

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Trolley Shelter (Amendment to Swan Point Cemetery)

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Opposite 585 Blackstone Boulevard

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Providence

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1 - Fernand J. St Germain

STATE

Rhode Island

VICINITY OF

CODE  
44

COUNTY

Providence

CODE

007

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: abandoned

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME City of Providence

STREET &amp; NUMBER

25 Dorrance Street

CITY, TOWN

Providence

STATE

Rhode Island

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Providence City Hall

STREET &amp; NUMBER

25 Dorrance Street

CITY, TOWN

Providence

STATE

Rhode Island

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Providence Broadbrush: Blackstone

DATE

July, 1976

\_\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

CITY, TOWN

Providence

STATE

Rhode Island

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

EXCELLENT             DETERIORATED  
 GOOD                  RUINS  
 FAIR                  UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

---

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

The Swan Point Trolley Shelter is located on one section of the median strip of Blackstone Boulevard opposite the entrance to Swan Point Cemetery (listed in the National Register). The amended area includes the median island between the intersection of Blackstone Boulevard and Elmgrove Avenue and the crossover between Hartshorn Road and Eighth Street.

Blackstone Boulevard is a two-hundred-foot wide, two-and-a-half-mile long residential thoroughfare of two broad traffic lanes separated by a wide, well-planted esplanade. The Boulevard, completed in 1904, connects Butler Avenue to the south with Hope Street at the northern end.

The flat, trapezoidal median island on which the shelter stands is longitudinally traversed by an unpaved path, and approximately six trees, including some fine elms, stand on either side of the path. The trolley shelter is at the southeastern corner of the island.

The low, ground-hugging shelter, completed in 1904, was designed by Olmsted Brothers of Brookline, Massachusetts, the landscape architects employed by the Proprietors of Swan Point Cemetery for the design of the western section of the cemetery bordering on Blackstone Boulevard. The symmetrically massed, open structure has low walls of relatively small, randomly placed boulders, a treatment which integrates the building to its site and echoes the design of the boulder wall which surrounds the cemetery. Two broad, open entrances, on the flanking walls of the building, give access to the path and to Blackstone Boulevard. Wide open spaces above the low stone walls regularly punctuate the four sides of the building.

Massive piled-stone piers at the four corners and flanking the entrances support the open framing of the hip roof, which rises in two stages above the wide overhanging eaves.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input 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 checked="" 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 1904

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Olmsted Brothers, Brookline, Mass

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Swan Point Trolley Shelter, the only original structure on the landscaped esplanade of Blackstone Boulevard, is significant to the history of both architecture and landscape architecture. Blackstone Boulevard, designed by H.W.S. Cleveland of Chicago and completed between 1892 and 1904, is itself considered eligible for the National Register, but its nomination has been postponed pending further survey work and analysis of the residential neighborhood surrounding it. The Trolley Shelter is proposed as an amendment to the Swan Point Cemetery nomination at this time to facilitate more immediate action on the commitment of funding for restoration of the shelter, which might otherwise be demolished.

The decision by the City of Providence in 1902 to construct a streetcar line along the median strip of Blackstone Boulevard prompted the Proprietors of Swan Point Cemetery to request permission of the city to construct, at the cemetery's expense, a shelter at the entrance to the cemetery. The Proprietors engaged Olmsted Brothers of Brookline for the design of the structure, which harmonizes with the treatment the firm used for the walls and entrance to the cemetery, and integrates two major late nineteenth-century landscaping projects in this part of Providence.

The trolley shelter is an excellent example of the picturesque park structures that the Olmsted firm, in conjunction with Henry Hobson Richardson, developed in the late nineteenth century. Structures of this type are relatively rare in Rhode Island, and the Swan Point Trolley Shelter is by far the finest example of the Richardsonian-inspired rusticity deemed eminently suitable in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for park surroundings.

The shelter was well used until the streetcar system was abandoned by the City in 1946. Since then, the shelter has been abandoned, and it now shows signs of deterioration to the roof, although the structure remains sound.

See continuation sheet 1

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

1

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

2

The restoration and maintenance of this structure will significantly improve the visual quality of this focal point of the northern part of Blackstone Boulevard and preserve an important ensemble of early twentieth-century landscape architecture.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Report of the Park Commissioners. City of Providence.  
1903, 1904

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one.

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,9	3,017,5,0	4,613,519,0,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Median strip of Blackstone Boulevard with trolley car stop shelter opposite the entrance to Swan Point Cemetery.

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

Wm. McKenzie Woodward, Historic Preservation Planner

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

March, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

150 Benefit Street

401-277-2678

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Providence

Rhode Island

# 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

*Frederick W. Williams*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE June 21, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



SWAN POINT CEMETERY AMENDMENT  
BLACKSTONE BOULEVARD TROLLEY SHELTER  
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Photographer: Warren Jagger

Date: March 1978

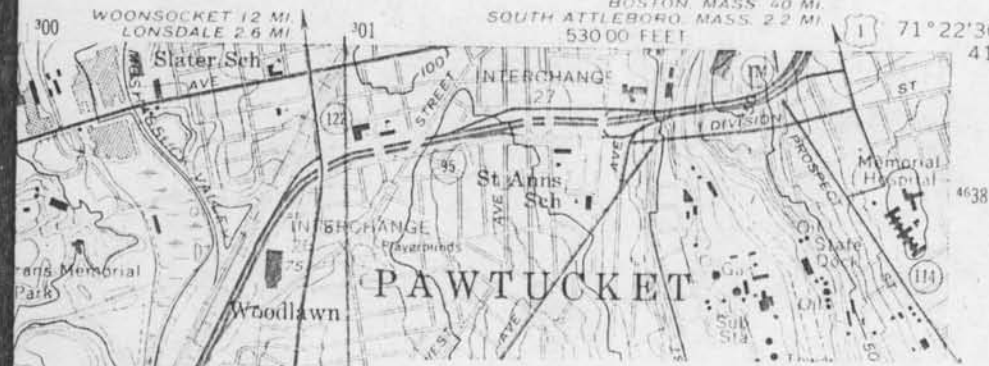
Negative: Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission  
Trolley Shelter, view to the northeast

PROVIDENCE QUADRANGLE  
RHODE ISLAND  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

67° 14' NE  
(ATTLEBORO)

BOSTON, MASS. 40 MI.  
SOUTH ATTLEBORO, MASS. 2.2 MI.  
53000 FEET

71° 22' 30"  
41° 52' 30"



PAWTUCKET

Trolley Shelter ( amendment to  
Swan Point Cemetery)  
Providence, Rhode Island

19 301750 4635900

