

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**HISTORIC The U.S. Gundelø Philadelphia (Continental Gondala)AND/OR COMMON  
The Philadelphia**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Washington \_\_\_ VICINITY OF  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE D.C. CODE COUNTY CODE

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
___DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	___OCCUPIED	___AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM exhibit
___BUILDING(S)	___PRIVATE	___UNOCCUPIED	___COMMERCIAL ___PARK
___STRUCTURE	___BOTH	___WORK IN PROGRESS	___EDUCATIONAL ___PRIVATE RESIDENCE
___SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	___ENTERTAINMENT ___RELIGIOUS
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	___IN PROCESS	___YES: RESTRICTED	___GOVERNMENT ___SCIENTIFIC
	___BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	___INDUSTRIAL ___TRANSPORTATION
		___NO	___MILITARY ___OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Smithsonian Institution, Division of Naval History

STREET & NUMBER  
Department of National and Military HistoryCITY, TOWN Washington \_\_\_ VICINITY OF  
STATE D.C.**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE, N/A  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE None known

DATE

\_\_\_FEDERAL \_\_\_STATE \_\_\_COUNTY \_\_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excavated		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Philadelphia's hull is 54 feet in length, 15 feet in beam and approximately five feet deep. Construction was almost entirely of oak and sap still remained in the bottom planking. The mast, almost 36 feet high, was found intact except for the top portion, and the hull timbers were still in place. Three shot holes were visible in the hull and in one of them a cannon ball was lodged. Considering the punishment it took in battle and its long years underwater, the Philadelphia is an exceptionally well-preserved survivor of this important Revolutionary War naval battle.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES August 8-October 11, 1776 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The United States Gundelo Philadelphia is the only surviving gun boat built and manned by American forces during the Revolutionary War. Further, the vessel is one of the 15 small craft with which Benedict Arnold fought 29 British vessels in the battle off Valcour Island, Lake Champlain, October 11, 1776. The year of grace won by the building of Arnold's "fleet" and the battle off Valcour Island paved the way for the decisive American victory at Saratoga in the fall of the following year.

Little more than a rowboat compared with modern vessels, the Philadelphia was one of the hastily-built fleet constructed in early summer of 1776 at the present Whitehall, New York. On September 23, 1776, the fleet took position in the small bay west of Valcour Island, about seven miles south of what is now Plattsburg, New York. The sound between the Island and the mainland was about three quarters of a mile wide, divided by a high bluff projecting from the west side of the Island. Arnold's fleet formed its line south of the bluff and in this position fought the heavier British fleet to a standstill on October 11. The American force was badly damaged in the action and only with considerable luck was Arnold to elude the enemy and escape southward during the night. The Royal Savage, the American flagship, and the Philadelphia had gone to the bottom on October 11, and only four of Arnold's vessels managed to elude the British pursuit during the next two days.

In 1934, the wreck of the Royal Savage was recovered and the pieces saved. In the following year the Philadelphia, remarkably well preserved by the cold water, was identified and salvaged from the sandy lake bottom near the mid-channel of Valcour Bay. After her guns, a twelve-pounder and two nine-pounders, were lifted, the hull was raised 57 feet to the surface and towed to the beach. In addition to her guns, hundreds of other relics were found on the vessel--shot, cooking utensils, tools, buttons, buckles and human bones.

In the ensuing years the vessel was exhibited at various points on Lake Champlain and the Hudson, prior to her installation at a permanent exhibit space at Exeter, New York. In 1961 by the terms of the will of Lorenzo Haggliend, who first identified, salvaged, and later exhibited the vessel, the Philadelphia was bequeathed to the Smithsonian Institution. She has been since exhibited on the third floor of the Smithsonian's Museum of History and Technology, in Washington, D.C. The exhibit also includes virtually all the artifacts recovered with the vessel in 1935.

(CONTINUED)

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

L. F. Hagglund, A Page from the Past: The Story of the Continental Gundelo Philadelphia on Lake Champlain - 1776-1949 (n.p., 1949); Alfred T. Mahan, The Major Operations of the Navies in the War of American Independence (Boston, 1913); Christopher Ward, The War of the Revolution, 2 vols (New York, 1952), I.

(CONTINUED)

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY N/A

UTM REFERENCES

A								
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING						
C								

B								
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING						
D								

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Philadelphia is presently exhibited on the third floor of the Museum of History and Technology of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. The boundaries of the landmark are the dimensions of the ship itself.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Charles E. Shedd, Jr., 1960, original report; Blanche H. Schroer, Historian

ORGANIZATION  
Historic Sites Survey Division, National Park Service

DATE  
2/24/77

STREET & NUMBER  
1100 L Street NW.

TELEPHONE  
202-523-5464

CITY OR TOWN  
Washington

STATE  
D.C. 20240

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE     

LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Designated: JAN 20, 1976  
date

Boundary Certificate  
DATE 12/20/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 12/20/78

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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**CONTINUATION SHEET**

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In recent years the original payroll of the Continental Gondola Philadelphia, whose crew was hitherto unknown, was recovered, in some documents at Fort Concho in Texas. The payroll lists the entire 44 men of the crew, identifying Captain Benjamin Rue as of Pennsylvania, and 27 of the 44 men as from New Hampshire.

(See also national historic landmarks Fort Crown Point, Fort Ticonderoga and Fort St. Frederick.)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

R. G. Skerrett, "Another Revolutionary War Vessel Recovered," Compressed Air Magazine, XLI (July, 1936).

Telephone interview with Philip Lendeberg, Curator, Division of Naval History,  
October 26, 1976.