

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only
received MAR 31 1982
date entered APR 29 1982

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Saint Luke's Home for Destitute and Aged Women

and/or common Saint Luke's Home

2. Location

street & number 135 Pearl Street N/A not for publication

city, town Middletown N/A vicinity of congressional district

state Connecticut code 09 county Middlesex code 007

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Rak Realty

street & number c/o Frank Rak, Bear Hill Road

city, town Middletown N/A vicinity of state Connecticut

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Middletown Municipal Building, Office of the Town Clerk

street & number 152 DeKoven Drive

city, town Middletown state Connecticut

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

State Register of Historic Places (A)
title Middletown, CT--Historical and Architectural Resources (B) has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1981 (A); 1979 (B) federal state county local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission (A & B)

city, town Hartford state Connecticut

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Saint Luke's Home for Destitute and **Aged Women** is a 2½ story, late Victorian Institutional style structure with Flemish Revival features built in 1892. Originally intended to provide accommodations for fourteen women, it is located on the southwestern corner of Pearl and Lincoln Streets in Middletown's residential north end. The present size of the lot on which the building stands is 120 feet long and 100 feet deep (0.275 acres); this area comprises the site to be included in this nomination.

The structure stands approximately fifteen feet back from both Pearl and Lincoln Streets on a heavily shaded lot which slopes gradually upward toward the west. A paved driveway enters from Lincoln Street along the western side of the property and runs to a small parking lot behind the building. The area to the north, east, and west of the property is dominated by moderately-sized late nineteenth-century residences; to the south along Washington Street stand larger, more fashionable homes dating from the early-through-late nineteenth century.

The original main block of the building (48' X 39') was constructed with load bearing brick laid in common bond with Flemish variation and capped by a slate shingled gable roof.¹ The front (eastern) slope of this roof is broken by two large gable dormers flanking a diminutive shed dormer (see photo #1); the rear slope is broken by a large shed dormer which overlooks a large gable dormer and a small gable dormer (see photo #2). Decorative exterior detailing includes rock-faced brownstone ashlar door and window sills and lintels, and a corbelled main cornice with regularly spaced, projecting brick headers which resemble a classical modillion course. This projecting header treatment also appears beneath the sills of the building's windows, and is mimicked beneath the wooden frieze of the single story, projecting window bay on the north elevation (see photo #4). Similar detailing also appears on all exterior wall joints, where raised stretchers in alternate courses serve as quoins. The building's 1-over-2 window sash are original; with the exception of the windows in the basement story, all of the windows on the facade and north and south elevations still display original interlaced pointed-arch mullions in the upper sash (see photos #1, #3, #7).

The facade displays slight asymmetry; major features such as the chimneys, dormers, main entrance and two story projecting window bays create an unbalanced visual composition which draws the viewer's eyes from south to north (see photo #1). The raised front entry, which is capped by a large rock-faced brownstone ashlar lintel embellished by scrolled brownstone brackets, currently features an inset segmental arched fanlight transom and sidelights rising into a relatively plain architrave embellished by a single band of denticulated molding. This entrance is approached by a broad staircase of cut brownstone (see photo #5). The ornate ballustrades flanking this staircase are wrought iron, as are the exceptionally fine ornamental newells (see photo #6). The 3½ foot high wrought iron fence which borders the property on the east and northeastern sides extends from these newells (see photo #1). The tall, attenuated chimneys, raised ground story and main entrance, projecting two story front window bays, and the front gable dormers all serve to emphasize the vertical proportions of the building. (See Continuation Sheet.)

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An early (ca. 1910) photograph of Saint Luke's Home reveals that the building as it was constructed closely followed virtually all of the massing and detailing aspects of its original design, a rendering of which was published in the 1896 Middletown Tribune Souvenir Edition.² These visual references also reveal that the majority of the building's original exterior details remain intact. Existing modifications to the original structure include the removal of the Flemish gables which adorned the end walls and dormers of the building (see fig. #9); these gables were replaced by the present double-pitched gables (see photo #1, #3). The original four-panel double-leaf front doors were replaced by the current Colonial Revival style fixtures, although the present fanlight transom is original. On the south elevation, the fire escape and its central first, second and attic access doorways are later additions. The single-story screened-in frame porch which projects from the eastern side of this elevation is also a later addition (see photo #7). Most of these alterations appear to have been made about 1925, when the architecturally sympathetic two-story brick wing (30' x 25') projecting from the north side of the west (rear) elevation was added (see photo #2, #3, #8). Most of these modifications are either minor, reversible, or required under the present fire codes. The interior of the building, which was only recently vacated by Saint Luke's Home, was renovated in 1981 by its new owner Rak Realty for use as an apartment complex containing nine units.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates erected 1892

Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Built in 1892, Saint Luke's Home for Destitute and Aged Women is significant for its associations with the development of private charitable institutions specifically aimed at providing care for the elderly (Criteria A). It has additional significance as an unusually small and well preserved example of late Victorian Institutional style architecture, and as the only local structure of its type and period to display pervasive Flemish stylistic influences in both the massing and detailing of its exterior (Criteria C).

Custodial care for the elderly was not a totally new concept in the post Civil War period in the United States. It was, however, limited to the elderly poor. Elderly men and women who were totally without resources had been institutionalized in most of the country's major cities and towns as early as the second and third decades of the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, these were not specialized institutions designed particularly to care for the elderly, but established to provide poor relief for all those persons who were unable to care for themselves.³ Such an almshouse was first built in Middletown in 1813/14. It housed not only the elderly, but orphans, widows and the disabled as well as the able bodied poor.⁴ Like many other towns and cities, Middletown had chosen to build an almshouse rather than to continue to provide relief for the poor in a family setting either in the homes of relatives or by boarding them in local households, a traditional solution employed throughout America during the Colonial period.

By the mid-nineteenth century, state prisons, orphanages, and insane asylums had been built in most states, including Connecticut. These more specialized institutions were established with the full expectation that criminals would be reformed, orphans properly trained, and the insane cured. However, the plight of the elderly as a group was ignored, partially because they were not perceived to be a threat to the social order, but primarily because they did not fit the reformist vision of the purpose of institutions. Many, probably the majority, of aging parents were cared for in their homes; only the truly indigent elderly without relatives would become a public charge. For them, the "poor farm," as almshouses came to be known, was the only recourse.

Privately funded charitable institutions such as Saint Luke's Home, both sectarian and non-sectarian, began to be established throughout most of the United States during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. These small institutions were designed as residences for small select groups, not to fill any general need. In the case of Saint Luke's, with its direct connection to the Church of the Holy Trinity (Episcopalian), it is quite probable that the institution was limited to members of that church. Funds to run the home were provided by members of the parish; the rector served as President of the home's Board of Trustees. As the phrasing of the history of this establishment implies, the women who were housed in Saint Luke's Home were generally (See Continuation Sheet)

9. Major Bibliographical References

ITEM NOT LISTED
See Continuation Sheet
ACREAGE NOT LISTED

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 0.275

Quadrangle name Middletown

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	8	6	9	5	3	8	4	6	0	3	5	4
Zone		Easting				Northing						

B

Zone		Easting				Northing						

C

Zone		Easting				Northing						

D

Zone		Easting				Northing						

E

Zone		Easting				Northing						

F

Zone		Easting				Northing						

G

Zone		Easting				Northing						

H

Zone		Easting				Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title J. Paul Loether, Assistant Director and Janice P. Cunningham, Director

organization The Greater Middletown Preservation Trust date 8/27/1981

street & number 27 Washington Street telephone 203 346-1646

city or town Middletown state Connecticut

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Director, Connecticut Historical Commission date March 16, 1982

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register

date 4/29/82

for  Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Significance (continued)

from the same middle to upper socio-economic class as their benefactors. It states: "About 1860, some charitable ladies of Middletown met together to devise some way of taking care of certain ladies who, through one cause or another had become entirely dependent on their friends for support."⁵ Although the charity which these women were able to extend to their friends did become institutionalized, the home that was eventually established did not resemble an institution either in location, design or method of operation.

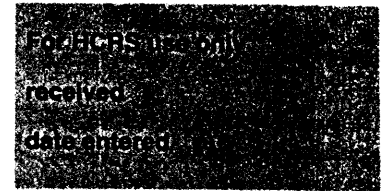
In a period when the Alms House in Middletown was renamed the "Town Farms" and relocated in the outskirts of the city in response to citizen protest at its former location in a residential area, Saint Luke's Home was first established in 1865 in an existing house at the corner of Pearl and Court Street. This location was well within one of the more fashionable residential areas of the city on the perimeter of the Wesleyan University (then College) campus. In 1892, with the proceeds of a large legacy, the corporation was able to build larger quarters only two blocks to the north. The new Saint Luke's Home (the subject of this nomination) was an architecturally compatible addition to the residential area developing on the north of Washington Street. Even later with the addition of a large wing in the 1920's, Saint Luke's scale and proportions continued to resemble the private residences of the prominent citizens in the area.

Although many publicly supported charitable institutions had failed in their attempts to employ a family system of organization, Saint Luke's Home for Aged and Destitute Women effectively functioned as an extended family throughout its eighty year history.⁶ Undoubtedly economic considerations and the availability of an already constructed house may have influenced the way the Home was run initially, but it is clear that the interior of the second building was deliberately designed to foster this approach. A home-like atmosphere was created both by the interior plan and furnishings, one that was particularly suitable for the social class of the group that it was intended to serve.

In contrast to the lack of privacy found in the more typical nineteenth-century institutions, the women who lived out their lives at Saint Luke's were provided with private bedrooms which could be furnished and decorated with the occupant's possessions.⁷ The common rooms, such as the large parlor on the northeast corner of the first floor and the dining room on the lower level, were elegantly furnished and decorated. With the convenience of an adjoining butler's pantry, formal teas were served in the parlor and crystal, china, linens, and placecards in the dining room contributed to the upper class setting. Although a group of "lady managers" supervised the running of the home, and took an active part in its operation, they were assisted by a matron who lived on the premises in her own quarters, two rooms and a bath on the first floor.

By the mid-1970's Saint Luke's was once again too small to accommodate the growing number of elderly women who wished to live there. Construction was completed in 1981 on larger modern quarters behind the Rectory of the Church of the Holy Trinity (The Bishop Acheson House, a National Register property) at 144 Broad Street. The interior of the 1892 house was converted to nine apartments by its new owner Rak Realty the same year.

Saint Luke's derives additional significance from its architecture. An architectural rendering of Saint Luke's Home published in the 1896 Middletown Tribune Souvenir Edition shows that, unlike other local late nineteenth-century institutional or residential build-



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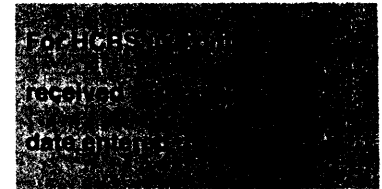
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Significance (continued)

ings, the original design of Saint Luke's Home was dominated by Flemish features. These included Flemish gables on the building's end walls and facade dormers, and a stuccoed facade (see fig. #9), although an early twentieth-century photograph indicates that the stucco was never applied.⁸ Although the original Flemish gables were removed about 1925, the Flemish stylistic framework of the building's original design is still strongly reflected in the existing fenestration pattern and, more particularly, in the detailing exhibited by the building's exterior brick walls. An architectural and historical survey conducted by The Greater Middletown Preservation Trust in 1978-1979 shows that Saint Luke's Home is the only extant Middletown structure to employ the detail feature of raised brick stretchers as quoins to accentuate all exterior wall joints. It is also the only extant Middletown structure to feature common bond with Flemish variation in the brick coursing of its exterior walls.

Both the unity of the building's design aspects and the existence of a published architectural rendering of Saint Luke's Home clearly suggest that it was professionally designed; the locally unique detail features of the building further suggest that the architect was someone from outside the greater Middletown area. An extensive recent search to locate either the designer or builder of Saint Luke's Home has, however, been unable to produce evidence for either attribution. The key to this information undoubtedly lies in the account books of the Saint Luke's Home Corporation for the last decade of the nineteenth century which have not survived.⁹

Notes

1. Descriptive terminology for masonry is derived from Harley J. McKee Introduction to Early American Masonry. (National Trust for Historic Preservation and Columbia University, 1973).
2. see H.F. Donlan, The Middletown Tribune Souvenir Edition. (Middletown, Connecticut: E.F. Bigelow, 1896).
3. For this and a more detailed account of the following general discussion of the development of American public institutions see David J. Rothman, The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic. (Boston: Little Brown, 1971).
4. see Middletown Town Votes and Proprietors Records, vol. 3 (Middletown Town Clerk).
5. The Incorporation, History, By-Laws, and Rules of Saint Luke's Home. (Middletown, Connecticut: n.d.).
6. See "Middletown Votes..." vol. 3, for the use and failure of the family system of organization at the Middletown Alms House.
7. Barbara Warner. Interview 11-1981, for this and the following description of the Home's operation.
8. see William H. Pierson American Buildings and Their Architects, Vol. 1. (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1976), pg. 32.
9. Jean Samolyk, Director, Saint Luke's Home. Interview 5-4-1981.

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Major Bibliographical References

Primary Sources

Middletown Land Records. Middletown, Connecticut: Middletown Municipal Building, Office of the Town Clerk.

Middletown Town Votes and Proprietors Records. Middletown, Connecticut: Middletown Municipal Building, Office of the Town Clerk.

Records of the Vestry Meetings of the Church of the Holy Trinity. Middletown, Connecticut: Church of the Holy Trinity.

Secondary Sources

Donlan, H.F. Middletown Tribune Souvenir Edition. Middletown, Connecticut: The Middletown Tribune, 1896.

Incorporation, History, By-laws, and Rules of Saint Luke's Home. Middletown, Connecticut: n.d.

Middletown, Connecticut - Historical and Architectural Resources. Middletown, Connecticut: The Greater Middletown Preservation Trust, 1979.

Rothman, David J. The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic. Boston: Little Brown, 1971.

Interviews

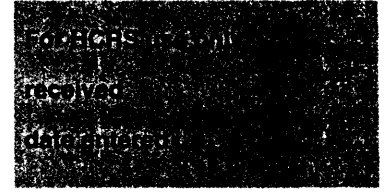
Rak, Frank. Owner, Rak Realty. Interview 6-26-1981.

Samolyk, Jean. Former Director, Saint Luke's Home. 5-4-1981.

Warner, Barbara. Church Member, 11-24-1981.

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Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The property on which Saint Luke's Home for Destitute and Aged Women stands is currently bounded on the north by Lincoln Street for 100 feet, on the east by Pearl Street for 120 feet, on the south by land now or formerly of Sebastiana Gugliemo and Carmelina Bordonaro and land of Anna M. Bartolotta for 120 feet. The dimensions of this lot have remained unchanged since Saint Luke's Home for Destitute and Aged Women (the subject of this nomination) was erected in 1892. (see Middletown Land Records: vol. 598, p. 153)