

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

100 South Prospect Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(203) 566-3005

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY FORM

For Buildings and Structures

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

TOWN NO.: _____ SITE NO.: _____
UTM: 18/---/---/---/---/---
QUAD: _____
DISTRICT: S NR: ACTUAL
POTENTIAL

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME: Common: Mystical Seven Historic: same
2. TOWN/CITY: Middletown VILLAGE: _____ COUNTY: Middlesex
3. STREET & NUMBER (and/or location): 30 Wyllys Avenue
4. OWNER(S): The Mystical Seven Society PUBLIC X PRIVATE
5. U. E: Present: Secret Society Historic: same
6. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: x yes no
Interior accessible: yes, explain no

DESCRIPTION

7. STYLE OF BUILDING: Unique: Seven-sided structure DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1912
8. MATERIAL(S) (indicate use or location when appropriate):
clapboard asbestos siding X brick
wood shingle asphalt siding fieldstone
board & batten stucco cobblestone
aluminum siding concrete: type: X cut stone: type: brownstone
X other: wood cornice foundation and trim
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM:
wood frame: post and beam balloon
X load bearing masonry structural iron or steel
other: _____
10. ROOF: type:
gable flat mansard monitor sawtooth
gambrel shed X hip with seven pitches round X other cupola
material:
wood shingle roll asphalt tin X slate
asphalt shingle built up tile other: _____
11. NUMBER OF STORIES: 1 APPROXIMATE DIMENSIONS: 112' circumference
12. CONDITION: Structural: excellent X good fair deteriorated
Exterior: excellent X good fair deteriorated
13. INTEGRITY: Location: X on original site moved, when: _____
Alterations: no X yes, explain: Extensive repairs and improvements, interior
14. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES:
barn shed garage other landscape features or buildings: _____
carriage house shop garden _____
15. SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT:
open land woodland X residential scattered buildings visible from site
commercial industrial rural X high building density

16. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS: This peculiar seven-sided templum is one of two "secret society" buildings on the Wesleyan University campus. These structures are similarly sited on Wyllys Avenue, a quiet side street that joins High Street a short distance away. Both have ivy-covered walls and resemble small monuments. One of the modern Center for the Arts buildings, a larger grey rectangular structure, is situated between these two templums.

17. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING OR SITE (interior and/or exterior):

Two seven-pointed star-shaped windows on main facade
Door constructed of seven vertical tongue and groove planks
A seven-sided cupola surmounted by a pointed finial

SIGNIFICANCE

Architect: Elmer P. Merrill, Prof. Builder: William B. Mylchreest

18. HISTORICAL OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: This small structure, built in 1912, is the headquarters of the Mystical Seven Society. Chartered in 1837, Mystical Seven was the first secret society to appear at Wesleyan. It became a senior organization in 1867, thus compelling the underclass members to establish the Greek letter fraternity of Delta Kappa Epsilon. This building's erection was necessitated by a fire in 1906 that destroyed the "Seven's" original headquarters in the attic of the old North College building.

The Mystical Seven, which came to be recognized as an honor society, pays homage to the seven-ness of the universe. The templum's construction portrays this. It has seven walls, and practically every element of the building is seven sided or displays seven parts. The structure also features an arched entranceway with a prominent keystone. It surrounds a brightly colored door fastened by decorative metal hinges. A finial projecting from the roof of the cupola further accentuates this buildings eccentric appearance.

Before the recent construction of the Center for the Arts, this and the meeting house of another secret society, the Skull & Serpent, stood side by side. These organizations in past years exercised much influence in campus affairs. Their templums, resembling small monuments, evoke a significant aspect of Wesleyan's heritage and traditions.

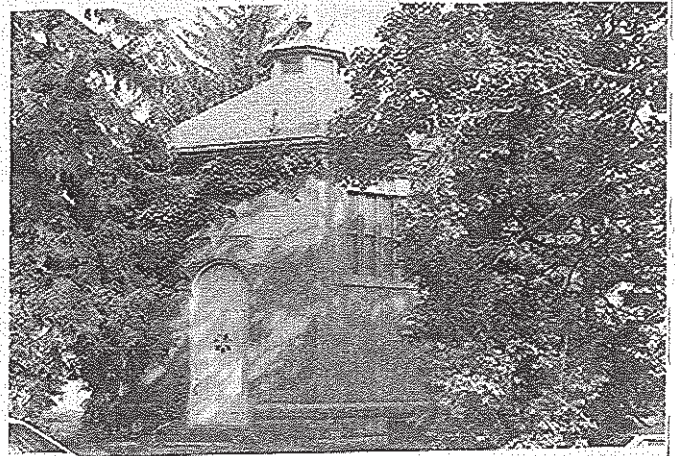
PHOTOGRAPH

photographer: Elizabeth Loomis
date: 7/78 view: south
negative on file: Roll 33, #11

COMPILED BY:

name: Robert Svec date: 7/78
organization: Greater Middletown Preservation Trust
address: 27 Washington St., Middletown, Ct. 06457

19. SOURCES: Wesleyan Archives



20. SUBSEQUENT FIELD EVALUATIONS:

21. THREATS TO BUILDING OR SITE:

☒ none known ☐ highways ☐ vandalism ☐ developers ☐ other: _____
☐ renewal ☐ private ☐ deterioration ☐ zoning ☐ explanation: _____