

FORM B - BUILDING

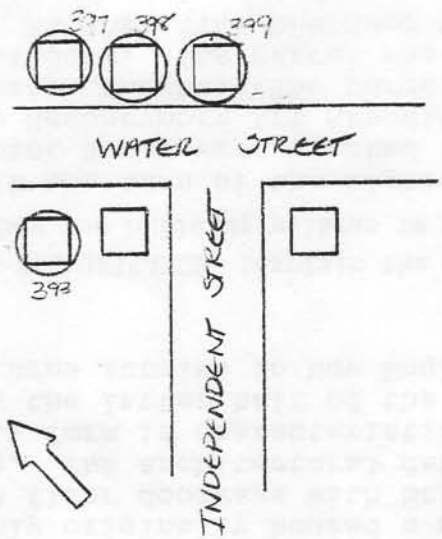
Area	Form no.
	399

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
 251 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108



City Newburyport  
 Address 63-65 Water Street  
 Historic Name Newburyport Art Association Building  
 Original Use Commercial  
 Present Use Newburyport Art Association  
 Ownership:  Private individual  
 Private organization Newburyport Art Association  
 Public  
 Original owner Captain Anthony Gwynne

Draw map showing location in relation to nearest cross streets and other buildings or geographical features. Indicate north.



DESCRIPTION:  
 Date Late eighteenth century  
 Source Essex County Registry of Deeds  
 Style Georgian  
 Architect Unknown  
 Exterior wall fabric Brick  
 Outbuildings \_\_\_\_\_  
 Major alterations (with dates) fenestration altered (dates unknown)  
 Moved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Approx. acreage 3,130 sq. ft.  
 Setting in area of mixed residential and commercial uses along the banks of the Merrimack River.

Recorded by Mary Jane Stirgwort  
 Organization Office of Community Development  
 Date 10-20-80

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within community)

This building is an excellent example of a late eighteenth century mercantile building. Built on the banks of the Merrimack, this building probably originally housed a mixture of storage and counting rooms. The second floor doorways with beams for hoists lends credibility to this notion. The architectural details of this building are simple, yet the overall form is characteristic of building, utilitarian or residential, during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Few such mercantile structures survive in New England today.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community)

At the turn of the eighteenth century the river lots on the Merrimack River were granted to individual citizens. The parcels occupied by the Newburyport Art Association Building was granted to James Ordway and Joseph Knight. The parcel was subsequently occupied by a number of boatbuilders. The parcel was consolidated by Captain Anthony Gwynne in 1756. At that time the deed made no mention of any building on the site.

Captain Gwynne was a merchant and owned this land until his death in 1777. The Gwynne heirs conveyed the property "with all buildings, stores, and wharf" to Anthony Davenport in 1785. It is quite possible that this brick building was built prior to this date.

Anthony Davenport, born in 1752, was the son of William Davenport, the proprietor of the Wolfe Tavern. After the death of his father in 1773, Anthony helped to run the inn with his brother Moses. Anthony was a prominent Newburyport merchant. In 1793 he was one of the town's ten wealthiest men. Davenport served as a town selectman during the 1790's. Davenport lived until 1836. Two years later his heirs conveyed one half of "the brick store" to Solomon Currier.

In 1852 Robert Bayley and Son were the owners of this building and the wharf and adjacent buildings. Captain Robert Bayley and his son Robert Bayley, Jr. were large importers of molasses and other products from Puerto Rico and the West Indies. This firm paid custom duties in excess of fifty thousand dollars for over fifty years. They continued their business until 1879.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Assessor's Records 1890-1980
- 1851 Plan of Newburyport, Mass. H. McIntire
- 1872 Map of the City of Newburyport, Mass. D. G. Beers and Co.
- 1851, 1871 City Directories
- Deed Research compiled by Ms. Cathryn Coffin
- J. J. Currier, History of Newburyport 1764-1905, Vols. I and II., reprint, Newburyport, 1964.
- Newburyport Daily News April 20, 1911.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Newburyport	Form No: 399
Property Name: Newburyport Art	

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below. Association Building

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (CONTINUED)

In 1886, this building was purchased by the Victor Manufacturing Company. The firm was organized in 1882 as manufacturers of barn door hangers and rails. Later they made "heat-closing fire doors" and tin clad fire shutters, at the time a unique product much in demand.

This building had several owners and uses in the twentieth century before it was acquired by the Newburyport Art Association in 1969. It has been used as offices and gallery space since that time.

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