COMMON!

Conanicut Battery
AND/OR
HISTORIC;
LOCATION
STREET AND NUMBER;
To the west of the northern portion of Beaver Tail Road
CITY OR TOWN:
Jamestown
STATE
Rhode Island, 02835

CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
(Chack One)
☐ District ☐ Building ☐ Site ☐ Structure ☐ Object
☐ Public ☐ Private ☐ Both
☐ Public Acquisition:
☐ In Process ☐ Being Considered
☐ Unoccupied ☐ Preservation work in progress
☐ Occupied ☐ Restricted ☐ Unrestricted

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)
☐ Agricultural ☐ Government ☐ Pork ☐ Transportation
☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Private Residence ☐ Other (Specify)
☐ Educational ☐ Military ☐ Religious ☐ Comments
☐ Entertaiment ☐ Museum ☐ Scientific

OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNER'S NAME:
Town of Jamestown
STREET AND NUMBER:
71 Narragansett Avenue
CITY OR TOWN:
Jamestown
STATE:
Rhode Island, 02835

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Town Clerk
STREET AND NUMBER:
71 Narragansett Avenue
CITY OR TOWN:
Jamestown
STATE:
Rhode Island, 02835

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE OF SURVEY:
Not so represented
DATE OF SURVEY:
☐ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
STREET AND NUMBER:
CITY OR TOWN:
STATE:
CODE
### MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

**Latitude and Longitude Coordinates Defining a Rectangle Locating the Property**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corner</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Longitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NW</td>
<td>41° 28' 38.73&quot;</td>
<td>71° 23' 49.32&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Approximate Acreage of Nominated Property:** 1.0 acres

**List of States and Counties for Properties Overlapping State or County Boundaries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
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**Property Description**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

- National [ ]
- State [ ]
- Local [ ]

Name ____________________________

Title ____________________________

Date ____________________________

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**National Register Verification**

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

_____________________________

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

__________

Attest:

_____________________________

Keeper of The National Register

__________
The land on which the Conanicut Battery was built originally belonged to Benedict Arnold, a former governor of Rhode Island, but at the time of the Revolution it was in the possession of Jerathmael Bowers. The fortification was built by Americans, probably in May of 1776, and was to be used in concert with a battery at Bonnet Point to defend the West Passage of Narragansett Bay with its six or eight heavy cannon, but it was occupied by the British from the time they landed in Newport in December, 1776 until August, 1778, when ..., anticipating the arrival and occupancy of the island by the French, they (the British) spiked the guns, destroyed the magazines, abandoned the place and returned to Newport. [Field]

When the French arrived in the summer of 1778, Captain Frederick MacKenzie, who had been with the British Royal Fusiliers in Newport, recorded in his diary:

The General, judging it would answer little purpose to risque the loss of the Detachments upon Conanicut, sent orders, as soon as the French ship had passed the Battery on Fox Hill, to withdraw ... The French took possession of Conanicut this day and hoisted a White Colour there.

Though the cannon of Conanicut Battery were never fired in active fighting, the battery had, nevertheless, a certain effect by its very existence and placement. It was strategic, first, in the intended defence of Narragansett Bay by the Americans and, second—when under British control—in the blockade of the bay which kept the colonial navy bottled up in Providence and also restricted the movements of privateers.

### Statement of Significance

The land on which the Conanicut Battery was built originally belonged to Benedict Arnold, a former governor of Rhode Island, but at the time of the Revolution it was in the possession of Jerathmael Bowers. The fortification was built by Americans, probably in May of 1776, and was to be used in concert with a battery at Bonnet Point to defend the West Passage of Narragansett Bay with its six or eight heavy cannon, but it was occupied by the British from the time they landed in Newport in December, 1776 until August, 1778, when ..., anticipating the arrival and occupancy of the island by the French, they (the British) spiked the guns, destroyed the magazines, abandoned the place and returned to Newport. [Field]

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Conanicut Battery is a Revolutionary War fortification located on the west side of Conanicut Island (Jamestown), on what is known as Prospect Hill, which has also sometimes been called Fox Hill. Its original plan was supposed to have been thus: Today one cannot easily surmise this shape, but it is still clearly a rectangular landform with sides that are "pulled in" towards the center. This artillery emplacement could be described as a continuous trench dug about six feet below ground level, with sides which are built up about two feet above ground level, giving an impression of long mounds. The earthwork is about 150 feet in length and 75 feet in width at its maxima, and 100 feet by 50 feet at minima—and thus it has a large central area. Particularly remarkable is the fact that the forms are still so very well defined; perhaps part of the reason for this survival is that the earth here is hard and stony. The land slopes down towards the west passage in Narragansett Bay; one can see Point Judith and Block Island to the southwest and Dutch Island, with its lighthouse, to the north.

A site of about an acre has been cleared on and around the battery. In 1931, the Daughters of the American Revolution placed a bronze marker (which seems no longer in evidence) at the site and planted three large spruce trees (which remain) symmetrically down the center of the battery.
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<td>COUNTY:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newport</td>
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**PHOTO REFERENCE**

- PHOTO CREDIT: B. Christopher Bene
- DATE OF PHOTO: 1971
- NEGATIVE FILED AT: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, John Brown House, 52 Power Street, Providence, Rhode Island, 02906

**IDENTIFICATION**

- DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC: View towards west.
GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES

Latitude: 41° 28' 38.73" N
Longitude: 71° 23' 49.32" W
Form 10-301
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Property Map Form

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

1. Name

Common: Conanicut Battery

2. Location

Street and Number:
To the west of the northern portion of Beavertail Road

City or Town:
Jamestown

State: Rhode Island

3. Map Reference

Source:
U.S. Geological Survey

Scale: 1:24,000

Date: 1957

4. Requirements

To be included on all maps:
1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.