's heavy-handed rule of New Orleans earned him the sobriquet "Beast" among the people of the Crescent City. Serving as a radical Republican in Congress (1867-1875) during the Reconstruction period, Butler was a confidante of President Grant. In 1882 he was elected Governor of Massachusetts as the candidate of the Greenback Party. He ran unsuccessfully as a Greenbacker in the presidential election of 1884. Based on his military, political, and business exploits alone, Butler ranks high on the list of the BYC's most celebrated figures. Further solidifying the General's role as an important person in the club's history was his ownership of the schooner *America* of America's Cup fame. Part of the BYC's fleet for over 27 years, the legendary yacht passed to a nephew upon Butler's death in 1893 and was decommissioned in 1901.

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In addition to General Butler, important early Commodores of the BYC include Francis H. Peabody, a founder of the famous brokerage firm of Kidder, Peabody and Company (1878-1881) and Henry Pfaff of Bavaria, a founder of the H. and J. Pfaff Brewing Company of Roxbury in the mid 1880s.

During its early years, the BYC, through its membership, figured significantly in the history of American shipbuilding and design. Club members are credited with inviting the George Lawley family of shipbuilders to move from Scituate to South Boston in 1874. George F. Lawley (1848-1928) joined the BYC after relocating his business to East Sixth at the foot of P Street. Lawley boats and yachts became recognized for designs that increased the speed of sailboats. During the 1890s, the business relocated once again, setting up shop at the Lawley Boat Basin on the north side of City Point where numerous vessels were built. About 300 "highly skilled mechanics" were employed during the busy season. Together with Lawley, BYC member Edward Burgess designed and built the successful America's Cup defenders of 1885, 1886, and 1887.

In addition to George F. Lawley, Nathaniel Green Herreshoff (1848-1938) was an original BYC member whose name became synonymous with yacht design. A.B.C. Whipple notes that "of all the sea-loving men who put their minds and hands to the art of boat building, few have made an impact as Nathaniel G. Herreshoff." Known as the "Wizard of Bristol," Hereshoff revolutionized American yacht building. Only 19 years old when he joined the club, Herreshoff would bring much prestige and glory to the BYC. A graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "Captain Nat" was the brother of the renowned yacht and ship builder John Herreshoff. Based in Bristol, RI, Nathaniel Herreshoff in 1867 drafted the first sailing measurement rule that later became the basis for future handicap racing systems in yacht races. He built and designed the five yachts that successfully defended the America's Cup against six challengers (one of his boats raced twice) between 1893 and 1920. The Herreshoff brothers gained international acclaim in 1891 with the construction of the sloop *Gloriana*, winner of numerous races. In addition to being one of the original founders of the BYC, Herreshoff served as its Rear Commodore from 1889 to 1892 and was an honorary member of the club until his death in 1928. Other BYC honorary members of note included the Scottish millionaire merchant and yachting enthusiast Sir Thomas Lipton, and Woodrow Wilson's Undersecretary of the Navy, later United States President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

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**The South Boston Yacht Club's Move to the Strandway in 1898**

The BYC's first clubhouse at South Boston was built in 1874 on a pier extending into Dorchester Bay between O and P streets. Described as a "Swiss Cottage," the 1888 edition of King's Handbook of Boston depicts the organization's first Boston clubhouse as a commodious, T-shaped Stick Style building which stood with the verandah encircled gable end facing the water. Built by an A.C. Martin, measuring 70' by 40' and painted "drab" with a red roof, part of the original clubhouse was moved in 1898 to the club's new site on the Strandway where it became the nucleus of the present Boston Harbor Yacht Club building. By 1878, the BYC had 250 members. At that time, 80 yachts were enrolled in the club.

In 1898, the club was compensated for the direct access to Dorchester Bay lost to landfill created for the eastern extension of the Olmsted-designed park system. According to Paul E. Shanabrook, "The inconvenience [of the move] turned into a face lifting. The twenty-five year old house had been built on pilings. Now the house had to be lifted up and moved out onto fill poured along the beach."

The gable-roofed segment of the old clubhouse was recycled as the mid-section of the new BYC building. Shanabrook sheds light on the new clubhouse's structural evolution noting that "The old Swiss chalet of 1874 had been given a new look befitting the Edwardian Period. A sturdy, eight-sided tower was added to the east corner with piazzas on its two levels and bay windows were placed on the sides of the building at right angles to the Strandway. Dormers were added and the building shingled."

On the Strandway, the new BYC clubhouse housed gear lockers on the second floor. A stair hall, dining room, meeting hall and lavatory facilities are located on the second floor. The third story contained additional locker rooms. An early 1900s post card view indicates that the 1874 building stood with a gable end facing the new boulevard. Soon, a new Tudor/Colonial main block built to house the aforementioned stair halls would be constructed in front of the old building.

Unlike other clubs, the BYC is flanked on its east and west sides by relatively ample yards. The eastern yard, now paved with asphalt and used for boat storage originally contained three freestanding rectangular wooden structures which were presumably used as storage facilities. This trio preceded the present, extensive gear locker building that has occupied the western third of the clubhouse's parcel since at least 1906.

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**The BYC's Design Attributed to Albert C. Fernald**

Boston architect Albert C. Fernald, designer of the BYC's Marblehead Station may have been responsible for the creation of the South Boston BYC's building on the boulevard in 1902. Additionally, Boston Building Department records list Fernald as the architect of the BYC's neighbor, the PCC, in 1899.

Albert C. Fernald, a native of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, began work as an architect in Boston around 1895. He is credited with the design of a commercial building at 186 Devonshire Street (1896) and the Gilmore Gymnasium (1899) at the Clarke School for the Deaf in Northampton, Massachusetts. Together with the noted Boston architect William Gibbons Preston, Fernald designed the no longer extant Hotel Aubrey in Boston.

By 1910, 44 years after its founding, the BYC controlled as many as six yacht clubs, including buildings at Rowe's Wharf in downtown Boston; Hull; Dorchester; Five Islands in Sheepscot Bay, Maine; as well as stations at South Boston and Marblehead. Further research may identify clubs that pre-dated BYC acquisition vs. those built under its aegis. By that time, the South Boston clubhouse had become a "secondary station" within the BYC system. As early as the 1880s, the Marblehead station began to assume the dominant role within the BYC system. Compounding the BYC's station's decline was Marblehead's preference for the well-heated, more centrally located Rowe's Wharf clubhouse that was equipped to host BYC meetings year round rather than on a seasonal basis.

**The Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Rise of the Marblehead Station as the Most Powerful Club Within the BYC System**

That Marblehead eventually superseded South Boston as the leading station within the BYC constellation of clubhouses is linked to the town of Marblehead's nearly century-long evolution from a rough and tumble seafaring community to a genteel summer resort. The celebrated Salem diarist William Bentley noted during the early 1800s that "Marbleheaders are as profane, intemperate & ungoverned as any people on the continent." Few envisioned that after the Civil War, a community populated with "rude and turbulent" fishermen and later shoe industry workers would flower into a summer playground for moneyed families from Lowell and Boston. Among the early signs of Marblehead's transformation into a summer resort was the opening of Clifton House, a small summer hotel built by Benjamin P. Ware in 1846. In that year the fishing

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industry, for centuries the backbone of the local economy, was dealt a lethal blow by "a great gale" from which it never regained its former strength. The town's shoe industry, seemingly poised as the new source of prosperity at mid-century, was almost completely destroyed by a great fire in 1888.

In 1858, journalist Robert Carter and a group of friends explored Marblehead's rockbound harbor. Partially protected by Marblehead Neck, a promontory which was host to "a breezy pasture," Carter deemed Marblehead Harbor magnificent "with no rival between Rio de Janeiro and Bar Harbor." He noted that the town once had a reputation for "being among the most uncivilized in New England...But of late years the place has much improved." Indeed, Marblehead Harbor would be the key to its late 19<sup>th</sup> century revival, but for reasons related to recreation rather than the hard work of fishermen and shoe workers.

According to Joseph E. Garland in *Boston's North Shore*, "The single event...that charted the future course of the town was the decision of the Eastern Yacht Club to locate permanently at Marblehead." Founded by dissident members of the BYC in 1870, the Eastern, from the very beginning, was the largest and richest yacht club in New England. The new club's members, like those of the BYC's South Boston and Marblehead boat clubs, were drawn from Boston and North Shore families of means and impeccable lineage. The North Shore yachtsmen who joined the BYC "fretted from the start over the distance of the station at City Point, south Boston, from their piazzas." Garland notes that "the construction of the Eastern's first clubhouse midway on the harbor shore of Marblehead Neck in 1881 established Marblehead as the yachting center of the Northeast." The rivalry that ensued between the Eastern on the Neck and the BYC's Marblehead station on Front Street in the old town shifted society's interest from South Boston to Marblehead. By the end of the 1880s, yachting organizations based at Marblehead Neck reached critical mass with the construction of the Corinthian and Pleon yacht clubs. By the early 1890s, "Marblehead sloops had retained the America's Cup three times running." In the words of Garland, "the queer old town was on the map."

The destruction of Marblehead's fishing and shoe industries forces the townspeople to reinvent their local economy. Indeed, "Marbleheaders had to turn to a future quite largely dependent upon the foibles of the summer strangers and the fortunes of those whose fleets of shining yachts had captured their harbor." In addition, the growing interest on the part of the affluent Colonial Revivalist antiquarians, artists, and architects in the 18<sup>th</sup> century charms of the old port town figured importantly in the rise of Marblehead as a desirable seasonal retreat for affluent urbanites with a penchant for quaint coastal living.

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That Marblehead rose to the fore within the BYC system as the station with the most social cachet was evidently linked to several factors. Despite the construction of a new coastal road and improved rail links between Boston and the North Shore during the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Marblehead was never a magnet for the less privileged seasonal visitor. For working and middle-class families seeking respite from city heat, Winthrop and Revere were closer at hand, providing affordable North Shore summer rentals. South Boston's new Dorchester Bay recreational areas, in turn, attracted "day trippers" drawn from a broad socioeconomic spectrum, contributing to the BYC's apparent loss of social cachet after the turn of the century.

**The BYC's Post 1900 History**

Through a series of club mergers the Boston Yacht Club grew, and by 1910, the club operated from six different stations: Rowe's Wharf in Boston, Hull, City Point in South Boston, Marblehead, Dorchester, and Five Islands in Sheepscot Bay, Maine. Today the club operates from a single station in Marblehead, with 500 members and 400 yachts flying the BYC burgee.

Despite Marblehead's rise to prominence after 1880, the BYC's South Boston station prospered under the leadership of Benjamin P. Cheney, who was the Club's Commodore from 1899 to 1905. He is credited with returning the club to better financial health following a period of fiscal instability during "the difficult nineties."

South Boston Yacht Club histories do not mention rivalries developed between the four organizations during the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, emphasizing, instead, the participation of notable members and good works on behalf of the community. Given the clubhouses' proximity to each other it would seem logical that racing competitions among their fleets figured to some degree in the life of the clubs at City Point.

The BYC played an important role in the creation of the United States Power Squadrons. In 1912, a BYC sailboat race from Marblehead to Peak's Island in Maine's Casco Bay fell victim to a fierce, fast-moving storm. As many as 40 sailboats and 20 power boats participated in the competition. One two of the 60 boats made it safely to Portland. The heroic actions of men in two surviving powerboats saved the lives of the disabled sailors, averting great loss of life. The BYC's powerboats performed well under dangerous circumstances, setting a precedent for government sponsored squadrons to be used in time of emergency.

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In 1924 BYC Commodore James Hodder held the first women's sailing championship, marking the beginning of annual competition for the club's Hodder Cup. Following Hodder's lead, the BYC donated the Mrs. Charles Francis Adams trophy to the U.S. Sailing Association as the perpetual trophy for the National Women's Championship.

After World War II, the BYC and the other clubs returned to a full roster of recreational activities. Just as the 1960s brought sweeping social changes to the rest of the country, South Boston boat clubs had to adjust to a change in their lot lease agreements. In 1962, the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), successor to the City of Boston Park Commissioners, suddenly changed from a long-term to a year-by-year lease agreement with the yacht clubs. Shanabrook sets forth in no uncertain terms the reason behind Marblehead's eventual break with South Boston in 1962, citing the North Shore members' perception that South Boston members used gear lockers as living quarters suitable for unbridled revelry. The MDC's change in land leasing terms served as the timely official reason for Marblehead's sale of the BYC's South Boston station to the newly formed Boston Harbor Yacht Club. By that time, Marblehead was in the process of abandoning Boston completely as the existence of its Rowe's Wharf clubhouse was threatened by plans to drastically transform the long-neglected downtown waterfront; plans that resulted in the demolition of the Rowe's Wharf clubhouse in 1965. The boat clubs are located on public parkland which is today under the care of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and are used by private interests under revocable permits.

The BHYC's first officers were accomplished professionals drawn from the ranks of business, the building trades, and medicine. First Vice Commodore Norman S. Feinberg was president of the Boston Paper Board Company. The Rear Commodore was William L. Morrison, president and namesake of a Boston insurance company. John E. Hicks, a South Boston contractor was a fleet captain, while Dr. Michael J. Donovan was the fleet surgeon. The remaining founders included State Senate President John E. Powers, George E. Call, President of the Fish Pier, and J. Harry Lynch, head of the Newman Preparatory School. When the new club assumed ownership of its Day Boulevard clubhouse, the principal clubrooms, as well as the kitchen facilities were located on the first floor while lockers were located on the second floor.

Unspecified interior renovations to the clubhouse occurred at the time of transition of ownership. Heated from the beginning of the BHYC's ownership, year-round recreational activities were offered at the clubhouse. The purchase agreement of the Boston Yacht Club's building also

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included a launch and three big floats. Shortly after the BHYC opened, and nearly a decade before the Women's Liberation movement, women were invited to become members, raising the membership numbers to 80 "salty skippers."

According to a *Boston Globe* article of November 28, 1965, the South Boston boat clubs' existence was threatened with plans that, if implemented, would have resulted in their demolition. Under consideration was the filling in of Dorchester Bay to accommodate a 1975 World's Fair that would conclude with the nation's bicentennial. Following the success of the 1964 World's Fair in New York, many officials in American cities saw international expositions of a certain magnitude as a means of boosting stalled local economies. Just as the boat club had to move nearly 70 years earlier to accommodate the Strandway, the proposed fairgrounds would have forced their removal from Boston. The proposed fill was projected to extend from City Point to Thompson's Island in inner Boston Harbor. After the Fair was dismantled, high rise apartment buildings and "deep draft tankers" were slated for construction on the new land. Fortunately, the 1890s shoreline remained intact as plans for a Boston Bicentennial World's Fair never came to fruition due to the expense of such an ambitious project.

**The South Boston Yacht Club (SBYC): Early History, 1868-1898**

The South Boston Yacht Club was organized as early as February 5, 1868 at Arthur Scott's boathouse on Dorchester Bay. The initial meeting attracted "59 yachting enthusiasts." John Greer was chosen the club's first Commodore. Dedicated on July 15, 1868, the SBYC's first clubhouse was built at a cost of \$500 on a lot located on Dorchester Bay near the foot of K Street. An 1868 painting by M. Pierce depicts the original South Boston Yacht Club as an extremely modest one-story wooden cottage with unfurled flags flying atop poles rising from either end of its gable roof. Rapid growth necessitated moving the old K Street clubhouse to East 6<sup>th</sup> Street near Q Street in February, 1872, "where better facilities were offered for yachting." By 1877 the SBYC had a membership of 139 with an enrollment of 44 yachts.

On April 2, 1877, the SBYC was officially incorporated under Massachusetts law "for the purpose of encouraging yacht building and natural science." Men largely drawn from working and middle class backgrounds incorporated the club. The occupation of these men provide evidence that by the late 1870s, the elite, moneyed world of yachtsmen had become more democratic than ever before. Among the club's incorporators were James H. Stark, manager of the Photo-Electrotype Company; Frederick S. Wright, proprietor of the Atlantic House at East 6<sup>th</sup>

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Street; John Winniatt, rigger; Michael J. Kiley, printer; policeman Francis J. Baxter; Thomas Christian, purveyor of "small wares;" Henry J. McKee, blacksmith; William P. Thompson, wood engraver; and a John H. Gillin. With the exception of Kiley who hailed from nearby Dorchester, all of the incorporators lived either in Boston or South Boston.

In 1885-1886, due to a significant increase in membership, the SBYC's East 6<sup>th</sup> Street building was "enlarged extensively and completely remodeled." A more substantial facility was dedicated on April 7, 1886, but the organization's years on East 6<sup>th</sup> were to be short-lived due to the Boston Parks Department's late 1890s landfill project that blocked the SBYC's direct access to the bay.

**The South Boston Yacht Club: From Relocation to the Strandway to World War II, 1899-1945**

In 1899, SBYC members abandoned their old clubhouse in favor of a new facility bordering the recently-completed Strandway. The new clubhouse's main block contained a lounging room and a library as well as a reading room, ladies, reception room, spacious corridors, and an extensive system of lockers. The SBYC's building was unique among the quartet of yacht clubs for having a roof garden providing superb views of Point, park, and bay.

The SBYC clubhouse was designed by the nationally prominent architectural firm of Maginnis, Walsh and Sullivan: a firm better known for their Roman Catholic churches than their yacht clubs. Early in his career, Charles Donagh Maginnis (1867-1955), a native of Londonderry, Ireland, was head draughtsman of the City Architect's office under Edmund March Wheelwright. Wheelwright is best known as the architect of the Longfellow Bridge, but he also designed Horticultural Hall, the South Boston Head House at Marine Park, and many other public buildings in Boston; he was a partner in the firm of Wheelwright and Haven during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Maginnis, Boston's leading designer of Catholic churches during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, completed his masterpiece, the Church of St. Catherine of Genoa in Somerville, in 1916. Near the end of his life he was awarded the American Institute of Architects' highest award, the Gold Medal.

During the 1890s, Maginnis started the firm of Maginnis, Walsh and Sullivan (later Maginnis and Walsh). Although Matthew Sullivan had no formal architectural training, he studied with the firm of Peabody and Stearns, and also worked in Wheelwright's office at City Hall. Timothy Walsh (1868-1934) was associated with Maginnis for nearly 40 years. A native of Cambridge, he

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graduated from English High School in 1886. Like Maginnis, he benefited from early training with some of the most talented architects in the nation. Maginnis and Walsh designed more than 115 ecclesiastical buildings for parishes located in all parts of the country. Important examples of their Catholic church projects (all still extant) include the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC; the Carmelite Convent, Santa Clara, California; Holy Cross Church, Worcester, Massachusetts; and the Cardinal's residence in Brighton, Massachusetts.

The main block of the SBYC clubhouse, including the south stair hall wing, was built in 1899 at a cost of \$19,000. Contractors for the new clubhouse were Monson Brothers of Roxbury's Warren Street. Two wings were added to the main building in 1900, and a large western wing with four bowling alleys and 103 lockers along with a larger Commodore's quarters was completed in 1901. By that time the club had 315 members and 150 yachts. At the time of the SBYC's 1899 relocation to the Strandway, officers included Commodore Edmund H. Lansing, Vice Commodore S. Gordon Sawyer; Rear Commodore M.R. Peterson, a veterinarian; Jeweler's Building superintendent and Club Secretary Daniel F. Carew; Union Dry Goods Company executive, Thomas Christian; and James Bertram, one of the leading carpenters in late 19<sup>th</sup> century South Boston. By 1901, the club had a membership of over 350 with 150 yachts associated with the organization.

1928, the first full year of the SBYC's Junior Sailing Program marked a significant watershed in the history of the club. The program's existence is owed to Massachusetts legislation of October, 1927, granting tax advantages to organizations engaged in educational activities for children. The SBYC led the way for numerous Massachusetts Bay yacht clubs that subsequently established similar programs. In return for crewing members' boats during races, the Juniors were given the responsibility of maintaining the racing boats, keeping the boats clean, and their sails dry. In 1939, the Juniors organized into a structured sailing program. They requested and received permission to call themselves the "South Boston Junior Yacht Club." As such, they elected their own officers (Junior Commodore, etc.) and scheduled their own activities, including daily races in "Snipes" owned by club members. During the winter of 1942-1943, "Penguin" class sailboats were built in the Club's main cellar and added to the fleet of Snipes used by the Junior Members. The beginning of the present Junior sailing program is traced back to 1956 with the purchase of four new "Cadet" sailboats for the exclusive use of the club's youth contingent. At that time a sailing instructor was hired to supervise sailing activities. Over time, the Junior sailing program has stressed basic safety and has hosted various certification courses in First Aid and CPR. In

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2000, the Junior sailing program hosted the capacity enrollment allowed by the club's constitution of 125 Junior members. Over time this program has proven to be an important facet of the SBYC, providing community youth with constructive recreational and educational experiences.

Since 1877, Memorial Day has held a special place in the annual schedule of club events. Known as the SBYC's Opening Day, the event draws competing boats from all parts of Massachusetts Bay and marks the real beginning of the yachting and racing season in Dorchester Bay. In the year 2000 the SBYC had 476 members. The club is known to yachtsmen as a club with excellent launching and hauling facilities in case of an emergency such as an approaching hurricane.

**The Puritan Canoe Club (PCC): From the Early Days of Sport Canoeing to World War II, 1887-1945**

Organized in 1887, the Puritan Canoe Club has the distinction of being the only open water canoe club within a radius of many miles of Boston. The origins of modern sport canoeing may be traced back to the late 1840s when the writings of John MacGregor inspired outdoorsmen to paddle about in small craft long used by Native Americans. Between 1849 and 1869, MacGregor, an English barrister, wrote a series of highly popular books in which he described his European canoe trips. MacGregor founded the Royal Canoe Club in 1865. An important milestone in the history of American sport canoeing was the offering of the International Challenger Cup by the New York Canoe Club in 1885.

Shortly after its founding, the PCC's nine charter members set up headquarters in a structure located on East 6<sup>th</sup> Street near O Street. By 1898, the PCC, along with the other City Point boat clubs, had lost its direct access to Dorchester Bay as the result of the Strandway landfill project. Park Commissioners granted the PCC a lot adjacent to the new boulevard and the new club's construction was completed in May, 1899, just in time for the summer season. Built at a cost of \$2,000, the architect of the Puritan Canoe Club was Albert C. Fernald (see Boston Yacht Club History). South Boston historians Toomey and Rankin described the new clubhouse's early 1900 appearance: "Though not as large as the yacht clubs, it is none the less comfortable and convenient for the purpose, the lower floor being used for the storage of canoes and for a locker room. On the second floor is a comfortable hall. An excellent view of the bay and vicinity may be had from the balcony on the water side."

(continued)

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Continuation Sheet

South Boston Boat Clubs HD  
Boston/South Boston (Suffolk), MA

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Industrialist Frank R. Kimball became the PCC's Commodore in 1900. He was a partner in Frank L. Young and Kimball's oil manufactory. Located on three acres adjacent to I Street in South Boston, Kimball's company manufactured "oils, grease, degas, and wax."

By the third decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, canoeing was being taken more seriously as a professional competitive sport. Canoe racing with paddles first became an official Olympic competition at the Berlin games of 1936. Over time the PCC seems to have prospered with funding generated from membership dues used to make a few alterations to its clubhouse. During the mid-to-late 20<sup>th</sup> century two of the three original standard size doors on the south elevation were replaced by a wide entrance evidently intended to facilitate the seasonal storage of small craft within the clubhouse.

**The Columbia Yacht Club (CYC): From the Mid 1890s to World War II**

The last South Boston yacht club to be organized was the CYC. Established on March 31, 1896, at Boston's Hotel Savoy, the early members were drawn from the "older owners and yachtsmen of the area." Six months after the club's founding, the organization had a membership of well over 100. The original yacht club was large, wooden and located at the foot of P and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets in a structure formerly occupied by the Commonwealth Yacht Club. Chartered by the state in July, 1896, the new club was headquartered at P and East 6<sup>th</sup> for only a short time as the construction of the Strandway necessitated its removal to a parcel located between the SBYC and the PCC. Almost from the beginning of the club's existence, its officers affiliated themselves with the Yacht Racing Association of Massachusetts. During the first year of its existence the CYC sponsored an open race, held its first Annual Ball, and its Annual Dinner.

In the fall of 1898, three club trustees, Joseph E. Doherty, A.E. Justice, and A.S. Roberts were empowered to build a new clubhouse on the lot bordering the new boulevard. The raising of bonds subscribed by its members provided funding for the new club. The present CYC building was dedicated in September of 1899. Boston building permits list a J. O'Brien as the CYC's architect and a J. Schofield as its contractor. Boston Directories do not list a J. O'Brien as an architect. The possibility remains that the permit refers to an M.J. O'Brien, the same builder active as a housing contractor in Roxbury, Dorchester, and South Boston during the 1890s. Among the CYC's most popular events was an annual cruise to Newburyport; a cruise organized "to show that they real yachtsmen."

(continued)

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South Boston Boat Clubs HD  
Boston/South Boston (Suffolk), MA

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(continued)

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Boston/South Boston (Suffolk), MA

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(end)

South Boston Boat Clubs HD  
Name of Property

Suffolk, MA  
County, State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property ca. 3.5 acres

### UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 19 330000 4688420  
Zone Easting Northing

2. 19 332760 4688300  
Zone Easting Northing

3. 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 Edward Gordon, consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date June 2005

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 multiple

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**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 Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

South Boston Boat Clubs HD  
Boston/South Boston (Suffolk), MA

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---

## 10. GEOGRAPHIC DATA

### Verbal Boundary Description

The district's boundaries are parcels 2711-2714 on the enclosed Boston Assessing Department map, corresponding to the land leased to the boat clubs from the Massachusetts DCR. It includes the club's buildings and locker facilities, as well as the seawall fronting Dorchester Bay.

### Verbal Boundary Justification

The district corresponds to the area historically associated with the clubs.

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Continuation Sheet

South Boston Boat Clubs HD  
Boston/South Boston (Suffolk), MA

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PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Boston Harbor YC, west gate entrance, view facing east
2. BHYC, front façade, view facing south
3. BHYC, front porch, west elevation, view facing southwest
4. BHYC, east elevation, mid-section, view facing south
5. BHYC, rear elevation, boat storage, view facing northeast
6. BHYC, west elevation, view facing northeast
7. BHYC, west elevation, projecting component, view facing north
8. BHYC, interior, reception hall stairway
9. BHYC, gear locker structure, Day Blvd. elevation, view facing northeast
10. BHYC, gear locker structure, waterside elevation, view facing northwest
11. Puritan Canoe Club, front elevation, view facing northeast
12. PCC, front elevation, view facing southeast
13. PCC, detail, front elevation, view facing northeast
14. PCC, early 20<sup>th</sup> century photograph of south elevation
15. PCC, waterside elevation, view facing east
16. PCC, waterside elevation, view facing north
17. PCC, waterside elevation, view facing north
18. PCC, interior, first floor, central room
19. Columbia YC, main façade, view facing southeast
20. CYC, main and west elevations, view facing east
21. CYC, main façade, view facing southwest
22. CYC, waterside elevation, view facing north
23. CYC, interior, center stairhall
24. CYC, interior, center stairhall
25. CYC, lockers building, view from Day Boulevard, facing southeast
26. CYC, lockers building, waterside view, facing north
27. CYC, lockers building, interior
28. South Boston YC, street façade, view southeast from Day boulevard
29. SBYC, street façade, view facing southwest
30. SBYC, rear elevation from float, view facing north
31. SBYC, rear elevation from float, view facing northeast
32. SBYC, rear elevation, seawall, view facing northwest

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South Boston Boat Clubs HD  
Boston/South Boston (Suffolk), MA

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33. SBYC, west wing from Day Boulevard, view facing east
34. SBYC, interior, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, stairhall, south wing
35. SBYC, interior, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, original oak bench
36. SBYC, interior, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor mantelpiece
37. SBYC, interior, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor auditorium
38. SBYC, interior, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, west wing, back stairs
39. SBYC, interior, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, auditorium

**Appendix – Historic Views from the Collection of the Boston Public Library**

- A.1 Undated view of the seawall constructed by the Boston Street Dept. in 1898.
- A.2 Postcard view of the South Boston boat clubs, postmarked 1906
- A.3 Ca. 1905 view, note original water elevation of the CYC at right
- A.4 Ca. 1905 view of SBYC with E.M. Wheelwright's Head House at far right
- A.5 Ca. 1905 view of SBYC water elevation
- A.6 View of second L Street Bath House complex, ca. 1902
- A.7 Ca. 1905 view of Mosquito Fleet YC (demolished)

(end)

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Toomey and Rankin described the new clubhouse as "a commodious structure, with reception, smoking and lounging rooms, besides a well arranged hall and extensive and well arranged lockers. Verandahs on the water side and balconies on the other sides offer excellent places for observation." By all accounts the CYC offered a wide range of year-round activities with members enjoying winter evenings engaged in bowling, whist, and cribbage contests.

The CYC has significant historic associations with Joseph E. Doherty, the club's second commodore during the early 1900s. He was an accomplished yachtsman and owner of *Early Dawn*, considered to have been one of the finest and fastest boats ever to race on Dorchester Bay. Under Doherty's leadership, the CYC gained a reputation for ranking among the most hospitable clubs on the New England coast, attracting many champion racing boats to its moorings. In 1900, Doherty managed the construction of a one story building containing 26 still extant on the east side of the clubhouse property.

The 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CYC was celebrated in 1921. The club hosted a grand banquet which was attended by approximately 200 of its members and friends. In attendance at the event were "many prominent men of the yachting fraternity."

After 1940, a distinct change in the type of pleasure craft associated with the CYC and other clubs became evident. In the *Golden Jubilee CYC History* (1946), the unidentified author notes that "Up to a few years ago many beautiful and fast sail boats were enrolled at the Club but as the motor boat was developed in the later years, the fleet now contains some of the finest yachts of this type and the majority of our boats are propelled by power instead of wind."

(end)

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### APPENDIX A: South Boston Boat Clubs Historic District

Post Card Views of the South Boston Boat Clubs from the Collection of the Boston Public Library.

A.1 Undated view of the sea wall constructed by the Boston Street Department in 1898



A.2 Post Card view of the South Boston Boat Clubs post marked 1906



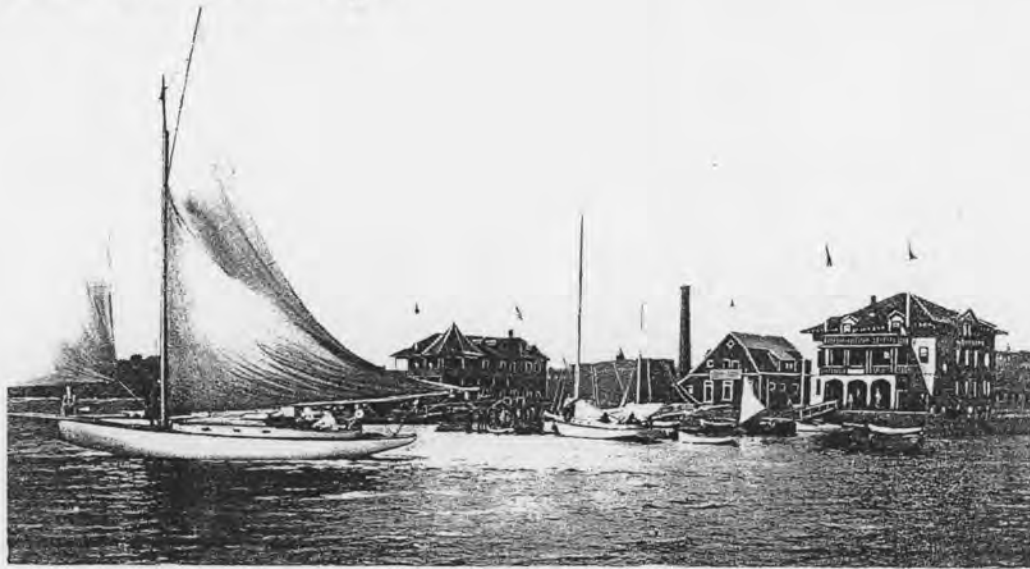
United States Department of the Interior  
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A. 3 Undated view (c. 1905) of the South Boston Boat Clubs. Note the original water elevation of the C. Y. C. at the far right.



687. COLUMBIAN YACHT CLUB, SOUTH BOSTON.

*E. G. Johnson.*

(10)

A. 4 Undated view (c. 1905) of the S. B. Y.C. with E. M. Wheelwright's Head House at the far right



A 642

*Water Front View, showing Yacht Clubs,  
South Boston, Mass.*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

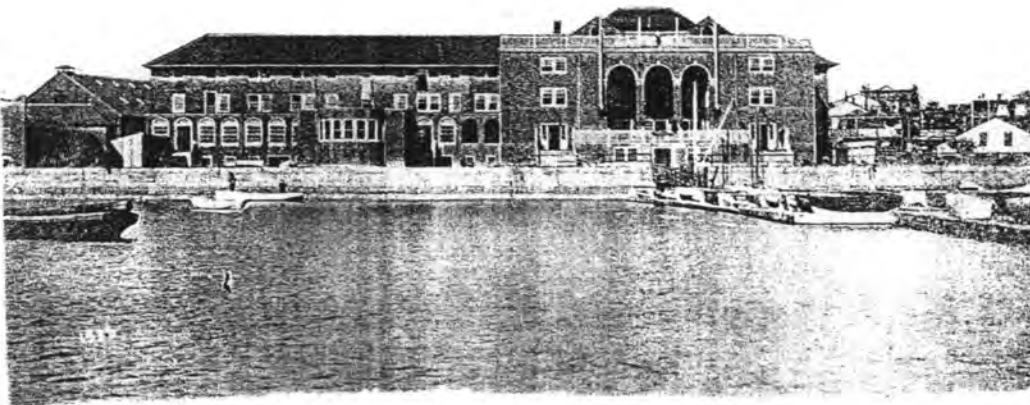
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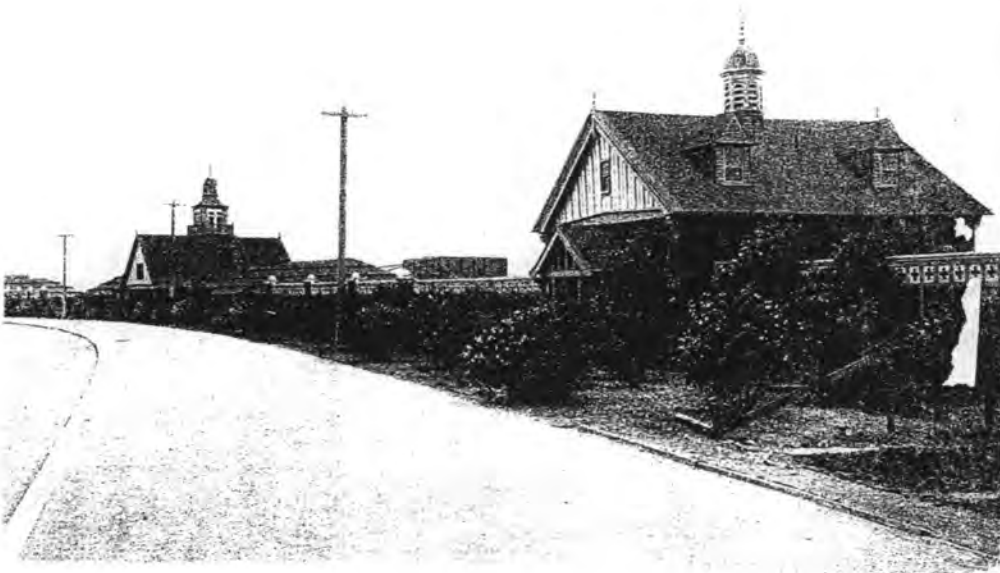
A. 5 View of S. B. Y. C. water elevation c. 1905

South Boston Yacht Club, City Point,  
South Boston, Mass.



A. 6. View of second L-Street Bath House complex, c. 1902

VIEW OF SECOND L-STREET BATH HOUSE COMPLEX



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National Park Service

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### A. 7 View of Mosquito Fleet Yacht Club (demolished), c. 1905

Mosquito Fleet Yacht Club House, South Boston, Mass.

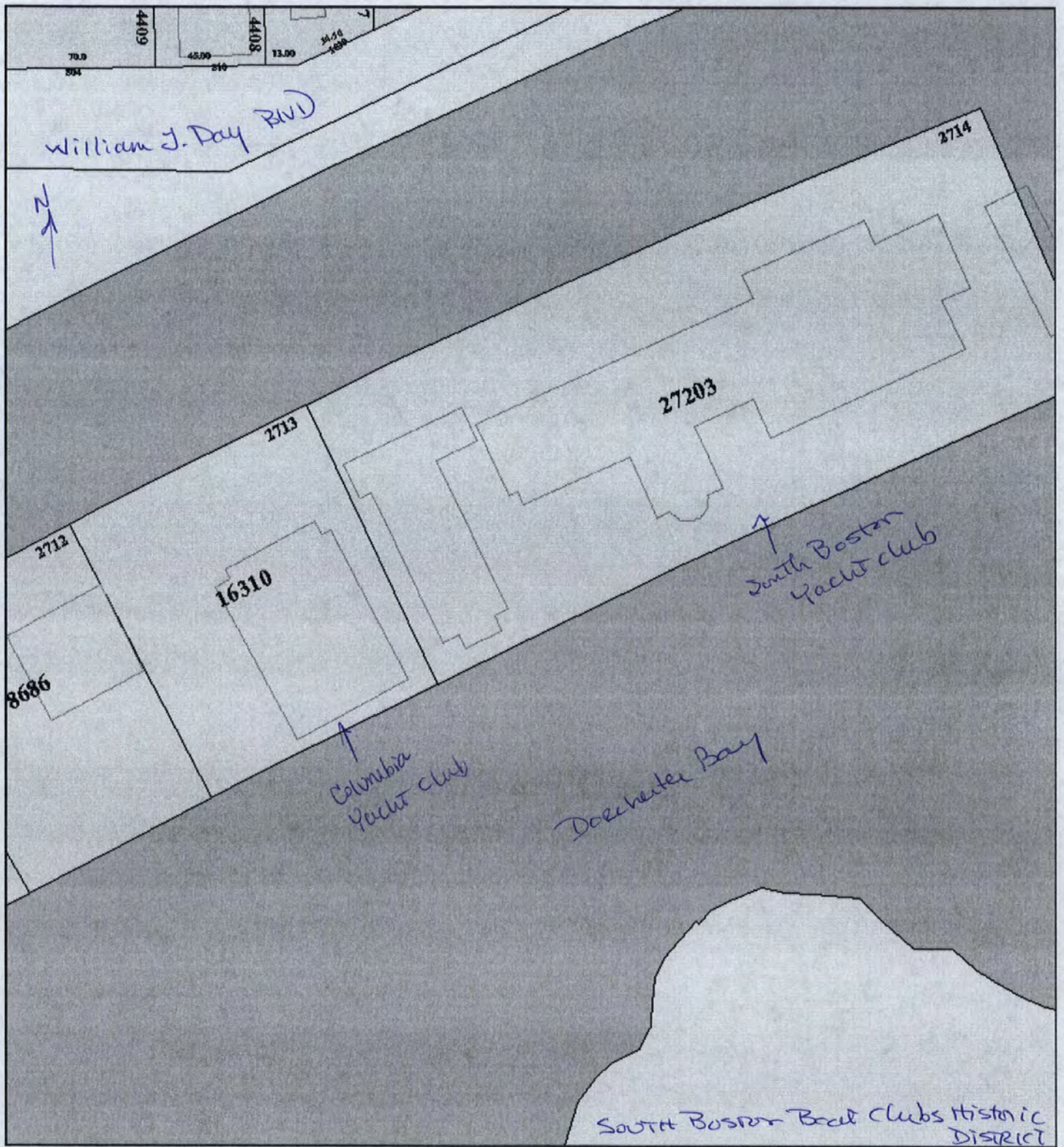


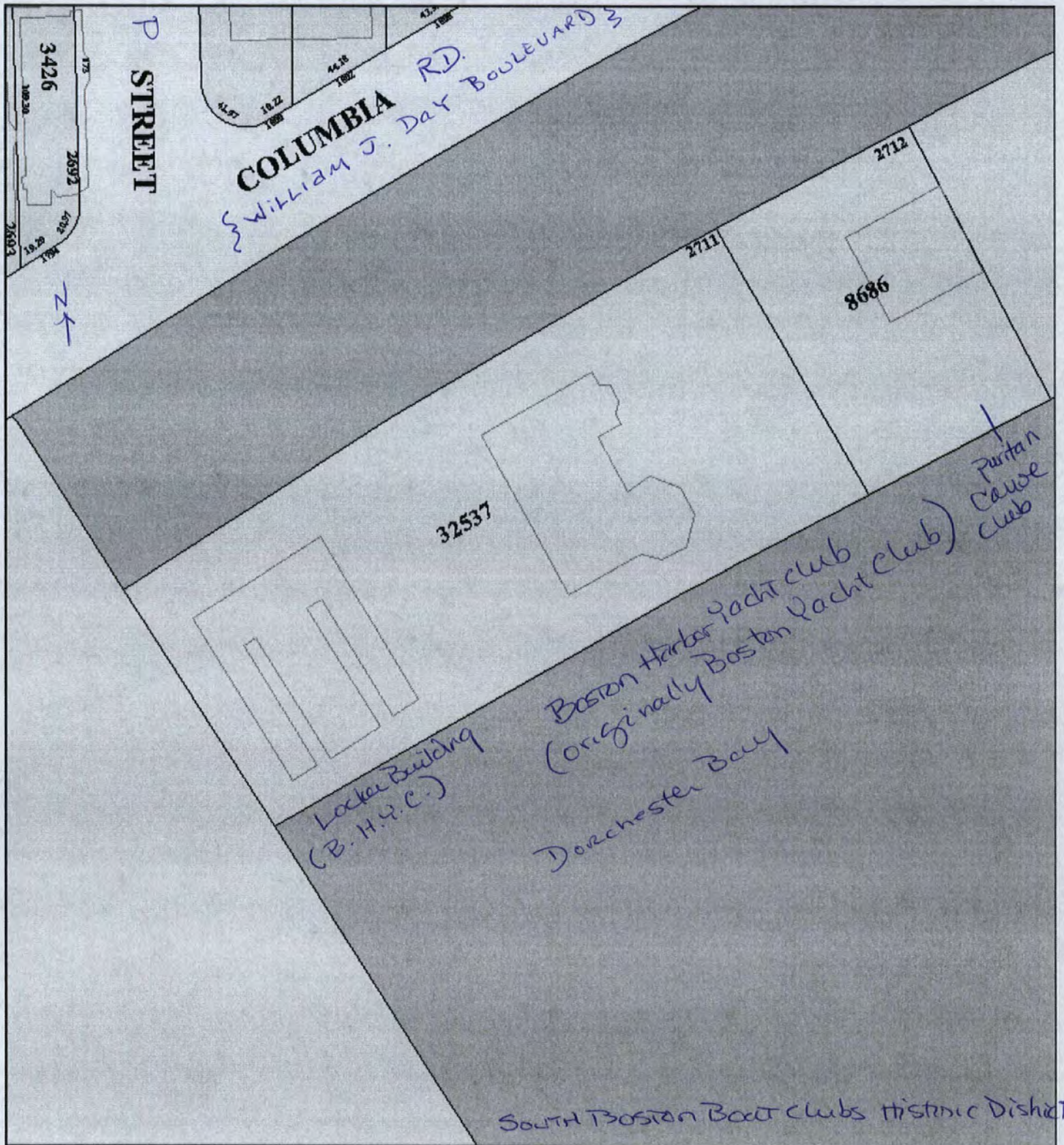
**South Boston Boat Clubs HD  
Boston, MA**

**District Data Sheet**

Boston Harbor YC (MHC # 6855) Locker building	1793-1805 Day Boulevard	1898-1900 early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	QA/Col.Rev./Tud. Rev. Utilitarian (wooden)	B/C B/C
Puritan Canoe Club (MHC # 6852)	1819 Day Boulevard	ca. 1900	Shingle	B/C
Columbia Yacht Club (MHC # 6853) Locker building	1825-1829 Day Boulevard	1899 early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.	QA/Shingle/Craftsman Utilitarian (wooden)	B/C B/C
South Boston Yacht Club (MHC # 6851)	1849 Day Boulevard	1899-1901	QA/Shingle. Col. Rev./ Craftsman	B/C
Iron fence	along street side of district	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.		ST/C
Retaining wall (granite block)	on Dorchester Bay side of district	early 20 <sup>th</sup> c.		ST/C

TOTALS: 6 contributing buildings, 2 contributing structures





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

**National Register of Historic Places  
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**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

NRIS Reference Number: 05000936 Date Listed: 9/01/2005

Property Name: South Boston Boat Clubs Historic District County: Suffolk 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.

Patrick Andrews  
Signature of the Keeper

9/1/2005  
Date of Action

-----  
Amended Items in Nomination:

This SLR makes two corrections to the form. The district is nominated under Criterion B for its association with Gen. Benjamin Butler. Butler died in 1893 and the defined Period of Significance for the district begins in 1898. Because he was not alive during the Period of Significance, Butler's name will not be included for association with this district. The Period of Significance ends in 1955, but 1962 is included in the category of Significant Dates. Since it is outside of the Period of Significance, 1962 will not be recorded as a Significant Date.

**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 NAME: South Boston Boat Clubs Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Suffolk

DATE RECEIVED: 7/21/05      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/10/05  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/25/05      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/03/05  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 05000936

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT       RETURN       REJECT      9/1/05 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A, B, C  
REVIEWER Patrick Andrus      DISCIPLINE Historian  
TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_      DATE 9/1/05

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached 

SLR
628

 Y/N  
If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet



05000936  
OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

South Boston Boat Clubs HD  
Boston / South Boston (Suffolk), MA

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The coordinates originally provided for point 1 in the South Boston Boat Clubs HD group of coordinates was 19 330000 4688420. The correct location is 9420 feet due East of this point at **19 333000 4688420** (North American Datum 1927).

Corrected March 2009

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: South Boston Boat Clubs Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Suffolk

DATE RECEIVED: 10/28/11 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/13/11  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 05000936

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 \_\_\_\_\_ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Additional Documentation Approved

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept  
REVIEWER E. Beal DISCIPLINE Historic  
TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE 12.9.11

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

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



NO  
PARKING  
PLEASE  
DO NOT  
BLOCK  
DRIVEWAY

Boston Harbor Yacht Club

William J. Day Blvd

South Boston

Roll: 01139

Frs: 15A + 16A

Fig. 1



Boston Harbor Yacht Club  
(originally the Boston Yacht Club)

William J. Day Blvd.

South Boston, MA

Roll: 81135

Frs; 35A + 36A

Fig. 2



BOSTON HARBOR  
YACHT CLUB

Boston Harbor Yacht Club  
(originally the Boston Yacht Club)

William J. Day Blvd  
South Boston, MA

Roll: 81139

Frs: 33 A, 34 A

F.6.3



East Elevation

Boston Harbor Yacht Club  
(originally the Boston Yacht Club)

William J. Bulward

South Boston, MA

Roll: 81139

Frs: 314, 324

Fig. 4



Boston Harbor Yacht Club  
(originally the Boston Yacht Club)

William J. Day Blvd.

South Boston, MA

Roll: 81139

Frs: 27A, 28A

Fig. 5



West Elevation

Boston Harbor Yacht Club  
(originally the Boston Yacht Club)

William J. Day Boulevard

South Boston, MA

Roll: 81139

Frs: 29A, 30A

Fig. 6



South Boston Yacht Club  
Historic District

West Cleveland

Boston Harbor Yacht  
Club

ROLL: 81139

Ft: 21A, 22A

Fig. 7



South Boston, MA  
Boston Harbor Yacht Club

Wm. T. Jay Blvd  
Reception Hall Staircase

Roll: 81505

FR: 3A + 4A

Fig. 8



Day Boulevard elevation  
Boster Harbor Yacht Club  
Lockers structure

William J. Blvd.

Roll: 81139

Frs: 17A, 18A

Fig. 9



Locker structures

West side Boston Harbor Yacht Club

South Boston, MA

William J. Day Blvd.

Roll: 81139

Frs: 23A, 24A

Fig 10



Puutan Cause Club  
1819 William J. Day Blvd  
South Boston. MA

Roll: 81139

Frs: 5 and 6

Fig 11



Puritan Carse Club  
South Boston. MA

1819 William J. Day  
Boulevard

Roll: 81139

FRS: 3am24

Fig. 12



Puritan Cause Club

1819 William J. Day Blvd.

South Boston, MA

Roll: 8113f

Frs: 7 and 8

Fig. 13



1477 33 H N N H 18 0903 24/1/1998  
No. 36  
Puritan Cancelled  
undated photo  
of water side  
elevator

Roll: 81505  
FF: 31A, 32A

Fig 14



Puritan Cane Club

William J. Day Blvd.

South Boston, MA

Roll: 81139

Frs: 13A, 14A

Fig. 15



Puritan Canoe Club  
South Boston, MA

1819 William J. Day Blvd

Roll: 81139

Frs: 9A, 10A, 11A, 12A



Fig. 16



Panitan Canal Club  
South Boston, MA

1819 William J. Blvd.

Roll: B1139

Frs: 9A, 10A, 11A, 12A

Fig. 17



Puritan Cause Club  
Day Blvd. So. Boet

interior: First +  
floor, great rental  
room

Roll: 8105

Fc: 33,34

Fig. 18



Columbia Yacht Club  
1000 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK, N.Y.

4x4  
4000 H.P. MOTOR

Yacht Club  
Columbia

1825-1829

Columbia Yacht Club  
William J. Day Blvd.

Roll: B11 30

Frs: 33A, 34A  
Smith Boston, MA

Fig 19



South Boston, MA

Columbia Yacht Club

William J. Day Blvd.

(Columbia Road)

(strandway)

Roll: 81138

Frs: 35A + 36A

South Boston, MA

Fig. 20



Sibley Yacht Club  
11 WESTON ROAD  
NEW YORK, N.Y.

4x4  
OFF ROAD



Columbia Yacht Club

1825-1829 William J. Dry Blvd.

(Columbia Road)

(Shawway)

Roll: 81138

F: 334 + 34A

South Boston, MA

Fig. 21



Columbia Yacht Club  
1825-1829 William D. Day  
Boulevard  
South Boston

Roll: 81138

Frs: 21A + 22A

Fig. 22



Center stair hall  
Columbia Yacht  
Club

William J.

1825-1829<sup>2</sup>

Day Blvd.  
SO. Boston  
Roll: 81505  
Fr: 10+11

Fig 23



Columbia Yacht Club  
Center Steer hall

1825-1829 William J. Day Blvd.

South Boston, MA

Roll: 81505

Fr: 14A + 15A

Fig. 24



South Boston, MA

Columbia Yacht  
Club

(Locker's building)

William J Day Blvd.

1825.

(1829 Columbia Rd)

Shawway

Roll: 81138

Frs: 31 + 32A

South Boston, MA

Fig. 25



Columbia Yacht Club  
Locker Building  
at east side of Club  
House

1825-1829 William J. Day Blvd  
South Boston, MA

Roll: 81130

Frs: 25A, 26A

Fig. 26



Columbia Yacht Club  
1825-1829 Wm. J. Day Blvd  
South Boston, MA

Locker Building  
Interior

Roll: 81505  
FR: 6 and 7

00T/090Z 0908 24 H H H H 42 GRSS 2868/100  
FILM NO: 6 >0128H

Fig. 27



The South Boston Yacht Club  
→ William J. Day Blvd.  
1849 South Boston, MA

Roll: 81138

Frs: 13A + 14A

Fig. 28



The South Boston Yacht Club  
1849 William J. Day Boulevard  
South Boston, MA

Roll: 81138

Frs: 15A+16A

Fig. 29



The South Boston Yacht Club

1849 William J. Day Blvd.

South Boston, MA

Roll: 81138

Frs: 9A + 10A

Fig. 30



South Boston Yacht Club  
1849 William J. Day Blvd.

South Boston, MA

Roll: B1130

Frs: 19A, 20A

Fig. 31



South Boston Yacht Club  
1849 William J. Day Boulevard  
South Boston, MA

Roll: 81 138

Frs: 1/A + 12A

Fig. 32



1849 South Boston Yacht Club  
William J. Day Boulevard  
South Boston, MA

Roll: 81138

Frs: 17A, 18A

Fig. 33



SOUTH BOSTON Yacht Club  
3<sup>rd</sup> fl. stair hall, south  
wing

1849 Wm. J. Day Blvd.  
South Boston, MA

Roll: 81505

Fr: 20, 21

Fig 34



SOUTH Boston  
Yacht Club  
Original Oak bench  
2nd fl. Lounge  
SOUTH Boston. MA

Roll: 81505

Ft: 18+19

1849 William J. Day Blvd,

Fig. 35



South Boston  
Yacht Club

Board Room  
main floor - 2nd

1849 William J. Day Blvd.  
South Boston, MA

Roll: 81505

Fr: 16 + 17

Fig 36



So. Boston Yacht  
Club

1849 William J.

Day Blvd.  
South Boston  
3rd fl.

Auditorium

Roll: B1505

Fr: 22 and 23

Fig 37



1849 William J.

So. Barm  
Yacht Club

Day Blvd

So. Barm

3rd Fl Audition

Roll: 81505

Fr: 24 + 25

Fig. 38



So. Boston  
Yacht Club

West Wing  
2<sup>nd</sup> fl.

back stairs  
railing

Roll: 81505

Ex: 30, 31

1849 William J. Day Blvd.

Fig 39





# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

House of Representatives

State House, Boston 02133-1054

RECEIVED

JUN 08 2005

MASS. HIST. COMM

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125

June 3, 2005

Re: Nominations to the National Register for Historical Areas and Historical Landmarks for the following locations:

Boston Harbor Yacht Club  
Columbia Yacht Club  
South Boston Yacht Club  
Puritan Yacht Club

Dear Director Friedberg:

I am writing to you in support of the nomination applications described above, which seek to register the aforementioned yacht clubs in the section of South Boston, located within the City of Boston.

Historically, a boat club has resided in South Boston since 1874 and the yacht clubs previously listed have resided in South Boston since 1898. The existence and presence of these boating facilities has a deep historic importance and cultural significance to the residents of South Boston. These yacht clubs exemplify the proud heritage South Boston has with the ocean.

The City of Boston Landmark Commission has granted formal recognition of the area and the yacht clubs. Therefore, I respectfully request your favorable vote in support of the applicants requesting to be listed in the National Register for Historical Areas and Historical Landmarks. It is my hope that the area along Day Boulevard in South Boston will be known as the "*South Boston Boat Clubs Historical District*." I thank you in advance for your time and consideration of my request.

Very Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian P. Wallace".

Brian P. Wallace  
State Representative  
4<sup>th</sup> Suffolk District



June 7, 2005

RECEIVED

JUN 08 2005

MASS. HIST. COMM

Cara Metz  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125

**Re: South Boston Yacht Clubs National Register Nomination**

Dear Ms. Metz:

Thank you for providing the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) the opportunity to review the National Register nomination for the South Boston Yacht Clubs. I understand that the Commission will vote on this nomination at its next meeting on June 8th.

While the nomination makes a compelling case for listing the architecturally significant buildings on the National Register of Historic Places, DCR has a number of concerns. These yacht clubs are located on public park land under the care of DCR, and are used by private interests under revocable permits (not leases as stated in the document). At this time, not all of the clubs using the nominated properties have signed and returned a permit or paid the required fee, as requested by DCR.

As the steward of the Commonwealth's park system, DCR is obligated to protect the public interest, especially when DCR lands are used by private parties to the exclusion of the general public. Over the past year DCR has been working with this permit program to assure (1) that use of this special privilege by private organizations to occupy public park land is protective of the public's rights and expectations in its public park land; (2) that minimum standards for use apply to each permittee; (3) that appropriate public access, outreach and stewardship are implemented and maintained for each facility; and (4) that the citizens of the Commonwealth are fairly compensated for the use of public park land by private organizations. The permits are intended to formalize the relationship between the agency and each user group, thereby allowing each group to legally use and occupy the site, and to maintain a consistent, high level of protection for the resources of the historically significant Metropolitan Parks System. As you know, DCR is committed to a management strategy that protects the integrity of the system as a whole.

Although supportive in principle of the concept of the nomination and the importance of the historic structures, DCR is concerned that most of the South Boston Yacht Clubs have

251 Causeway Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02114  
(617) 626-1250  
(617) 626-1351 FAX  
[www.mass.gov/dcr](http://www.mass.gov/dcr)

MITT ROMNEY  
*Governor*

KERRY HEALEY  
*Lt. Governor*

ELLEN ROY HERZFELDER  
*Secretary*

STEPHEN R. PRITCHARD  
*Acting Commissioner*



chosen neither to execute the permits nor remit the required fee; and, as such, outstanding issues of public access and management of public resources remain unresolved. Prior to moving in the direction of including this area on the National Register, these important issues need to be addressed to ensure consistent treatment and management of public resources. Accordingly, the agency cannot support any change in the properties' status at this time and requests that the nomination be tabled until outstanding issues are resolved. Please contact me at (617) 626-4994 if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom LaRosa', written in a cursive style.

Thomas J. LaRosa  
General Counsel

cc: Patrice Kish, Director, Office of Cultural Resources  
Ellen Lipsey, Executive Director, Boston Landmarks Commission

STEPHEN F. LYNCH  
9TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL MARKETS, INSURANCE  
AND GOVERNMENT SPONSORED ENTERPRISES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY  
OPPORTUNITY

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, EMERGING  
THREATS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS  
RANKING MEMBER

ASSISTANT DEMOCRATIC WHIP

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2109**

319 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-8273  
(202) 225-3984 FAX

88 BLACK FALCON AVENUE  
SUITE 340  
BOSTON, MA 02210  
617-428-2000  
617-428-2011 FAX

BROCKTON FEDERAL BUILDING  
186 MAIN STREET  
BROCKTON, MA 02301  
508-586-5556  
508-580-4692 FAX

STEPHEN.LYNCH@MAIL.HOUSE.GOV  
WWW.HOUSE.GOV/LYNCH

June 8, 2005

Ms. Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125

Dear Ms. Friedberg:

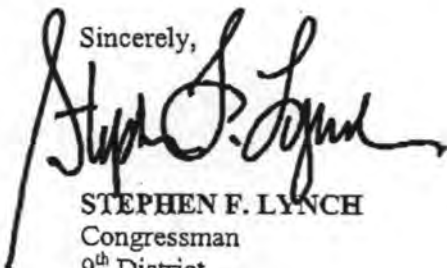
Please accept this letter in support of the Boston Harbor Yacht Club, South Boston Yacht Club, Columbia Yacht Club and the Puritan Canoe Club in their request to be included on the National Register of Historic Places. As Congressman for the Ninth District of Massachusetts, I represent the neighborhood of South Boston.

The original Boston Yacht Club was founded on the site in 1876 by a group of local sailors for the purpose of holding competitive small boat races. Since 1898, the site has been home to all four yacht clubs and is considered the home of competitive sailboat racing on the Atlantic coast. Each building represents a different type of architecture commonly associated with yacht clubs. The site is exclusive and historic in the sense that it is the only location on the Atlantic coast that houses all four structural types.

These yacht clubs have played an important role in Massachusetts maritime history. I believe that their contributions have been and will continue to be deserving of inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

It is my hope that you will give the request of Boston Harbor Yacht Club, South Boston Yacht Club, Columbia Yacht Club and the Puritan Canoe Club for designation on the National Register of Historic Places your utmost consideration.

Sincerely,



STEPHEN F. LYNCH  
Congressman  
9<sup>th</sup> District  
Massachusetts



## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

July 18, 2005

Mr. John Roberts  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005



Dear Mr. Roberts:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

South Boston Boat Clubs Historic District, Boston (Suffolk), MA

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 properties included in this Certified Local Government community district were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 60 to 90 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

Two letters of support have been received and are enclosed. Also enclosed is a letter from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Sincerely,

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

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Susan Pranger, Chair, Boston Landmarks Commission  
Edward Gordon, Preservation Consultant  
Hon. Thomas Menino, Mayor, City of Boston  
Roysin B. Younkin, Boston CLG Coordinator  
Congressman Stephen F. Lynch  
State Representative Brian P. Wallace  
Boston Harbor Yacht Club  
Columbia Yacht Club  
Puritan Canoe Club  
South Boston Yacht Club



**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

October 20, 2011

Mr. J. Paul Loether  
National Register of Historic Places  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW 8<sup>th</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Re: Additional Documentation (Technical corrections of UTM's)

In the process of mapping National Register nominations for our GIS database, we have identified errors in UTM coordinates for 23 properties. The errors vary from a few hundred feet to hundreds of miles, often due to transposition of numbers.

As recommended by Edson Beall, we are enclosing a continuation sheet for each of the nominations. Please let me know if you need more information in order to correct your records.

Sincerely,

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

Betsy Friedberg  
National Register Director  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Enclosures