

2694

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bush-Holley House
other names/site number n/a

2. Location

street & number 39 Strickland Road not for publication n/a
city, town Greenwich vicinity n/a
state Connecticut code CT county Fairfield code 001 zip code 06807

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register n/a

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] October 25, 1988
Signature of certifying official Date
Director, Connecticut Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

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] 12-1-88
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

Commerce: inn

Other: art colony

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

New England Colonial

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation granite

walls clapboard, horizontal

flush-boarded siding (ell)

roof wood shingle

other vertical boards (outbuildings)

seamed copper roof (addition)

wood-shingle siding (outbuilding)

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Bush-Holley House faces east on an embankment overlooking Strickland Road and Strickland Brook, a tributary of the Mianus River that runs into Long Island Sound. Located in Cos Cob, a residential section of Greenwich of moderate density, the nominated property consists of the house (constructed ca.1732) and four outbuildings. (Refer to attached site plan. Three of the four outbuildings are contributing resources.) The irregularly shaped lot, sheltered by trees and bushes, slopes up from Strickland Road to the west property line. The four frame outbuildings consist of the archives building (1987) on the southwest corner, barn (ca.1850) to the northwest, shed (ca.1850) to the northwest, and small shed (former outhouse, ca.1850) directly west of the house. The archives building, a non-contributing resource designed to harmonize with the adjacent barn, is compatible in scale and materials with the other three. A dug well, discovered in 1986, is located about 20 feet south of the rear ell. The immediate residential neighborhood consists of a dwelling (ca.1770, formerly Cos Cob Post Office) about 150 feet south on Strickland Road, and a 19th-century residence about 500 feet north and west of the Bush-Holley House. Dense woodlands south, west, and northwest of the property contrast with the open eastern perspective toward the harbor and the Mianus River Bridge of Interstate 95 (photograph #4).

Constructed ca.1732, the two-story five-bay center-chimney saltbox has two major additions off the south (side) and west (rear), as well as a two-story open porch built between 1850 and 1890. (Refer to floor plans and photograph #s 1-5). The house frame consists of oak posts and girts. Where revealed, posts are boxed and painted. The roof frame has common and principal rafters joined by mortise and tenon, and remains exposed in the attic. On the south side of the house a two-story outbuilding was likely moved before 1790 from another site on the property and joined to the main house by a secondary entrance hall.¹ This new wing was used as a counting house or office on the first floor, while the additional bedrooms on the second floor accommodated the Bush family. At the rear (west) end an ell, known as former slaves quarters, was moved concurrently and used as the "new kitchen" (photograph #5).² The rear ell is distinguished from the rest of the house by its rusticated horizontal siding. Siding on the main house consists of early beaded-edge painted oak clapboard

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Bush-Holley House, Greenwich, CT

Section number 7 Page 1

7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

on the second floor of the facade and the entire north side. The rest of the clapboarded exterior is of painted white pine, of recent vintage. On the rear elevation a small shed with a copper roof was added ca. 1901 in order to extend the original kitchen west for use as a living room. Three 12-over-12 windows were installed in this addition to provide additional light for the expanded room (photograph #5).

During 1958 and 1959, following purchase of the property by the Historical Society of the Town of Greenwich, an attempt was made to reconcile numerous Victorian-era alterations in order to convey a more cohesive 18th-century appearance. As a result of this project numerous late 19th-century elements such as altered fireplace openings, Victorian doors and windows, and a second-floor dormer were removed. Architects Watland and Hopping attempted to replicate the original early 18th-century design and scale of the house.

On the facade, the first-floor center entrance has paired, hand-planed 4-paneled doors (photograph #2). Though original, the doors were moved in 1958 from the second-floor porch entry where they had been relocated since ca. 1890, after having been replaced on the first floor by a single Victorian door. Architect Gerald Watland specified removal of the Victorian door and designed in 1959 a prominent Georgian-style frontispiece to surround the paired doors. The frontispiece consists of fluted pilasters applied to a rusticated wood surround and surmounted by a flat pediment (photograph #2). The first-floor entry into the counting house on the south side appears original, with narrow 5-over-6 sash flanking the transom and split, 8-paneled Dutch door. On the facade, the five major bays of the first floor have elongated 2-over-4 sash (ca. 1850), and 12-over-12 sash (ca. 1740) on the second floor. Windows on the side elevations are of varying 18th-century configurations: 9-over-6, 6-over-6, 12-over-12, 9-over-4, and 4-over-4 (photograph #s 3,4). The north (side) elevation, probably best exemplifying the early 18th-century profile and fenestration of the house, clearly shows the extended gable ends and integral leanto (photograph #4). 18th-century window openings on the north side are framed by fairly narrow, molded jambs and surmounted by flat cornices that are flashed on the first-floor level.

The interior, reworked in 1958-1959 according to restoration plans of Watland and Hopping, is well maintained and appointed with 18th, 19th, and early 20th-century art and furnishings.

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

The first-floor plan of the main house has a keeping room and parlor on the east side, and a long living room (original kitchen) in the integral leanto at the rear (see first-floor plan). In the (south) keeping room a finely proportioned paneled fireplace wall (ca. 1740) is painted and grained, and has a rounded fireplace back. The fireplace in the (north) parlor has a deep herringbone-patterned back with rounded corners, and a painted Adamesque mantelpiece, installed ca. 1820 (photograph #7). The kitchen fireplace, revealed during restoration, has a high opening and Dutch oven (original); the bolection molding, narrow shelf, and flat-paneled wall were designed by architects Watland and Hopping (photograph #8). With the exception of the new kitchen, which has an exposed oak-beamed ceiling, first-floor ceilings are finished with plaster over lath. A small burning room is situated at the northwest corner of the leanto. A shallow front entrance hall, accessing the parlor and keeping room, stands against the center chimney with a pulpit stair to the second floor.

The second-floor plan was restored in 1958 to approximate the original 18th-century plan. The two chambers (north and south) retain hand-planed paneled fireplace walls (ca. 1740), wainscotting, and pine floors. The south chamber, of unusual architectural merit, has an intricately detailed paneled fireplace wall (photograph #10). The fireplace of yellow brick is surmounted by a double-paneled chimney breast flanked by fluted pilasters with caps in triplicate supporting a wide ceiling cornice. A plank door in the front hall opens into the narrow, winding attic stair. A lintry (long storage room) runs the length of the west (rear) section above the leanto. During restoration a late 19th-century dormer, disrupting the run of the lintry, was removed.

Victorian embellishments such as the elongated first-floor windows and second-floor porch were added during the period 1850-1900 when the property was used as an inn and rooming house (photograph #s 1,2). The second stair hall, remodeled around 1890, provides a large common area between the main house and the adjoining counting house. The wideness of the second hall and the machine-turned balusters of the Victorian stair contrast with the smaller scale front pulpit stair. Some time after 1800 the original wood-paneled walls of the counting house were wallpapered and the space was converted to living area. Two dormers were built off the southern end of the west side ca. 1901, and a second-floor bathroom installed. This section, now used as the curator's apartment, remains intact.

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Bush-Holley House, Greenwich, CT

Section number 7 Page 3

7. DESCRIPTION (continued)

Three of the four frame outbuildings are contributing resources. The archives building (photograph #12) is noncontributing because of its recent (1987) construction. Its one-and-a-half-story rectangular form was designed to harmonize in scale and materials with the vertical-boarded barn (photograph #11). The two remaining outbuildings (photograph #s 13,14) are simple rectangular structures on stone foundations with gable roofs. The shed on the northwest corner has an extension off the back, now used as a garage.

NOTES

1. Anson C. Lowitz, Susan McCown, ed. "Addendum to Bush-Holley House." Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS CT-279), 1962, p. 3.
2. Greenwich Historical Society pamphlets refer to the rear ell as former slaves' quarters. Anson Lowitz (op.cit., p. 3) describes it as a separate building moved from across Strickland Road to the back of the house.
3. Architects Gerald Watland (d. 1971) and Daniel Hopping practiced out of an office in New York City. Hopping was first cousin of Anson C. Lowitz, president of the Historical Society of the Town of Greenwich from 1956 to 1966.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture _____

Art _____

Period of Significance

1730-1938 _____

1901-1938 _____

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a _____

Architect/Builder

unknown

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

Constructed ca.1732, the Bush-Holley House is representative of 18th-century residential architecture built during and after the Dutch settlement period in Greenwich. It relates as well to the entrepreneurship of David Bush, owner of the property during the mid-18th century who promoted mercantilism in Cos Cob by establishing a tide mill on Strickland Brook across the street from the house. An art colony after 1900 under the proprietorship of artist/sculptor Elmer Livingston MacRae, the house and three out-buildings are associated with American Impressionism, an important movement in art and literature.

Architectural Significance

The Bush-Holley House is a well preserved residence from the New England Colonial period. In Greenwich, a number of extant 18th-century residences such as the Benjamin Mead House (ca.1700) and the Titus Mead House (ca.1750) have similar elevations, plans, and framing systems; yet none exhibit the variety of detail or the Dutch influence such as use of yellow brick and the distinctive rounded fireplace backs. Over 50 years ago historian Lydia Holland described the house as "much larger and finer than the average Greenwich farmhouse, with high ceilings and hand carved paneling of unusual beauty."¹ In addition to its architectural merit, the rural, harbor-oriented quality of the property remains intact, this in contrast with most other early 18th-century properties in Greenwich whose original large parcels have been subdivided and built upon over time.

Typifying what Elmer Keith described as the First Transition Period (1690-1720) in Connecticut domestic architecture, an era characterized by more complex plans and elevations, the Bush-Holley House is larger than its predecessors, with plastered walls and

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Bush-Holley House, Greenwich, CT

Section number 8 Page 1

8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

a full kitchen.² Its center-chimney saltbox form is derived from the late 17th-century single-room end-chimney houses that usually grew by addition of a room to the right or left of the chimney, and by a rear leanto. The Bush-Holley House, retaining the typical late 17th-century post-and-beam frame, incorporated a leanto integral with the body of the house. The resulting higher profile facilitated larger, high-ceilinged rooms on two floors. Significant exterior design elements visible in the north elevation are the gabled overhangs, integral leanto, and the attempt to place windows in a symmetrical fashion. Taken as a whole, these construction patterns represent a standard vocabulary and an approximation of style in 18th-century New England domestic architecture.

Other distinctive characteristics of the house include the clay-and-straw-mortared yellow-brick chimney, and Jacobean fireplace backs.³ Linkage ca. 1777 of the counting house and former slaves quarters, and 19th-century embellishments such as the double porch and Victorian stair hall enrich the architectural merit of the property and reflect its more recent historical significance. These additions, the double porch in particular, distinguish the house from other 18th-century properties in the town. The interior woodwork, completed ca. 1740, has characteristic moldings of the early 18th-century period in Greenwich: wood-paneled fireplace backs with bolection molding surrounding the openings. Posts and beams, now mostly hidden by plaster and lath, may have been left exposed when the house was originally built. The unusually high ceilings, especially on the second floor, accentuate the profile and quality of the paneled fireplace walls.⁴

Historical Background

The property has important historical associations with the Bush family.

The building site was described in 1686 by town proprietors as common land.⁵ In 1725 the land was divided into narrow strips and deeded to 27 proprietors, many of whom were Dutch settlers.⁶ According to land records the house site (Section A of Lot 18) was sold three times between 1728 and 1733.⁷ The existing house is first mentioned in 1733 following its purchase by Issac Quintard from Henry James.⁸ It changed hands five times between 1734 and 1738, including purchase in 1738 by Justus Bush Jr. from Anthony and Peter DeMill.⁹ Bush was elected a town selectman in 1747.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

Under his direction interior carpentry work on the house was completed around 1740. He willed the property in 1760 to his son David Bush.

Granted mill rights in 1764 on Strickland Brook across from the house, David Bush built a tide mill for the grinding of flour. The mill operated for over 130 years until it was destroyed by fire in 1899. Married twice, Bush had five children with his first wife; his second wife brought five children and the couple then had five more children. Greatly increasing the size of the house, Bush attached the counting house and moved the former slaves quarters to the rear as the "new kitchen" to accommodate his family and business enterprises.

Situated next to the Cos Cob Post Office and across from the waterfront, the Bush House was a center for Bush's mercantile ventures in real estate, milling, and shipping. In addition to the tide mill, schooners owned by Bush transported produce to the New York markets. Upon his death in 1797 David Bush was considered a wealthy man. His estate, valued at \$24,000, included substantial landholdings: a 35-acre waterfront tract on Strickland Road, and additional acreage on Mill Pond.¹⁰ His sons Justus Like and Ralph Issacs inherited the house. His wife Sarah lived there until her death in 1824. Between 1848 and 1882 the property was used as a rooming house, purchased from Justus and Ralph Bush by the Smith family. Edward Payson Holley purchased the property in 1882, turning it into an inn named Holley Farm. Holley's daughter Emma Constant (1871-1965) married Elmer Livingston MacRae in 1900. Under the aegis of MacRae, Holley Farm was transformed into an artists' colony.

American Impressionism

The early 20th century witnessed important changes in art and literature and its promotion in America. By drawing together important artists and writers at the Bush-Holley House, Elmer MacRae, himself an accomplished artist and sculptor, established the place as an art colony where the American Impressionism movement flourished.

American Impressionism was considered a reaction to complacency in the appreciation of art in America. At the turn of the century there were three major forces influencing art in America. The first was the "genteel school" of Boston-genre painting of Edmund Tarbell and Frank Benson, the second the "radical impressionist" stream of

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

John Twachtman and Childe Hassam, and the third the "academic tradition" of William Chase.¹¹ MacRae, who studied under Twachtmen, convinced his teacher in 1900 to move his summer artists' school from another location in Greenwich to the barn at the Bush-Holley House. MacRae, along with Twachtman and Hassam, attempted to promote public awareness of modern movements in art by preparing a number of important exhibits in New York. The group collaborated with others in the production of the acclaimed Armory Show of 1913.

Twachtman was considered the first teacher to bring the theories and method of Impressionism to students of art in this country. As the number of artists and writers who came here increased, the Bush-Holley House evolved into an art colony, one of the earliest of its kind in New England.¹² It was a center for the arts and their promotion in Greenwich.¹³ Artists Hassam, Lewis Comfort Tiffany, and Walt Kuhn, and writers Lincoln Steffens, Ernest Thompson Seton, and Willa Cather stayed for extended periods at the Bush-Holley House. In 1911 Walt Kuhn, Jerome Myers, and Elmer MacRae exhibited at the Madison Gallery at 305 Madison Avenue, New York. The three men formed soon after the Pastelists Society of Painters and Sculptors, and the Association of American Painters and Sculptors. Currently on display in the house are paintings, etchings, and engravings by Twachtman, Hassam, and MacRae, among others. Although Twachtman died in 1902, MacRae continued the art colony at the Bush-Holley house. It flourished through the 1920s.

NOTES

1. Lydia Holland Margaret Leaf Green. Greenwich Old and New. The Greenwich Press, 1935, p.33.
2. Elmer D. Keith. Some Notes on Early Connecticut Architecture. Hartford: Antiquarian and Landmarks Society, Inc., p.6.
3. The yellow brick is said to have been indicative of the Dutch influence in the construction of the house. The brick may have been fired in New Amsterdam or Greenwich, according to the Dutch tradition. The clay-and-straw mortar appears old; however, sections of the chimney were remortared during 1958-1959. Norman M. Isham (Early Connecticut Houses, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1965, p.165) describes the use of herringbone or "zig-zag"-brick rectangular panels as "quite complicated," and attributes the origins of the intersecting diagonal lines to the French.
4. Prior to restoration the Metropolitan Museum of Art offered to purchase these rooms for the American Wing.
5. Greenwich Land Records, vol.3, p.123.

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Bush-Holley House, Greenwich, CT

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8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

6. Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS, CT-279) Inventory Form, Bush-Holley House, 1972, np. Microfiche filed at Connecticut Historical Commission, Hartford. Greenwich Historic Collections, Elizabeth W. Clarke, ed. Historical Society of the Town of Greenwich, Jan.1970, v.1,p.4. Greenwich, under the jurisdiction of New Netherlands from 1642 to 1650, experienced a wave of Dutch settlement through the mid-18th century.

7. Greenwich Land Records, 3-383, 3-576, 5-453.

8. _____ 5-453.

9. _____ 5-534. Justus Bush, Jr. was the grandson of Hendrick Bosch, swordcutter, who migrated in 1658 from Leyden, Holland, to New Amsterdam.

10. Last Will and Testimony of the late David Bush, May 1, 1797. Filed at Stamford Probate Court, v.8, p.508.

11. Milton W. Brown, American Painting from the Armory Show to the Depression. Princeton University Press, 1955, p.47.

12. The McDowell Colony for artists, writers, and musicians was formed during the same period in Peterborough, New Hampshire, by composer Edward McDowell.

13. "New Yorkers to Attend Art Exhibit at Cos Cob." World, October 9, 1908. "What is Happening in the World of Art." The New York Sun, Feb.8, 1914.

14. Milton W. Brown, p.47.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Antiques. "The Bush-Holley House." Sadyebeth H. Lowitz and Anson C. Lowitz, June 1967.

Brown, Albert F., and Norman M. Isham. Early Connecticut Houses. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1965.

Brown, Milton W. American Painting from the Armory Show to the Depression. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955.

Clarke, Elizabeth W., ed. Greenwich Historical Collections. Historical Society of the Town of Greenwich, vol.1, 1970.

Gold, Jack A. Telephone Interview with Daniel Hopping, August 10, 1987.

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 # CT-279
- 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:

Library of Congress

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property .734 acres

UTM References

A

1	8	6	1	8	1	2	0	4	5	4	3	7	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See vol.580, p.251, Greenwich Land Records. Filed at Greenwich Town Hall, 141 Field Point Road, Greenwich, CT.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The parcel now associated with the property was originally part of larger acreage, now reduced in size to .734 acres.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Reviewed by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

name/title Jack A. Gold Architectural Historian

organization Historic Preservation Services date May 1988

street & number 334 Exchange St. telephone (203) 624-4673

city or town New Haven state CT zip code 06513

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (continued)

Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS, CT-279). "Bush-Holley House." Jack E. Boucher, Photographer, Feb.1963. Filed at Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

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Kelly, J. Frederick. Early Domestic Architecture of Connecticut. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1963.

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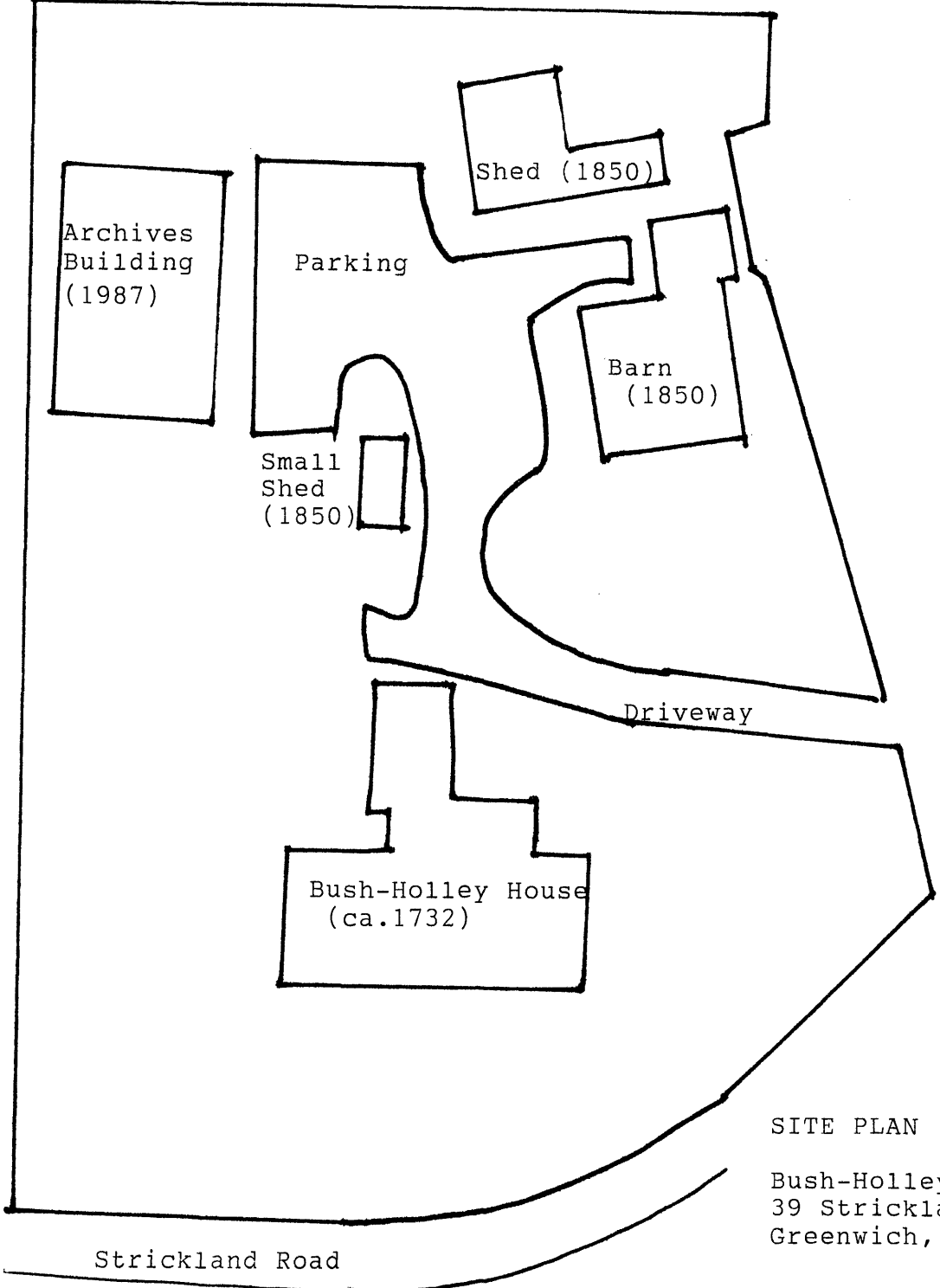
Morrison, Hugh. Early American Architecture. New York: Oxford University Press, 1952.

The New York Sun. "What is Happening in the World of Art." Feb.8, 1914.

Watland, Gerald R., and Daniel M.C. Hopping, Architects. Architectural plans for restoration of Bush-Holley House. 17 sheets filed at Library of Congress.

World. "New Yorkers to Attend Art Exhibit at Cos Cob." October 9, 1908.

Property Boundary Line



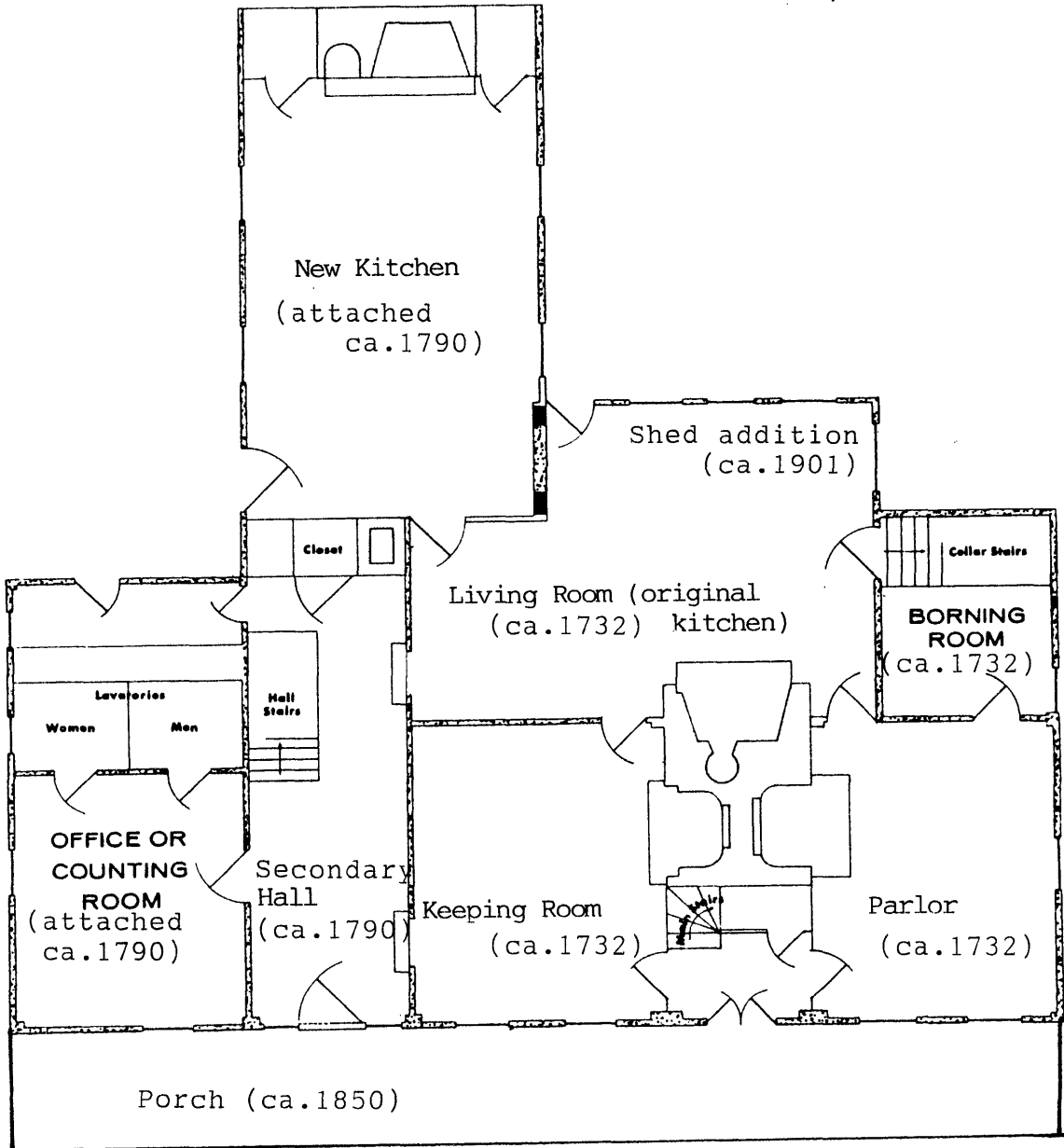
SITE PLAN

Bush-Holley House
39 Strickland Road
Greenwich, CT

North

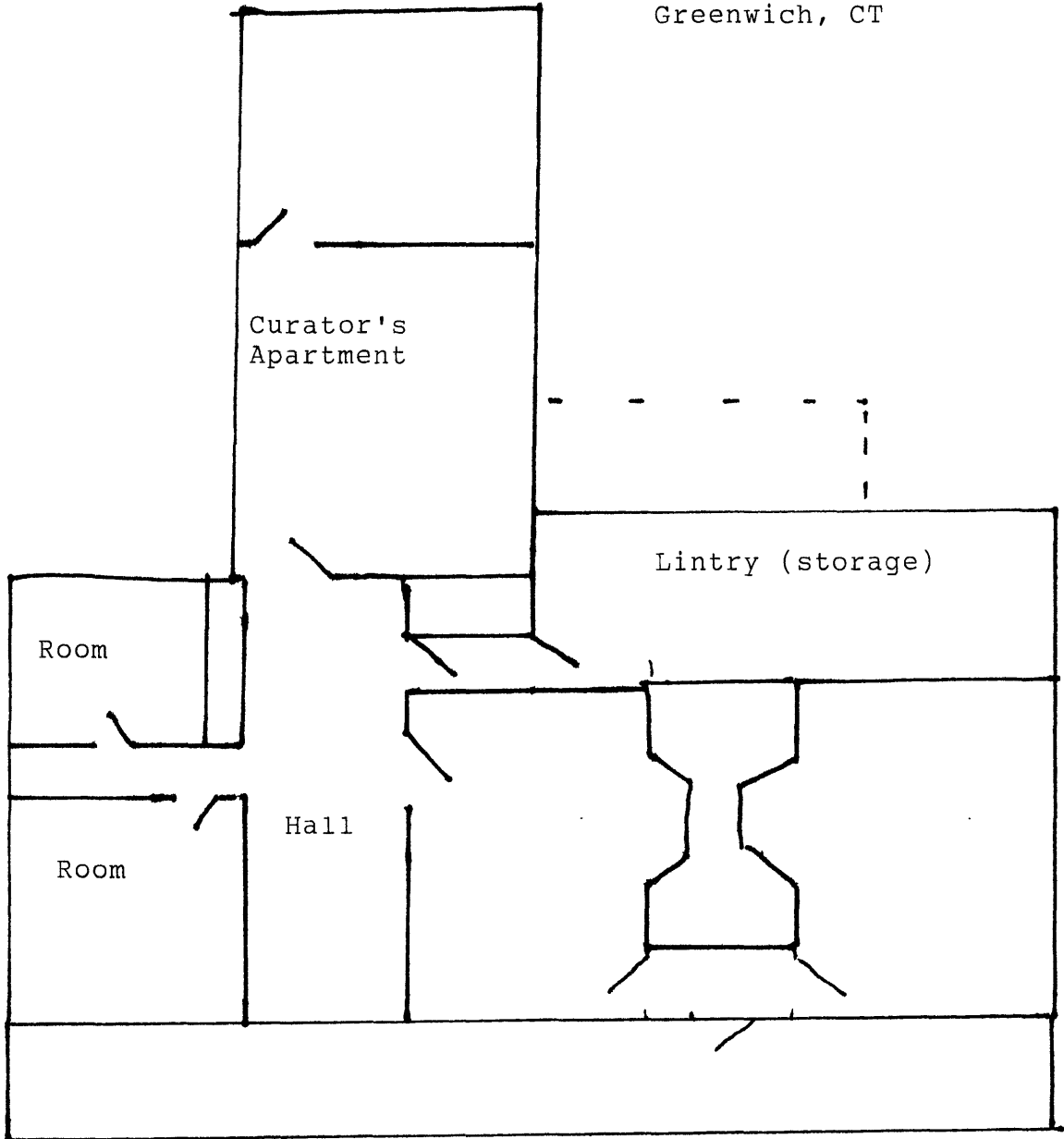
FIRST-FLOOR PLAN

Bush-Holley House
39 Strickland Road
Greenwich, CT



SECOND-FLOOR PLAN

Bush-Holley House
39 Strickland Road
Greenwich, CT



PHOTOGRAPH IDENTIFICATION SHEET

Bush-Holley House
39 Strickland Road
Greenwich, CT

Negatives filed at Connecticut Historical Commission

1. Facade, view southwest.
2. 1st-fl. porch, view southwest.
3. South (side) elevation, view north.
4. North (side) elevation, view southeast. Shows integral leanto, extended gable end and original window configuration. Note span of Mianus River Bridge, visible at lower left.
5. West rear view of rear ell (new kitchen). Shows shed addition with three windows on left side; view east.
6. South keeping room, view northeast.
7. North parlor, view southwest.
8. Original kitchen fireplace as redesigned by Watland and Hopping, Architects; view southeast.
9. New kitchen (rear ell), view northwest.
10. South chamber, 2nd fl., showing fireplace wall and hall to north chamber; view northwest..
11. Barn (ca.1850), view northeast.
12. Archives building (1987), view southeast.
13. Shed (ca.1850), view northwest.
14. Small shed (ca.1850), view southwest.