

State-Level Historical Documentation

Camp Columbia

Morris, Connecticut

In 2000 the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection acquired the former Camp Columbia. Camp Columbia, started by Columbia University, is the earliest field camp in a permanent location established for the purpose of providing practical experience to engineering students, primarily in surveying techniques. It operated from 1891 to 1965. The State of Connecticut purchased the 591-acre property for use as open space and outdoor recreation. The property includes numerous buildings and structures related to the camp operation, ranging from a stone observation/water tower, to dining, classroom, recreation and residence buildings, to a boathouse and icehouse on Bantam Lake. The SHPO determined that the Camp Columbia buildings are collectively eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Most of the buildings are in poor condition and unsafe, thus they will be demolished. AHS was contracted to prepare a photographic and documentary record of each building and structure prior to the demolition of these significant historic resources. More than 130 photographs were taken and narrative text was prepared that gives a capsule history of the camp, its historic context, and its significance.



Boathouse built in 1914 on the south shore of Bantam Lake.



Stone Tower at Camp Columbia, built in 1942.