

FORM B - BUILDING

NRDIS 8/2/1984

Assessor's number  
4-30B

USGS Quad  
Newburyport

Area(s)  
L,U

Form Number  
2202

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building



Town Newburyport

Place (neighborhood or village)

Address 10-16 State Street

Historic Name Marine Society Building

Uses: Present Commercial

Original Commercial/Public Hall

Date of Construction c.1811

Source visual inspection

Style/Form Federal

Architect/Builder unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation Granite

Wall/Trim Brick, Granite

Roof Asphalt Shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures

none

Major Alterations (with dates) c.1970 - restoration of  
previously altered second floor fenestration

Condition good

Moved  no  yes Date

Acreage 2613 SF

Setting central business district, flanked by other  
similar brick blocks

Recorded by Lisa Mausolf

Organization Newburyport Historical Commission

Date (month/year) May 1999

## BUILDING FORM (10-16 State Street)

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

*Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of the building in terms of other buildings within the community.*

The Marine Society Building at 10-16 State Street is a three-story, side-gabled brick building which is capped by an asphalt-shingled roof with two tall brick chimneys rising from the front roof slope. The brick walls are laid in a Flemish bond and a bracketed brick cornice decorates the facade. The building was at one time covered with mastic which was removed in 1902.

The first floor storefronts display a trabeated form ordered by granite sills and lintels. The three storefronts are all accessed by double glass-and-wood doors capped by 4 x 2-light transoms. To each side there is a 3 x 2-light window set above a wooden panel. The second bay from the south end of the building consists of an open passageway leading to the pedestrian mall at the rear of the building. The upper two stories of the facade are aligned in a slightly irregular fenestration pattern with a 1 - 3 - 4 bay rhythm. All of the openings contain 6/6 wooden sash capped by splayed sandstone lintels with plain sandstone sills. In some cases the sills and lintels are in-kind replacements. Centered between the second and third stories is a recessed rectangular tablet with flared corners reading "Marine Society of Newburyport Founded 1772".

Historic photographs of the building taken in the early 20th century indicate that at that time two pairs of the second floor windows had been replaced by tripartite picture windows and the first floor storefronts had been remodeled. The historic fenestration pattern of the building has been restored.

### HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

*Describe the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.*

Like its neighbors, this building is thought to have been constructed shortly after the Great Fire of 1811 wiped out much of what is now downtown Newburyport. According to a "Reminiscences" article printed in the Daily News in 1886, sixty or seventy years earlier this building had been occupied by a store belonging to Abraham Wheelwright, Moses Davenport's dry goods store, William Thompson's dry goods store and Benjamin Poore's dry goods store. In 1849 Porter and Byron had a dry goods store at 10 State Street, Osborn's Saloon was located at 12 State Street and William Palmer's dry goods store was at 14 State Street.

In 1851, Abraham Wheelwright's estate sold the three-story building to the Marine Society of Newburyport for \$3000. Soon thereafter the Society made repairs and alterations to the second and third stories of the building to accommodate the society's meetings. One room served as museum for the various gifts which the society had received from many sources, most bought from foreign lands by the members. The Marine Society was formed in 1772 and formed a fund for the benefit of unfortunate members. In time the Society not only achieved its purpose of aiding deserving members suffering ill luck, their widows and orphans but also became a recognized authority on matters of maritime importance, interpreted and made the pilot laws and among other things, recommended to the Federal government suitable places for establishing lighthouses and buoys. By the early 1900s the Marine Society had become too small and its membership too elderly to continue to manage the building and it was sold. Much of the collection of the Marine Society can be seen at the Custom House Maritime Museum.

By the 1860s directories describe the public hall at 14 State Street as "the Concert Hall". This meeting hall has served numerous functions over the years including a school of dance and the Greek American Club from the 1940s to 60s.

The first floor storefronts have had a variety of tenants over the years. By 1869 Knight & Pierce, tailors, were at 10 State Street and the First National Bank occupied space at 16 State Street. C.C. Stockman had a furniture store at 10 State Street in 1890. The commercial space at 12 State Street was occupied from the 1930s until the 1950s by a grocery store, first the New Public Market and later, Scott's Public Market.

Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attached a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

## INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town  
NewburyportProperty Address  
10-16 State St.  
Area(s) Form No.Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Massachusetts Archives Building  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

L,U	2202
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## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE (continued):

By 1967 the building had been unused for many years and the property was acquired as part of Urban Renewal. Prior to its rehabilitation the original windows had been replaced by 2/2 sash, the storefronts had modern replacements and the facade had been painted. The building was finally rehabilitated in the 1970s, as part of Parcel 10, by the Restoration Design Group of Portsmouth.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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Currier, John J. *History of Newburyport, Massachusetts, 1764-1906*, vols. 1 & 2. Newburyport: 1906 & 1909.  
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"Marine Society Served Dual Purpose", *Newburyport Daily News*, February 28, 1952.  
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Newburyport Daily News, 8/1/1902

## Maps

*Atlas of Essex County, Massachusetts*. Philadelphia: D.B. Beers & Co., 1872.  
*Atlas of Essex County, Massachusetts*. Boston: George H. Walker, 1884.  
Beck & Paul. *City of Newburyport*. Framingham, Mass.: Bigelow and Hazen, 1880.  
*Plan of Newburyport*. Philadelphia: H. McIntyre, 1851.  
Sanborn Insurance Maps, Newburyport, 1888, 1894, 1906, 1914, 1924, 1946. Massachusetts State Library, Boston, Massachusetts.