

# Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

## Scanned Record Cover Page

<b>Inventory No:</b>	NWT.5793
<b>Historic Name:</b>	Hawthorn Playground Field House
<b>Common Name:</b>	Childs, Edwin O. Recreation Center
<b>Address:</b>	11 Hawthorn St
<b>City/Town:</b>	Newton
<b>Village/Neighborhood:</b>	Nonantum
<b>Local No:</b>	14-016-0033
<b>Year Constructed:</b>	1950
<b>Architect(s):</b>	
<b>Architectural Style(s):</b>	No style
<b>Use(s):</b>	Other Recreational; Sports Facility
<b>Significance:</b>	Architecture; Art; Community Planning; Recreation
<b>Area(s):</b>	
<b>Designation(s):</b>	
<b>Building Materials(s):</b>	Roof: Tar, Built-up Wall: Brick; Ceramic Tile; Granite; Stone, Cut Foundation: Concrete Unspecified



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc)

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NEWTON

NWT. 5793

Town Newton

Place (neighborhood or village) Nonantum

Address 11 Hawthorn Street

Historic Name Hawthorn Playground Field House

Uses: Present Recreational Facility  
Original same

Date of Construction 1950

Source Recreation Dept. Annual Report 195

Style/Form contemporary

Architect/Builder unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation concrete

Wall/Trim red brick w/ granite & stone tiles

Roof tar and gravel

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures none

Major Alterations (with dates) none

Condition good

Moved  no  yes Date \_\_\_\_\_

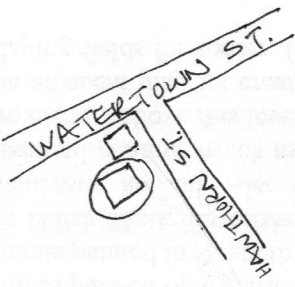
Acreage 4.2 acres

Setting next to playground, in residential neighborhood



Sketch Map

Draw a map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets, including route numbers, if any. Attach a separate sheet if space is not sufficient here. Indicate north.



Recorded by Katie Wade

Organization B.U. Preservation Studies

Date December 15, 1997

RECEIVED

MAR 16 1998

M.S. HIST. COM.

## BUILDING FORM

NWT. 5793

### ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION [ ] *see continuation sheet*

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

The Hawthorn Playground building, otherwise known as the Edwin O. Childs Recreation Center, is a red brick structure topped with a flat roof. The building is laid out in the shape of the letter "L", with the larger section consisting of two stories, and the smaller section consisting of only one. The one-story section projects eastward from the two-story section, and it contains the entry on its south side, as well as a memorial to the U.S. Armed Forces painted on its east end. The two-story section contains a gymnasium within, and is covered with decorative murals painted in its south and west sides. The southern mural shows Arthur Fiedler conducting the Boston Pops at the Hatch Shell; the northern mural depicts a streetscape with people walking and talking, cars driving by, animals wandering around. Also on this western section of the building are decorative granite/stone tiles creating a diamond pattern, which as a group form a decorative banding in the upper third of the wall area. Some windows are located above this level. A playground, outfitted with playground equipment installed in 1967 and designed for the adjacent play lot created by a landscape architecture firm, sits to the west of the building. To the south are playing fields for soccer, football and baseball, as well as tennis courts.

### HISTORICAL NARRATIVE [ ] *see continuation sheet*

*Explain 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.*

In 1922, 1.7 acres of land were acquired for the Hawthorn Playground, with an additional 1.13 acres being gained in 1931. The land of the playground was originally acquired by Italian residents of the community, who raised money to purchase this land (swamp land, at the time, which was being used by the city as a dumping ground for its trash), with the intention of creating a recreational facility. After turning the land from swamp to grass, the land soon became the park of which the residents had dreamed. However, when the maintenance and care of the park became unmanageable for the overseers (residents) the land was given to the city with the understanding that it would always be used as a park. The construction of the Hawthorn building occurred in 1950, and included a gymnasium. Known throughout Nonantum as the Edwin O. Childs Recreation Center, the building was named for Edwin O. Childs, who was mayor of Newton between 1914 and 1929, as well as between 1936 and 1939. Childs, a life-long resident of Newton, had always been involved with children's athletics around the city. The building has been used for year round recreation activity since it was built, as well as for community meetings, etc. Today, the land of the playground totals 4.2 acres.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES [x] *see continuation sheet*

- City of Newton, *Report of the Playground Commission: 1930, 1931.*
- City of Newton, *Report of the Recreation Department: 1950, 1952, 1961, 1967.*
- City of Newton, MA. *Newton, Massachusetts: A Celebration of 300 Years.* Newton: Newton Tricentennial Corp., 1988.
- City of Newton, MA Parks and Recreation Department, *Summary of Areas and Facilities, 1995.* Newton: City of Newton, 1995.

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

# INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

Town

Property Address

NWT.5793

Newton

11 Hawthorn Street

Area(s) Form No.

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

	5793
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## BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (cont.)

City of Newton Planning Department, *An Inventory of Facilities and An Analysis of Planning Standards; An Element of the Comprehensive Plan, 1967*. Newton: City of Newton, 1967.

Pasquariello, Michael John. *The Growth and Development of An Italian Community, Nonantum: 1985-1940*. Dissertation, Boston College, 1978.