

CT Trust Resource ID: 4195

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): McKenna, Rollie, Building; Trumbull Building

Other Name(s) (Historic): McKenna, Rollie, Building; Trumbull Building

Street Address or Location: 145 Water Street, Stonington

Town/City: Stonington Village: Stonington County: New London Designation(s): SRHD, NRHD
Borough

Owner(s): OLYMPIAN LLC

Public/Private: Private

Latitude: 41.3350 Longitude: -71.9066

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Commerce & trade: commercial

Historic Use: Commerce & trade: commercial

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

Interior accessible? If yes, explain: During open hours

Style of building: Vernacular classical revival Date of Construction: 1856

Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate) Cut Stone, Brick

Structural Systems(s): Load bearing masonry

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

Number of Stories: 2 1/2 Approximate Dimensions: 30' x 89'

Structural Condition: Excellent

Exterior Condition: Excellent

Locational Integrity: On original site Moved, When: NA

Alterations?: Yes If yes, explain: Rehabilitation

Related outbuildings or landscape features:

Surrounding Environment: Commercial

Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

This is a mid-nineteenth century commercial block located on the west side of Water Street in Stonington Borough, a picturesque maritime village set on a narrow, 170-acre peninsula in the southeastern corner of Connecticut near the Rhode Island border. The granite and brick building, known as the Trumbull Building, was designed with street-level retail space and probably offices above, later converted to an apartment. Rosalie Thorne McKenna, better known as Rollie McKenna, purchased the building in 1965. The building is a contributing resource in the Stonington Borough Historic District (listed in 1978).

Other notable features of building or site:

The building has a four-bay façade with granite piers and lintel framing storefront windows and doors at the ground level. The second floor is brick with four tall arched windows. The multi-pane sash have curved muntins in the arch, over six-pane sash below. In the attic there is one arched window. The gable roof is oriented perpendicular to the street.

Architect: Unknown Builder/Maker: Unknown

Historical or Architectural importance:

The 1865 granite and brick building, known as the Trumbull Building, was designed with street-level retail space and probably offices above, later converted to an apartment. Rosalie Thorne McKenna, better known as Rollie McKenna, purchased the building in 1965. Born in Houston, Texas, Rosalie Thorne McKenna (1918-2003) acquired the nickname Rollie from her parents. She studied American history at Vassar College, 1938-1940, and returned in 1948 to earn an MA in art history. During World War II, she served in the U.S. naval reserve and, in 1945, married Henry Dickson McKenna; they divorced in 1950. A self-taught photographer, McKenna took photographs of architecture in Rome and Florence, where she met and photographed Truman Capote, her first literary subject. She found a niche, and specialized in portraits of literary figures. The Modern Poets: An American-British Anthology (1963) featured her photographs of 80 subjects, including Thom Gunn, Seamus Heaney, Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath. In 1965, she produced a 21-minute film, The Days Of Dylan Thomas, and a

book of the same name, with text by Bill Read. In 2001, the National Portrait Gallery held a retrospective exhibition of her work, which, as well as people, usually on location and rarely in a studio, included architectural photography. McKenna died in 2003 (The Guardian obituary 2003).

In the 1960s she acquired her building in Stonington Borough, where she had an apartment on the second floor. In Stonington, she was a friend of James Merrill and others in his circle (see 107 Water Street).

Sources:

Town of Stonington Assessor's Records. Accessed at: <http://gis.stonington-ct.gov/> .

Saxon, Wolfgang. McKenna, Rosalie Thorne, obituary. 7/13/2003. New York Times.

Summers, John. McKenna, Rosalie Thorne, obituary. 7/20/2003. The Guardian. Accessed at:

<http://www.theguardian.com/news/2003/jul/21/guardianobituaries.artsobituaries1> .

Zimmerman, Sarah J. 1978. Stonington Borough National Register Historic District No. 08000497. National Park Service.

Photographer: Realtor photo (Loopnet.com) Date: 2008

View: West view

Form completed by: Charlotte Hitchcock Printed On: May 25, 2016

Organization: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address: 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

Threats: None known

Subsequent field evaluations:



145 Water St., Rolie McKenna - west view (Loopnet.com photo)

FOR OFFICE USE:

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