United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name: __The Rhode Island Red

other name/site number:

2. Location

street & number: __Intersection of Adamsville Road, Westport Harbor Road (South Road), Main Road, and Stone Church Road

not for publication: _N/A

city/town: __Little Compton_____ vicinity: _N/A

state: __RI_____ county: __Newport_____ code: __005_____ zip code: __02837

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: ____public-local

Category of Property: ____object

Number of Resources within Property:

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<th>Contributing</th>
<th>Noncontributing</th>
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Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:

Name of related multiple property listing: __Outdoor Sculpture of RI, 1851-present
Property name: The Rhode Island Red, Newport County, Little Compton, RI

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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. 

Signature of certifying official

Date 3/22/01

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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 Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: RECREATION AND CULTURE

Sub: work of art

Current: RECREATION AND CULTURE

Sub: work of art
7. Description

Architectural Classification:

NA

Other Description:

Materials:  foundation  walls  roof  other  METAL, bronze

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:  statewide

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):  F

Areas of Significance:  Art

Period(s) of Significance:  1925

Significant Dates:  1925

Significant Person(s):

Cultural Affiliation:

Architect/Builder:  Norton, Henry L. (sculptor)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet.
9. Major Bibliographical References

X See continuation sheet.

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      #

Primary Location of Additional Data:

___ State historic preservation office
___ Other state agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other -- Specify Repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property:  less than one

UTM References Zone  Easting Northing Zone  Easting Northing

A 19  322460  4602200  B
C  _______ _______  _______  D

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:  See continuation sheet.

The boundary of the nominated property is the boulder to which the sculpture is affixed.

Boundary Justification:  See continuation sheet.

The Rhode Island Red is set in its original location. While the location of the sculpture in the town of Little Compton is integral to its significance, the significance of the work is not dependent on its specific setting here in this particular stone wall.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title:  Ronald J. Onorato

Organization:  R.I. Historical Preservation & Heritage Comm.  Date:  August 2000

Street & Number:  150 Benefit Street  Telephone:  401-222-2678

City or Town:  Providence  State:  RI  ZIP:  02903
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Property name  The Rhode Island Red, Newport County, Little Compton, RI

Section number  7

Description

This is a bronze relief, depicting a life-size rooster, accompanied by text, and surrounded by a simple molding worked in the bronze. The relief is set into the rough but flattened face of a natural granite boulder and is built into a stone wall in the village of Adamsville.

The rooster is seen in profile and faces right. The beak and comb and the tail and throat feathers are shown in fine detail; the back and breast feathers and the legs are depicted more softly.

The sculpture is 53'' high, 31'' wide, and about 2'' deep. The rooster is titled under the breast: "THE RHODE ISLAND RED." The lower third of the sculpture's face contains this text: "To commemorate the birthplace of the Rhode Island Red breed of fowl which originated near this location--red fowls bred extensively by the farmers of this district and later named "Rhode Island Reds" and brought into national prominence by the poultry fanciers--this tablet placed by the Rhode Island Red Club of America with contributions of Rhode Island Red breeders throughout the world on land donated by Deborah Manchester/1925."

The sculpture is signed at the lower left edge "Henry L. Norton/Northrop, Mass." The sculpture is in good condition; some surface blotches can be seen on the bronze, but no serious damage is visible.
Significance

The Rhode Island Red (1925) is significant because it is the single best and best-known depiction of Rhode Island’s state animal. More than many states’ animals, the Rhode Island Red symbolizes the nation’s smallest state—in its size and in its disposition. The monument also testifies to an aspect of the state’s history, its late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century poultry industry.

The Rhode Island Red originated as a breed here in Little Compton, at William Tripp’s farm on Long Highway, and became an economically important component of the local poultry industry’s production, and of the national and international poultry market as well. The breed was raised both for meat and eggs. It is no longer as important commercially and has been replaced by more specialized breeds; the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy has included the Red on its “WATCH” list, as a breed which could be lost if not monitored and supported. Rhode Island’s poultry industry is now only a minor component of the state’s agriculture.

The sculpture has wide appeal and is one of the best known in the state, perhaps because its homespun subject is portrayed in a medium ordinarily reserved for more solemn subjects. In any case, this chicken has real dignity as well as charm.

The sculptor, Henry L. Norton, was from Winthrop, Massachusetts. The sculpture was commissioned by the Rhode Island Red Club, with contributions from Red breeders throughout the world.

While the Rhode Island Red is primarily commemorative in intent, its role as the principal historic portrayal of the state’s mascot has invested it with its own historic significance.
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Property name: The Rhode Island Red, Newport County, Little Compton, RI

Section number: 10

Major Bibliographical References


Providence Journal 16 November 1924, p. 3; 20 August 1926, p. 1; and 29 August 1926, p. 1.
THE RHODE ISLAND RED

TO COMMEMORATE THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE RHODE ISLAND RED BREED OF FOWL WHICH ORIGINATED NEAR THIS LOCATION.

RED BOWLS WERE BRED EXTENSIVELY BY THE FARMERS OF THIS DISTRICT AND LATER NAMED RHODE-ISLAND-REDS AND BROUGHT INTO NATIONAL PROMINENCE BY THE POULTRY FANCIERS.

THIS TABLET IS PLACED BY THE RHODE ISLAND RED CLUB OF AMERICA WITH CONTRIBUTIONS OF RHODE ISLAND RED BREEDERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

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DEBORAH T. MANCHESTER
1960
The Rhode Island Red
Adamsville Road
Little Compton, RI
Photographer: Ronald J. Onorato
Date: 3/2000
Negative: RITHC
150 Benefit St.
Providence, RI
View: Looking South
Photo #1 of 1