

CT Trust Resource ID: 2200

## 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): Benjamin Franklin Statue

Other Name(s) (Historic):

Street Address or Location: 267 Grand Street, Waterbury

Town/City: Waterbury

Village:

County: Litchfield

Designation(s): SRHD, NRHD

Owner(s): City of Waterbury

Public/Private: Public

Latitude: 41.5545 Longitude: -73.0444

### PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Site/Object: sculpture

Historic Use: Site/Object: sculpture

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

Interior accessible? If yes, explain: NA

Style of building: N/A Date of Construction: 1921

**Material(s)** (Indicate use or location when appropriate)

Structural Systems(s): N/A

Roof(Type): N/A (Material): N/A

**Number of Stories:** N/A **Approximate Dimensions:** 6' x 4' x 9'

**Structural Condition:** Excellent

**Exterior Condition:** Excellent

**Locational Integrity:** Moved, When: NA

**Alterations?:** No If yes, explain: NA

**Related outbuildings or landscape features:**

**Surrounding Environment:** High building density

**Interrelationship of building and surroundings:** The Benjamin Franklin statue is located on Grand Street in Library Park, directly in front (to the north) of the Silas Bronson Library in Waterbury. The park encompasses 7 acres and is bound by Meadow Street to the southwest, Grand Street to the northwest, and Waterbury City Hall to the east. Located in the northeast section of New Haven County, Waterbury is located on the Litchfield County border. The library property is located in the center of town, just to the southwest of the Waterbury Green.

**Other notable features of building or site:** Measuring approximately 6' x 4' x 9', the Benjamin Franklin statue sits upon what appears to be a marble base. The statue itself is of Benjamin Franklin sitting on what looks like an earthen bench, and holding a walking stick and Poor Richard's Almanac. He is dressed in a button-down coat with the tails splayed over the back of the bench. A hat and overcoat are placed on the bench on the east side of him. A key is found on the west side of the statue, by the earthen bench Benjamin Franklin is sitting upon. The statue faces north, overlooking Grand Street, located in front of the Silas Bronson Library. Bartlett's signature is found etched into the base of the bronze statue on the west side. The foundry's name is etched into the bronze on the south side.

Architect: Unknown Builder/Maker: Paul Wayland Bartlett

**Historical or Architectural importance:**

Paul Wayland Bartlett was born in New Haven, Connecticut in 1865 to Truman Howe and Mary Ann White Bartlett. Truman H. Bartlett was a sculptor, art critic, and a teacher who taught for many years at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Paul W. Bartlett grew up in New Haven and Waterbury, before moving to Paris. At the age of 14 he exhibited a bust of his grandmother at the Paris Salon, and the next year he began attending Ecole des Beaux-Arts. By 1918, Bartlett was chairman of New York's committee on war memorials, President of the National Sculpture Society and member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 1925 Bartlett died of blood poisoning after he accidentally cut his arm during a fishing trip. Among his noted sculptures are the Marquis de Lafayette statue located at the entrance of the Louvre in Paris, the Blackstone statue in London, statues of noted puritans found on the Connecticut State Capitol, six statues on the façade of the New York Public Library, and the Marquis de Lafayette statue in Hartford. The Lafayette statue in Hartford was created from the original plaster model that Bartlett had given to the State of Connecticut in the early 1900s.

The Benjamin Franklin statue forms a significant expression of patriotism following World War I. After Bartlett designed the statue, it was sent to Baltimore to be cast. On its way back to Waterbury, the statue stopped in 22 cities, accompanied by children in the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts as well as members from the Sons of the American Revolution. Numerous people in each city gathered to see the statue, and in many areas, a parade was held to promote Americanism and the founding of the United States.

**Sources:**

City of Waterbury, Famous Waterbury Landmarks accessed 5/30/2014 at <http://www.waterburyct.org/content/9586/9599/9602.aspx>;  
Lancaster, Frank H. & Birmingham, Ernest F.; The Fourth Estate: A Weekly Newspaper for Publishers, Advertisers, Advertising Agents, and Allied Interests; Fourth Estate Publishing Company; 1921 accessed 5/30/2014 at <http://books.google.com>

Franklin to be Honored by a Memorial – April 2, 1921

Ben Franklin's Statue at Home in Waterbury Unveiled – June 11, 1921; National Museum of Wildlife Art of the United States; Artists, Paul Wayland Bartlett accessed 5/30/2014 at <http://www.wildlifeart.org/collection/artists/artist-paul-wayland-bartlett-455/>; Silas Bronson Library; Waterbury Hall of Fame; Paul Wayland Bartlett accessed 5/30/2014 at <http://www.bronsonlibrary.org/content/1521/1545/default.aspx>; Smithsonian Institution; Archives of American Art; Paul Wayland Bartlett Papers accessed 5/30/2014 at <http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/paul-wayland-bartlett-papers-6463>

**Photographer:** Kristen Nietering **Date:** 4/4/2014

**View:**

**Organization:** Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

**Address:** 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

**Form completed by:** Kristen Nietering **Printed On:** December 21,2015

Threats: None known

**Subsequent field evaluations:**

North view, camera facing south

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**FOR OFFICE USE:**

Town # \_\_\_\_\_ Site# \_\_\_\_\_ UTM \_\_\_\_\_

District  S  NR If NR, specify:  Actual  Potential