DATA SHEET,

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

TIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUN 1 7 1975

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on the northern edge of Battery Park at the southern tip of Manhattan Island, City Pier A springs from the center of the bulkhead or river wall south of Battery Place and former Pier 1, at an angle of 116-1/20 with the main length of the wall. 1 Measuring 45 feet in width and extending 285 feet into the Hudson River, the two-to-three story pier, accented by a four-story clock tower, is a rectangular structure, resting upon a concrete foundation. 2

When construction began in 1885 G.S. Greene, Jr., Engineer-in-Chief at the New York City Department of Docks, reported that:

As the borings and soundings showed the rock to be only about 10 feet below mean low water, as a minimum, with soft mud on top of the rock, affording no holding ground for piles of either wood or iron, the foundations were made by clearing the mud off the rock, then sinking a box or crib of cheap timber upon the site of the sub-pier foundation, and filling the same up to a certain height with concrete in bags carefully laid by submarine divers under water. Mass concrete was then placed over the bags and levelled off, to form a seat or bed for the concrete blocks made in air, which extend from the above described foundation to a height two feet below mean low water mark. Above these concrete base blocks the sub-piers were built of granite to a level 2 feet above mean high water mark.

The top of the pier resting on these sub-piers consists of 6 main girders and 2 side girders, extending from sub-pier to sub-pier, each girder being 3 feet in depth, and a concrete arch being sprung between each two girders; the top of the arches forming the deck or floor of the pier, which is to be covered with an asphalt pavement two inches in thickness.³

Completed by May, 1886, the pier bore a two-story, rectangular building 42' wide by 272'2" long, divisible structurally into two sections: the fire-proof eastern or inshore end, and the wood-frame portion which constitutes the greater part of the pier's length. Constructed of brick and terra cotta walls sheathed by galvanized iron, and iron roof trusses covered by tin,

the inner 38 feet of the building is of entirely incombustible and fire-proof materials, with steel roller doors and window shutters. It is separated from the remainder of the building by a partition wall of brick 20 inches in thickness, having a 3-inch air space, and the openings through this wall have fire-proof doors. The lower story of this part of the building was in its middle the main entrance for wagons, etc., to the deck of the pier, closed by a steel roller shutter at its easterly or street end, and by a fire-proof door at the pier end, where is the fire-proof partition...

The building outside of the fire-proof part is a frame structure covered on the outside with galvanized iron on its sides and with tin on the roof.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY JUN 1 7 1975

DATE ENTERED JUN 2 7 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Pier A New York County

CONTINUATION SHEET

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The frame is composed of bents 11 feet 8 inches apart at centers, with girders to support the floor, which is of 5-inch solid spruce plank covered with one inch of yellow pine.

The side walls have under the outside covering of galvanized iron two thicknesses of tarred paper and one thickness tongued and grooved boarding. The space between the studding is filled with mineral wool. The interior is lined with wire lathing and plaster and finished in white 'hard finish.' Double sash windows are provided for winter use, and it was found in the severe blizzard the first few days in March that all the rooms could be kept at a temperature of 85° F., with a pressure of 60 pounds in the boiler, which is licensed to carry 100 pounds.

The entire structure was "warmed by steam, lighted by gas and supplied with Croton Water, a steam-pipe being carried alongside each water-pipe to prevent freezing." A large central corridor, accessible from the main entrance on the east (inshore) elevation, divided the first floor of the east (fireproof) end. No partitions fragmented the space of the Record Room above (36' x 41'). The west end was similarly divided on the first floor by a central corridor, with the boiler room and the staircase to the tower situated to the south, while the remaining central portion of the structure, approximately 187' in length, was unpartitioned. The second floor of this central section was divided into offices flanking a central hall which terminated in the Meeting Room and Balcony contained within the west end. The top of the tower was accessible from both floors by means of a spiral iron staircase.

In 1900 the building was extended 50' eastward at both first and second-story levels along the original axis, thereby providing additional office space. Four years later the City Department of Docks and Ferries further enlarged the building by the addition of a third story to the old fireproof east end and to its recent extension. Plans drawn at this time called for the elaboration of the square extension in a classical mode, including features such as a richly detailed cornice, the use of one-story pilasters to define the three-bay facades, elaborate pedimental architraves framing the two doors which flank the main entrance (east elevation), segmental pediments in the central bays of the north and south elevations, and a triangular pediment —decorated by acroteria—in the same position over the main entrance of the east elevation. Subsequent alterations have included the installation of the clock (1918), changes in the floor plans (1918), reinforcement of the first-story walls (1935), and the installation of oil-burning equipment.

The mass of the structure today remains unchanged since the enlargements at the turn of the century: a long, gable-roofed, rectangular building terminating at its inshore end in a three-story, hip-roofed block (five bays by three bays), and at its outshore end in a hip-roofed block and a 70-foot, square clock-tower, topped by a

Form No. 10-300a

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RECEIVED JUN 1 7 1975 DATE ENTERED JUN 2 7 1975

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pyramidal roof. The wall surfaces are relatively plain—most noticeably enlivened by the rhythm of the blind arcade which runs the length of the building's long, central portion. The rich detail of the extension, indicated on the drawings of 1904, is absent—represented only by the acroterium at the apex of the east (inshore) facade's triangular pediment. Galvanized iron sheaths the entire structure, including the "half-timbered" walls of the tower and outshore end which were still visible in photographs taken during the early 1950s.

¹Pier 1, constructed 1872-1876, was demolished ca. 1972, in anticipation of the development of Battery Park City on land fill in the North or Hudson River.

The pier itself measured 285' in length; the building upon the pier, 272'2" until the addition ca. 1900 of 50' inland.

³New York City Department of Ports and Terminals, Office of the Engineer-in-Chief, Annual Report (New York, 1885) p. 112.

⁴New York City Department of Ports and Terminals, Office of the Engineer-in-Chief, <u>Annual Report</u> (New York, 1886) pp. 95-96.

⁵<u>Ibid</u>, p. 96. See also National Register Nomination Forms for the Old and New Croton Dams (Westchester County), and High Bridge Aqueduct and Water Tower (New York and Bronx Counties).

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SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

G. S. Greene, Jr. Engineer-in-Cnief

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In the economically pressured, constantly changing, high-rise environment of 20th century Lower Manhattan, Pier A--once headquarters of the agencies responsible for regulating the nation's busiest waterfront-is a unique visual feature of New York Harbor and the island's southern tip. A landmark in the city's economic, technological, and architectural history, Pier A with its human-scale and vital design, as well as its strategic location at Battery Park, is a tangible reminder of Lower Manhattan's historic seaward orientation, and a unique and irreplaceable visual feature of New York Harbor.

On July 3, 1884 by unanimous resolution the New York City Board of Docks directed the Department of Docks to erect a pier "and such buildings and structures as are necessary for the accommodation of the business of the Department of Docks and for the requirements of the Police Department for the harbor Police force." The southernmost pier-site along the island's densely developed western shore, the site chosen was strategically located at Battery Park, the southern tip of Manhattan Island where the Hudson River widens into New York Harbor. Such a location would place the two city agencies responsible for regulating the waterfront activity of the nation's busiest port within easy reach of both eastern and western shores and would permit them to superintend seaborne traffic passing between the Harbor and the Waterfront.

Under the direction of Engineer-in-Chief G.S. Greene, Jr., the Department of Docks designed a pier consisting of a concrete foundation and "eight sub piers outside of the bulkhead or river wall, supporting a dock, or floor, of iron girders with concrete arches between them." In utilizing concrete for erecting Pier A, Greene was up-to-date with the technology of the period, for "by the 1880s plain concrete in bearing members under compressive strength only...was a familiar feature of...waterway and harborworks." In Pier A Greene used the material in bags as well as poured in the form of both blocks and arches. The resulting structure is a good example of the early period of the use of this material in America, and an important illustration of this technology in New York.

By May 1, 1885, sub piers 4,5,6, 7 and 8 were completed, and work was progressing on the remaining three. One year later Greene reported to the Board of Docks that the pier was "completed, with the exception of the asphalt covering of its deck or top" and that the new headquarters for the Department of Docks and the Harbor Police had been erected upon the pier by C.O. Brown, contractor (Contract 225).3

Except for the outshore (48') and inshore ends (38') which were divided into

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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New York County
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rooms by a wide central corridor or driveway, the first floor of the approximately 272' structure was one large, undivided space, the framing supported by a central range of posts. The Department of Police occupied the northern side, while the Department of Docks utilized the southern half. On the second floor were offices for the Department of Docks, arranged on both sides of a 200-foot corridor which terminated at the western or outshore end in the Board's Meeting Room. The 70-foot tower at the southwestern corner of the structure was designed as a "look-out or watch tower" for the use of the Police. The eastern end of the structure, on the second floor, Greene and his staff had designed as a Record Room (36'6" x 41'), a "place long needed for the safe storage and deposit for the large and constantly accumulating collection of maps and other valuable records" of the Department of Docks. This need had prompted the design of the east end as a "fire-proof" unit, "isolated" structurally from the wood-frame pier-shed which constitutes the greater portion of the structure's length.

In 1918 the lookout tower was converted to another use by the installation of a clock, donated to the city by Daniel G. Reid, prominent financier and one of the founders of U.S. Steel Corporation, as a memorial to the soldiers and sailors who died during World War I. The clock strikes the hours in ship bells—along with the clock at the U.S. Naval Academy, one of the few clocks equipped with this feature.

Until 1959, Pier A continued to function in the capacity for which it was designed, administered over the years by the successors of the Department of Docks: Department of Docks and Ferries, Department of Marine and Aviation, and now Department of Ports and Terminals. Utilized as headquarters of Marine Fire Company No. 1, the structure has served as a fire station for the waterfront of the North or Hudson River since 1960.

Its role in the history of the city's waterfront, its distinctive design, its ready adaptability to changing needs, and its strategic location render Pier A a landmark of considerable importance. A tangible reminder of both 19th century New York Harbor as a major center of commerce and immigration, and of the 19th century technology of marine engineering, Pier A, along with Battery Park, the U.S. Customs House, and South Street Seaport, is today one of the very few vestiges of Lower Manhattan's historic seaward orientation. The distinct vitality of the Pier's design as well as its human scale, now rare in the high-rise world of New York City, enable it to make a unique contribution to the ambience of the island's southern tip. From the promenade at Battery Park, Pier A forms an appropriate northern frame, channeling the vista seaward to a dramatic view of New York Harbor.

New York City Department of Ports and Terminals, Office of the Engineer-in-Chief, Annual Report (New York, 1885), p. 112.

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New York County
CONTINUATION SHEET

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²Carl W. Condit, <u>American Building Art: The Nineteenth Century</u> (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 228.

³New York City Department of Ports and Terminals, Office of the Engineerin Chief, Annual Report (New York, 1886), p. 95.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

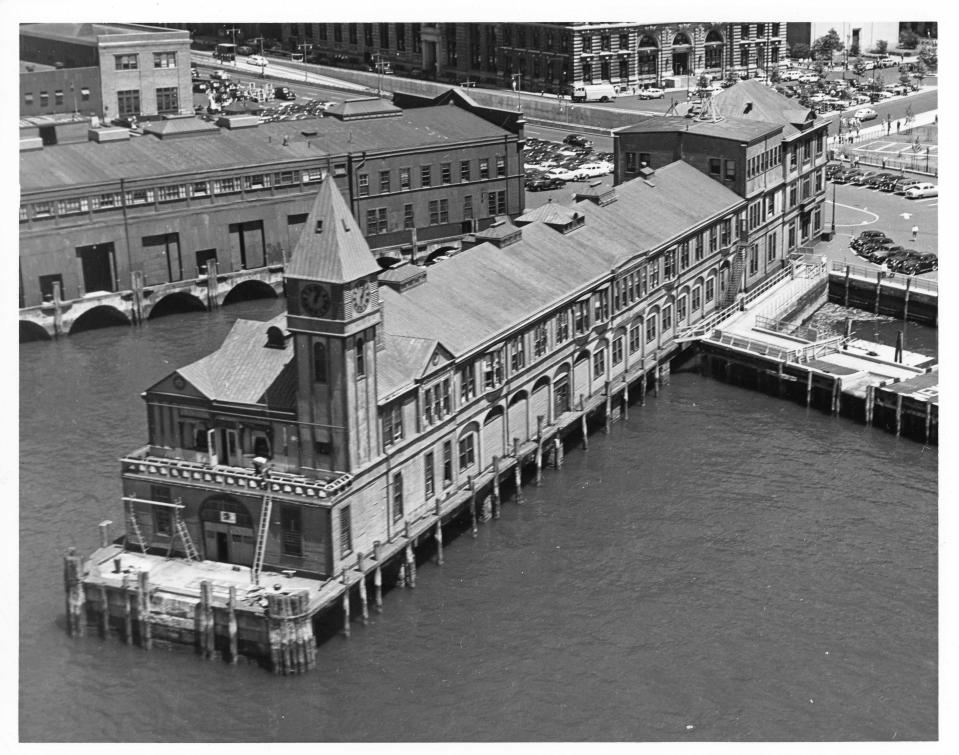
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Pier A New York County

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Form No. 10-301a (7/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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Form No. 10-301a (7/72)

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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Form No. 10-301a (7/72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

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CITY PIER "A": New York City, New York. Restoration Grant: \$70,000.00. Warehouses and piers are a highly adaptable and usable cultural resouce.

City Pier "A", m9, my

Form No. 10-301 Rev. 7-72

N

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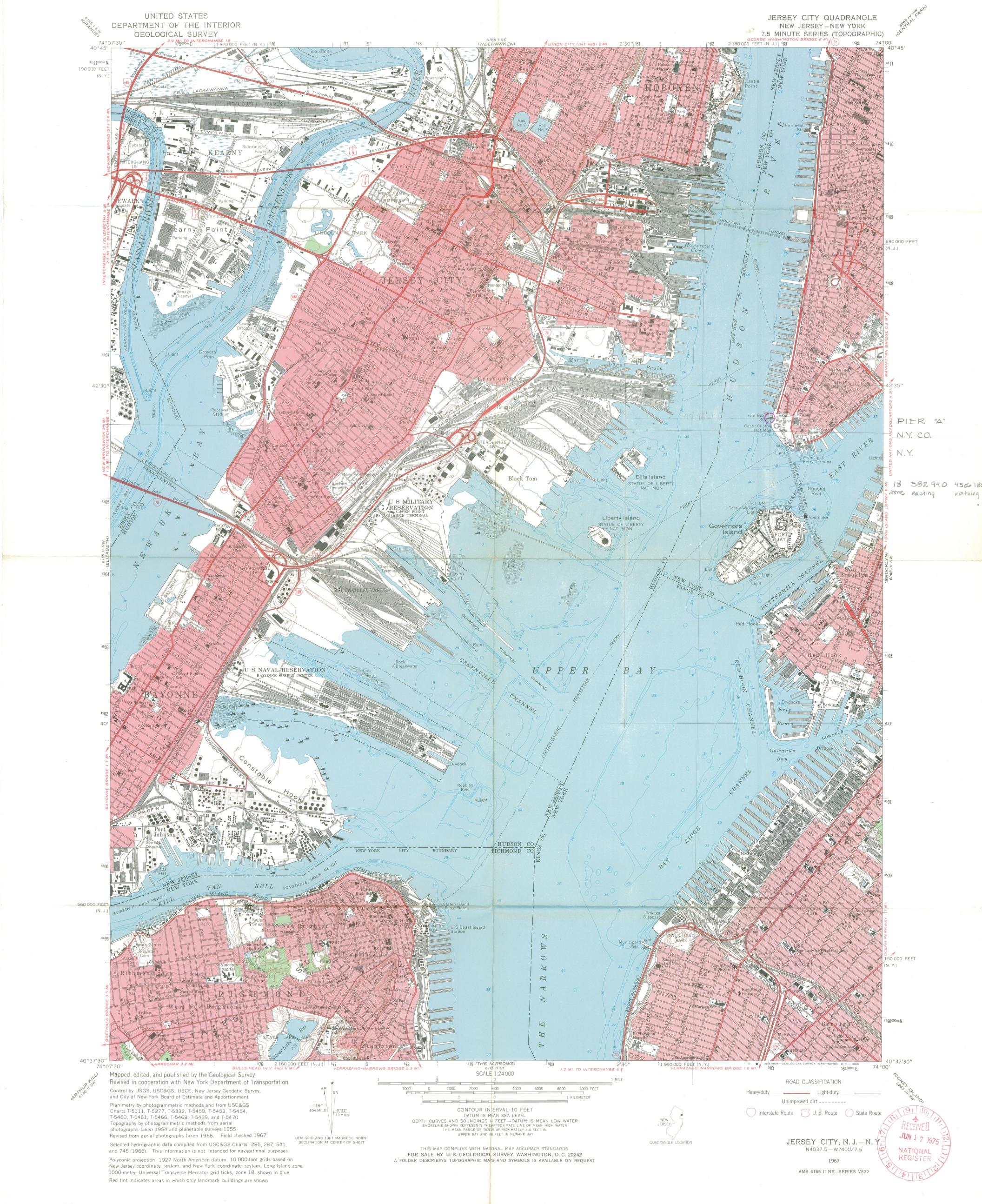
EE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

STATE	
New York	
COUNTY	
New York	
FOR NPS USE ONL	Y
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
JUN 2 7 1975	

(Type all entries - attach to or en	JUN 2 7	1975	
NAME		-	
common: City Pier A			
AND/OR HISTORIC:			
LOCATION			
STREET AND NUM BER:			
South of Junction of Batte	ery Place	and Hudson River	
CITY OR TOWN:			
New York			
STATE:	CODE CO	UNTY:	CODE
New York	36	New York	061
MAP REFERENCE		< <u> <677,007</u>	172
SOURCE:		(0)	1 VX
U.S. Department of the Int	erior, Geo	ological Survey	7.5 Min. Se
SCALE: 1:24,000		1.7	1075
DATE: 1967		JUN 17	19/5
REQUIREMENTS		NATION NATION	AL E
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS		REGIST	ERA
1. Property broundaries where required.			(10)
2. North arrow.		(ic)	cly
3. Latitude and longitude reference.		(1)	9



PIER "A" N.Y. Co. N.Y.

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE NEW YORK

JUN 2 7 1975 Date Entered

Name

Location

City Pier A

New York New York County

Also Notified

Hon. Jacob K. Javits Hon. James L. Buckley Hon. John M. Murphy Regional Director, North Atlantic

Region

State Historic Preservation Officer Mr. Orin Lehman Commissioner Parks and Recreation Room 303, South Swan Street Building Albany, New York 12238

PR

MMott/row

6/30/75

	FEDE	RAL ASSISTANCE	E	2. APPLI- CANT'S	a. NUMBER	3. STATE APPLICA-	a. NUMBER	57700088			
		PREAPPLICATION APPLICATION		APPLI- CATION	b. DATE Year month da 19 77 2	TION IDENTI- FIER	b. DATE ASSIGNED	76	month 7	day 8	
	(Mark ap- propriate box)	☐ NOTIFICATION OF INTEN									
							5. FEDERAL EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NO.				
	NVS Office of Parks & Recreation						14-6013200				
	b. Organization Unit : Division for Historic Preservation										
	c. Street/P.O.	Aconor: D	Bldg. #	6. PRO-	a. NUMBER	1 5	• 9	0 4			
	d. City	Albany		e. County	GRAM	b. TITLE					
	f. State	. New York		g. ZIP Code	(From Federal	Nation	ational Historic				
	h. Contact Per	son (Name		- 518-47	Catalog)	Prese	vation A	ct of	196		
5	& telephon					100					
T DATA	7. TITLE AN	D DESCRIPTION OF APPLIC	8. TYPE OF	. TYPE OF APPLICANT/RECIPIENT -State H-Community Action Agency							
SECTION 1—APPLICANT/RECIPIENT		City Pier A Deve	lopmer	t Projec	t - Phase I	B-Interstate C-Substate	I- Hig J- Indi	her Educational In: an Tribe	titution		
RECI	2.4	(New York Ci			D-Gounty	K-Othe	(Specify):				
1			21		F-School Distr	ict					
	Prep	are historic str	ructure	report	-	G-Special Purp District	G-Special Purpose				
ŧ		and measured dra	9. TYPE OF	ASSISTANCE							
7		is cash from Ne	A-Basic Grant	D. C. and an and County F. Others							
9						C-Loan		Enter ap priate let	ter(s)	A	
SE	10. AREA O	F PROJECT IMPACT (Name: States.	s of cities,	counties,	11. ESTIMATED NUM- BER OF PERSONS	12. TYPE OF	and the second second second				
					BENEFITING 8,000,000		-Revision -Continuation	E-Augmentation			
		New York Cit		Jan 19	Enter appropr	iate lette	r A				
	13. PRO		Bullet and the second second	ESSIONAL DIS			15. TYPE OF CHANGE (For 12c or 12e) A-Increase Dollars F-Other (Specify):				
	a. FEDERAL	4 -1 -1	a. APPLICAN		b. PROJECT	B-Decrease Do	B-Decrease Dollars C-Increase Duration				
	b. APPLICANT	5,875 .00	Sta		17	D-Decrease Du E-Cancellation					
	c. STATE	.00	DATE	Year month day			Enter appropriate letter(s)				
	d. LOCAL	.00		see #34	36 Months Year month day	19. EXISTING FEDERAL IDENTIFICATION NUMB				FR	
	e. OTHER		BE SU	BMITTED TO		36-76-00					
	f. TOTAL	\$ 11,750 .00 AGENCY TO RECEIVE RE	202		REMARKS AD	DED					
		of the Interior,	ngton, DC		☐ Yes XX N	0					
_	22. a. To the best of my knowledge and belief, b. If required by OMB Circular A-95 this application was submitted, pursuant to in- No re-										
CATION	THE	date in this preapplication/ap true and correct, the docume	nghouses and all I	esponses are a	ittached: sponse	att	ached				
	APPLICANT CERTIFIES	duly authorized by the govern	ning body o	ONYS P	lopment C	opment Clearinghouse XXX					
E	THAT >	with the attached assurances i									
II—CERTIFI		ance is approved.		(3)					<u>U_</u>		
	23. CERTIFYING	a. TYPED NAME AND TITLE			b. SIGNATURE	c. DATE SIGNED Year mon			month	day	
SECTION	REPRE-	ORIN LEHMAN State Historic	19 77 2			_	7				
	SENTATIVE 24. AGENCY	25	APPLICA- Yea								
		ment of the Inte		TIC	CEIVED 19		25				
		ZATIONAL UNIT	1101	OFFICE		FEDERAL APP					
2		al Park Service	tration I		IDENTIFICATION						
ACTION	29. ADDRES		30. FEDERAL GRANT								
	18th &	C Streets NW.,			36-76-005	78-3	4				
AGENCY	31. ACTION		Year mont		Year	month					
	a. AWARDE		5.87	5 .00	33. ACTION DATE	ACTION DATE ▶ 19 77 4 4			STARTING DATE 1977 4 4		
III—FEDERAL	b. REJECTE					35. CONTACT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMA-			A- 36. Year month day		
7		RETURNED FOR c. STATE			Stephen D. Newman (202) 523-5472			ENDING 19 80 4 3			
1973	AMENDA	NT d. LOCAL .00						37. REMARKS ADDED			
SECTION	d. DEFERR		.00								
SEC	O. WITHOR							☐ Yes ☑No			
	38.	a. In taking above action, any comments received from clearinghouses were considered. If agency response is due under provisions of Part 1, OMB Circular A-95, (Name and telephone)									
	FEDERAL AG		made.				as #35				

	. /					ISTER	R DAT	ra s	FIRET	
	NAME as it a	2 A			/	OTHER NAMES:			3 date of entry: (4) county c 6.27.75 (6)	ode:
	End of Bat		dson ?	2wer t	ity / town New York DERAL (agency name)	vicinity of	state V	lew York	Morth Atlan	tic
					NO CONGRESS. D	ISTRICT 17th 12so	DURCE of NOMINATION	≱ STATE □ FE	DERAL	
	WITHIN NATIONAL REGI Dyes name	STER HISTORIC DISTR	(67.7		OTTHIN NATIONAL RESTORE		XIII 1855	AGE	state who prepared form?	
	® CONDITION □ excellent □ good □ fair	□ deteriorat □ ruins □ unexposed □ unexcavat	i Du	altered inaltered reconstructe excavated	□original si □moved ed □unknown	TERIOR	OSUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-1 DNOT INTACT-O DUNKNOWN-4	SUBSTANTIALLY IN ON THE STANTIALLY IN ON THE STANTIAL IN ON THE STANTI	TACT-2 SUBSTANTIALLY INTACT-8 ONE NOT INTACT-O ONE UNKNOWN-6	3
. (BACCESS XYE	S-Restricted	YES - Unrest	tricted No	Access Unknown	19 ADAPTIVE USE ✓YES □N			A HISTORIC DISTRICT? yes	×40
6	AREAS OF SI	toric-2 COMMER	CE - 6	ENGINEERING -	T-26 LAW-16	☐ RELIGION - 22	21 RECREATION -28	CLAIM	S: explain	
	☐ ARCHEOLOGY - histor ☐ AGRICULTURE - 3 ARCHITECTURE - 4	CONSERV	ATION - 8	☐ EXPLORATION -	☐ MILITARY - 18	SOCIAL/HUMANITA	☐ URBAN PLANNII ARIAN-24 ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY	Othese		
	□ ART-5	□ EDUCATI		☐ INDUSTRY - 13 ☐ INVENTION - 1	MUSIC - 19 4 PHILOSOPHY -		1 - 25	- 'only' □		
	B functions WHEN HISTORICALLY SIGNI CURRENTLY: MARI	IFICANT: MARIN De Fire 6	ne faci	ility/govit.	, municipal	major alterations: 1900 historic events:	1904/1918		ETHNIC GROUP ASSOCIATION	
	Eclectic				archit		master build	er:	As greene, Jr.	
	landscape arch		i designe	r: minterio	or decorator:	artist:	33 artisan:	O.	D. Brown 3	
3		Reid -	donated	d clock	m 1918 25 h	VWI premorise	founding "	S. Feel		
	EVENTS:									
	INSTITUTIONAL:		st'			Na	6.		#	
@	NATIONAL RI	happed &	RITE-UP	Concrete ;	foundation, fr	ance, board & bat	ten, galvanized	tin siding;	2- and 3-story section vehicular entrance	with
171	lauking alaz	es course	- augr	entrances	early with 2	mad peopheules	VESTIBILITY SEA	mental-arc	hed side treat bane	
11-	.story river er	nd projection	4 baus u	with balu	straded deck	14-story corner	clock tower w	wh pyramu	dal cap; and story rete and five proof	
Manager Street	riewers initials.000				1	ADDITIONAL SPACE ALECT	DED MUMPER & DUT ON	DEVERO		