

CT Trust Resource ID: 60

HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

State Historic Preservation Office, DECD, One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford, CT 06103

*Note: Please attach any additional or expanded information on a separate sheet.

Inventory form modified for the Creative Places - Arts & Letters Project

GENERAL INFORMATION

Building Name (Common): Brackman, Robert, Home/studio

Other Name(s) (Historic): Brackman, Robert, Home/studio

Street Address or Location: 27 Smith Court, Groton

Town/City: Groton

Village: Noank

County: New London

Designation(s):

Owner(s):

Public/Private: Private

Latitude: 41.3237 Longitude: -71.9872

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Domestic: single dwelling

Historic Use: Domestic: single dwelling

Accessibility to public: No Exterior visible from public road? Yes

Interior accessible? If yes, explain: NA

Style of building: Colonial revival Date of Construction: 1938

Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate) Fieldstone, Clapboard

Structural Systems(s): Load bearing masonry, Wood Frame

Roof(Type): Gable (Material): Asphalt Shingle

Number of Stories: 2 1/2 Approximate Dimensions: 28' x 31', 23' x 41'

Structural Condition: Excellent

Exterior Condition: Excellent

Locational Integrity: On original site Moved, When: NA

Alterations?: No If yes, explain: NA

Related outbuildings or landscape features: Shed

Surrounding Environment: Residential

Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

This .238-acre property is located on the north side of Smith Court, a one-block cul-de-sac which extends east from Pearl Street in the Village of Noank. The entire village makes up the Noank Historic District. 27 Smith Court is identified as a non-contributing resource, as its mid-20th-century date is after the period of significance of the district. The site slopes down toward the east, toward the back yards of houses along Riverview Avenue, which runs along the shore. A fieldstone retaining wall along the south edge of the parcel has a stone stair leading up one flight to the patio level at the first floor elevation.

Other notable features of building or site:

There are two buildings, now both dwelling units. Both have gable roofs oriented north-south, forming a courtyard between the two buildings. An open porch with a gable roof connects the two blocks. The eastern building is a 2 1/2-story Colonial revival house styled after a center-chimney Colonial. A fieldstone retaining wall extends nine feet south of the building wall and has a patio at the first floor level over a two-bay garage which opens to the street at the basement level. The south gable façade contains the entry door in the left bay. A two-story gable-roofed wing projects from the west side. The western building has a shallow-pitched saltbox profile and a high fieldstone foundation wall extending up to the sills of the first floor windows. It appears to be entered from the connecting porch. At its northwest corner, a cross-gable dormer includes a steep-pitched north-facing skylight, indicating the location of the artist's studio. Walls are fieldstone and wood clapboard, roofing is asphalt shingles, and windows are a mix of six-over-six double-hung and four-light casements.

Architect: Unknown Builder/Maker: Unknown

Historical or Architectural importance:

The two buildings that make up the Brackman House were constructed for Robert Brackman on a vacant lot in about 1938 (Fairchild aerial photo 1934; Clouette 1979). At the time of the Noank Historic District nomination in 1979, Brackman was still the resident owner. The two buildings appear to be a primary dwelling (the east building) and a studio (the west building) where Brackman painted and taught art classes.

Robert Brackman (1898-1980) was a native of Odessa, in Ukraine, and immigrated to the United States with his family at age eleven. He grew up in New York City and apprenticed as a lithographer to earn money for art school. As an adult, Brackman taught at the Art Students League in New York before moving to Noank in about 1928. He taught painting in Noank in several locations, including the former Sixth District Schoolhouse at 100 Brook Street, which he purchased and converted to a studio, and his final home at 27 Smith Court. He painted primarily portraits combined with still life, and the human figure, and was a well-known and respected portrait painter in the 1930s and 1940s (Noank Historical Society) (Smithsonian). Brackman did some work for the Depression era Federal Art Project (FAP), but not under the Connecticut office (Smithsonian).

Sources:

Interview with Mary Anderson, Noank Historical Society, by C. Hitchcock. 6/16/2014.

Groton Assessor's records accessed at <http://gis.groton-ct.gov/homepage/mapservices.asp>.

Noank Historical Society archives and exhibit on the Noank Art Colony (site visit by C. Hitchcock 6/16/2014).

Clouette, Bruce. 1979. Noank Historic District National Register Nomination No. 79002656. National Park Service.

Smithsonian American Art Museum digital collections. Brackman, Robert.

Peter A. Juley & Son Collection. Accessed at: <http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artist/?id=543>.

<http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=2706>.

University of Connecticut Libraries Map and Geographic Information Center - MAGIC. 2013. 1934 Connecticut Aerial Photography Index.

Retrieved from http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash_up/1934_aerial_index.html

Photographer: Charlotte Hitchcock **Date:** 6/16/2014

View: South view

Organization: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address: 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

Form completed by: Charlotte Hitchcock **Printed On:** January 23, 2016

Threats: None known

Subsequent field evaluations:



Groton, Noank 27 Smith Court, home of Robert Brackman

FOR OFFICE USE:

Town # _____ **Site#** _____ **UTM** _____
District ☐ S ☐ NR **If NR, specify:** ☐ Actual ☐ Potential