

CT Trust Resource ID: 2182

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): Brainerd, Nehemiah; Brush, Katharine, House

Other Name(s) (Historic): Brainerd, Nehemiah, House; Brush, Katharine, House

Street Address or Location: 988 Saybrook Road, Haddam

Town/City: Haddam

Village:

County: Middlesex

Designation(s): NRHD, SRHD

Owner(s): Jeffrey & Maryan Muthersbaugh

Public/Private: Private

Latitude: 41.4767 Longitude: -72.5083

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Domestic: single dwelling; domestic: secondary structures

Historic Use: Domestic: single dwelling

Accessibility to public: Yes Exterior visible from public road? Yes

Interior accessible? If yes, explain: By appointment with the innkeepers

Style of building: Colonial / Colonial Revival Date of Construction: 1765, 1932

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

Structural Systems(s): Post & Beam, Wood Frame

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

Number of Stories: 2 1/2, B Approximate Dimensions: 26' x 34', additions 20' x 28', 15' x 20'

Structural Condition: Excellent

Exterior Condition: Excellent

Locational Integrity: Moved, When: NA

Alterations?: Yes If yes, explain: 1932 relocation within the property, additions & renovations

Related outbuildings or landscape features: Garden, Cottage

Surrounding Environment: Rural

Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The house is on a 5.07-acre parcel on the east side of Saybrook Road (CT Route 154) in the town of Haddam. The village of Haddam Center is just to the northwest and Haddam Meadows State Park occupies a stretch of flood plain along the river just east of this property. The main house, the Nehemiah Brainerd House Bed and Breakfast inn, is set back approximately 350 feet from the road, having been moved away from the roadway during renovations in 1932. A gravel drive extends east from Saybrook Road, and terminates in a circular turnaround. A spur to the north accesses a new free-standing garage with an additional guest suite above.

A cottage, is located to the northeast of the house and sits on the brow of the hill overlooking the Connecticut River valley. The cottage was built as a one-room writing studio. Its gable roof is oriented east-west, with the east gable-end facing toward the river. It has clapboard siding, asphalt shingle roof, and a mortared fieldstone foundation which is exposed on the north and east sides as the hill slopes down toward the river. The interior has a rustic stone fireplace in a vernacular Craftsman style. A modern addition provides a kitchen and bath. The exterior opens at grade to a fieldstone patio surrounded by a stone retaining.

The village of Haddam Center Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Nehemiah Brainerd House is a contributing resource in the district.

Other notable features of building or site:

The main block of the house is a 2 1/2-story gable-roofed Colonial-style post and beam structure on a granite random ashlar foundation (installed in 1932 when the house was moved within the site), with clapboard siding, simple corner board trim, and wood shingle roof. Windows are six-over-six double-hung sash; the original openings in the facade were retained in the 1932 renovation. The west façade has five-bays with a center entry door flanked by two windows on each side. The Colonial Revival-style entry surround with pilasters and an entablature was new in 1932.

The main block has attached dependencies at the north and south: a one-story kitchen wing extending northward and to the south a one-story wing with its gable roof perpendicular to the main roof. The projection of the two additions encloses a shallow entry court. The rear, east, façade includes a full-width veranda, originally an open porch with shallow hipped roof but now glass-enclosed. The house has an exterior chimney at the south end.

The interior is a center hall layout with a stair to the upper floor. The interior was newly finished in the 1932 renovation in Colonial Revival style, with the trim, built-in millwork, and front entryway emulating Federal-style prototypes. The several bathrooms, kitchen, and maid's room represented the requirements of a modern home of the time.

Architect: Le Roy P. Ward, Inc., NY, 1932 relocation Builder/Maker: Unknown

Historical or Architectural importance:

This Colonial-period house is significant for its association with the prominent Brainerd family during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In its second incarnation as a Colonial Revival-style country estate the ensemble of house, cottage, and grounds represents a sensitive adaptation of the original structure to contemporary fashion and functional needs of the early to mid-20th century. The site gains significance from its association with author Katharine Brush, a pioneering woman in journalism, best-selling novelist, and at the forefront of the new genre of writing for film during the early years of Hollywood cinema, known as the Precode era.

Sources:

Interview with Jeffrey and Maryan Muthersbaugh, 10/08/2014, at the site.

Town of Haddam Assessor's Records Parcel ID: 31-073, at <http://gis.vgsi.com/haddamct/>.

Historical aerial photography and maps accessed at UConn MAGIC: http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash_up/1934_aerial_index.html
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View: Multiple views

Form completed by: Charlotte Hitchcock **Printed On:** April 28, 2016

Organization: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address: 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

Threats: None known

Subsequent field evaluations:



Brainerd House B&B, 988 Saybrook Rd, Haddam

FOR OFFICE USE:

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