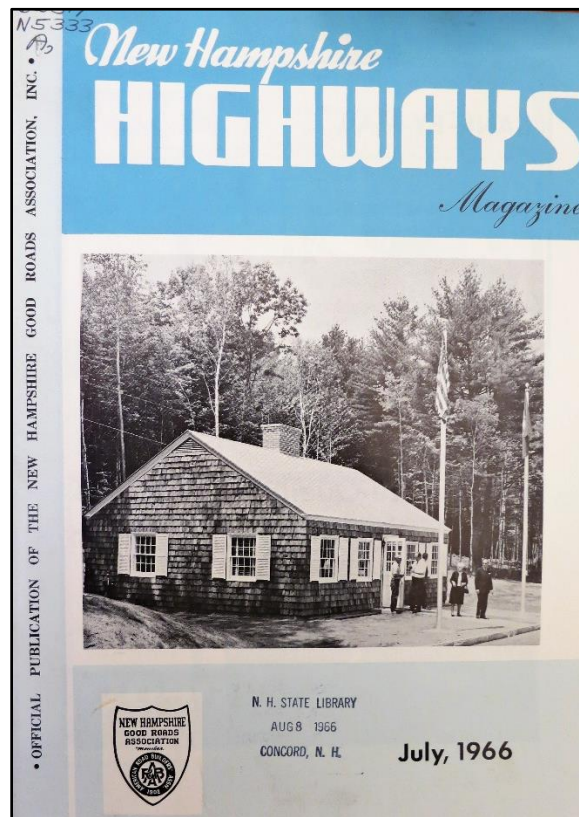


# Safety Rest Areas of New Hampshire

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for the  
NH Department of Transportation  
March 2019

## Historic Context: Safety Rest Areas of New Hampshire

### Abstract

In the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century New Hampshire's state government and local entities used a variety of tools to offer safe and attractive rest stops for the ever-increasing number of automobiles traveling on the state's roads. Information booths, turnouts, wayside parks and other variations sprung up on roadsides throughout the state but it was the federal Highway Beautification Act of 1965 that provided the impetus and funding for the construction of thirteen new modern "safety rest areas" between 1966 and 1973 by the NH Department of Public Works and Highways.

This document provides an historic overview of the development and evolution of rest areas in New Hampshire constructed by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation from the 1960s to present. As part of that history, it will briefly look at the events and influences on the state and national levels that contributed to the development of the safety rest areas. The purpose of this document is to take a comprehensive look at these safety rest areas in order to be able to compare them, determine integrity, and inform future planning.

Between 1966 and 1973 seven rest areas were built along New Hampshire's Interstates – in Sanbornton, Canterbury and Salem on I-93; in Lebanon, Springfield and Sutton on I-89; and in Seabrook on I-95. Five additional rest areas were constructed along Primary roads – on Rt. 9 in Antrim, Rt. 4 in Epsom, Rt. 2 in Shelburne, Rt. 3 in Colebrook and Rt. 16 in North Conway.<sup>1</sup> Of the twelve original safety rest areas funded by the federal Highway Beautification Act, today seven survive in near original condition (Antrim, Canterbury, Colebrook, Epsom, Lebanon, Shelburne, Sutton) while the original Sanbornton rest area building still stands but has served as storage since 1983 when a new rest area was built to the south. In most other cases, the 1960s buildings were demolished and replaced by new facilities on the same site (North Conway, Salem, Seabrook, Springfield). Nearly all of the rest areas were the subject of minor modifications, usually the addition of handicapped accessible restrooms, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1995. One of the buildings (Lebanon) has been covered in vinyl siding and the Colebrook Rest Area has been altered significantly by a large addition, constructed in 2002. The exterior of the original 1966 Sanbornton Rest Area (pictured on the cover) is now featureless as the façade was shingled over when the building was converted to storage.

The safety rest areas reflect various themes in New Hampshire's 20<sup>th</sup> century history: the expansion of road building, the growth of leisure travel that emerged during the mid-century period and the increasing importance of tourism to the state's economy. The modest buildings and surroundings developed by the state were both functional and aesthetically pleasing, creating environments that continue to offer a welcoming and relaxing stop for the travelling public.

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<sup>1</sup> One additional rest area was sited on the extension of the F.E. Everett Turnpike in Nashua but was a state-funded rather than federally-funded rest area. It was removed in 1992.

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Cover Illustration: The first NH Safety Rest Area in Sanbornton  
*New Hampshire Highways Magazine*, July 1966

## Methods and Purpose/Acknowledgements

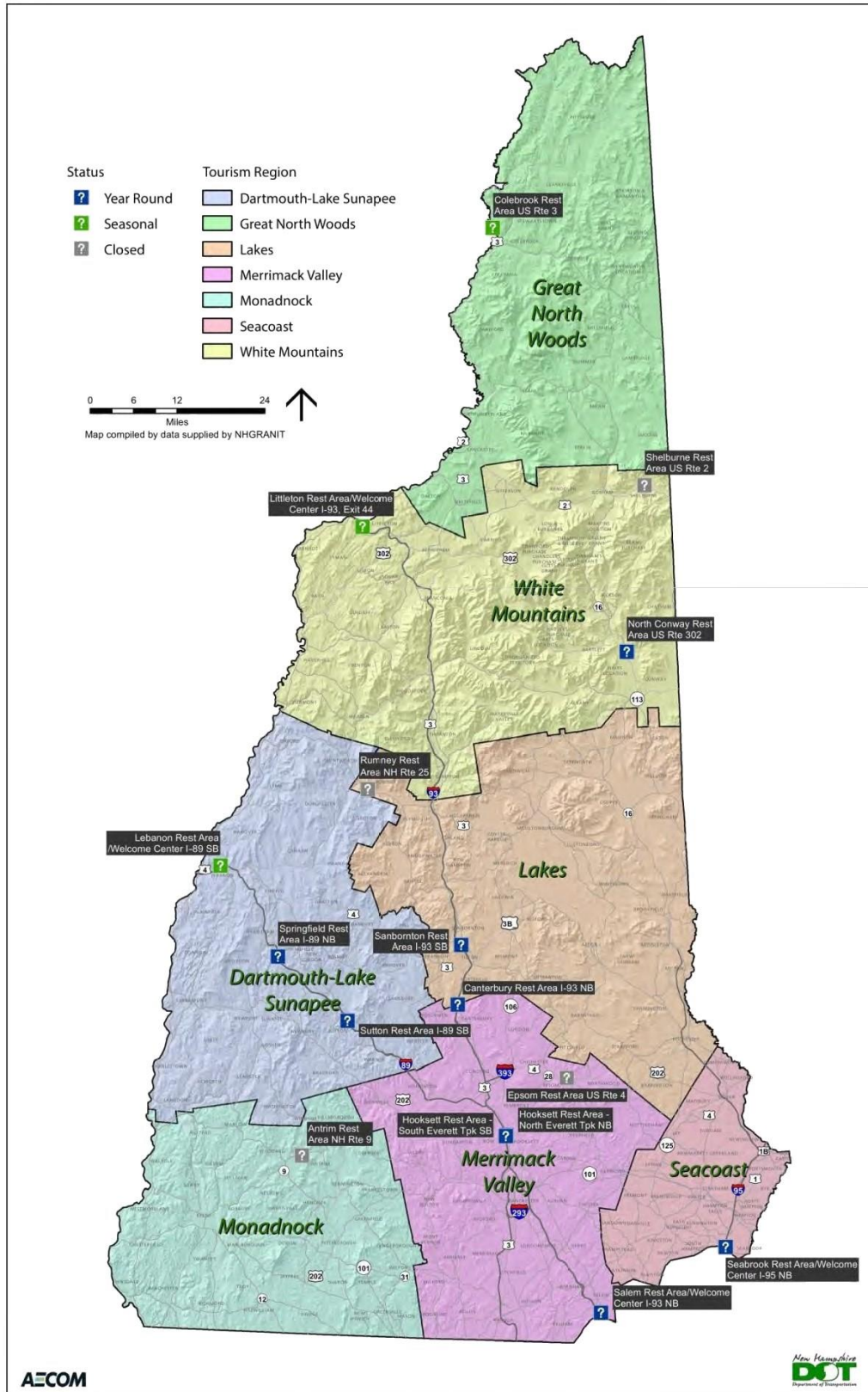
This context brings together information from a variety of sources. *New Hampshire Highways Magazine*, the official publication of the New Hampshire Good Roads Association, Inc. includes detailed information and photographs of several of the early safety rest areas. The magazine is in the collection of the New Hampshire State Library in Concord, along with other important source material including the annual reports of Department of Public Works and Highways. Roger Appleton, NHDOT Bureau of Highway Maintenance, provided copies of departmental memos regarding roadside rest areas from the 1960s. Tim Smith of the New Hampshire Department of Administrative Services, Division of Public Works, Design and Construction was kind enough to search through his archives in response to endless requests and supplied me with electronic scans of many of the rest area drawings. File searches at the NHDOT District 2 offices in Enfield yielded additional information as did files at State Parks related to wayside areas. I was extremely fortunate in being able to locate Lee R. Belanger Sr., the designer of the first 1966 safety rest area in Sanbornton (and also Canterbury and Lebanon) and a retired 47-year career NHDOT employee who was generous with his time and answered many of my accumulated questions. Other sources consulted included indexed statewide newspapers such as the *Portsmouth Herald* and *Nashua Telegraph*. The NHDOT Statewide Rest Area and Welcome Center Study prepared by AECOM in 2016 was another important resource used in writing this report.

The work done in other states looking at their rest areas was very helpful in understanding the national scene, especially *Places of Repose: The Evolution of Interstate Rest Areas in Iowa and their Role in the Culture of Travel* by Kristy J. Medanic and Abby M. Glanville (2013) and the work of rest area scholar Joanna Dowling, a historian and consultant based in Chicago.<sup>2</sup>

The preparation of this context also involved field survey at each of the nine New Hampshire safety rest areas that survives from the 1966 to 1973 period. Interior access to the four closed rest areas was facilitated by District staff. The rest area attendant at Sanbornton, Marie, was also extremely helpful.

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<sup>2</sup> Restareahistory.org was developed by Ms. Dowling and is a web-based organization dedicated to the documentation and communication of rest area history and architectural form. The website also includes a valuable list of nationwide resources on the subject. <http://restareahistory.org/Resources.html>



Locations of New Hampshire Rest Areas 2019

## BACKGROUND HISTORY

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the automobile increasingly became a fixture of everyday life and the number of automobiles on the roads rose exponentially. The first year that car registrations in the U.S. exceeded the 100,000 mark was in 1906; in 1913 the historic million-car registration milestone was reached.<sup>3</sup> In 1919 there were over 7.5 million motor cars, including commercial vehicles, registered in the country.<sup>4</sup> In the late 1920s through the 1940s innovations in road-building equipment resulted in the first paved roads and these improved, smoother surfaces ushered in a new era of tourism-based travel.<sup>5</sup> During the 1966 calendar year, there were 94 million motor vehicles registered in the United States including 334,052 in New Hampshire.<sup>6</sup>

In the 1920s two states in particular, Connecticut and Michigan, were early pioneers in the movement to improve the driving experience. By 1929 several “comfort stations” had been introduced along county roads in Wayne County, Michigan. Both states regarded roadside improvements such as comfort stations integral elements of highway construction and not optional luxuries.<sup>7</sup> Almost twenty years later, the message reached a wider, national audience when the Highway Research Board issued recommendations regarding highway landscaping, highway zoning, and highway design including the construction of parking turnouts and wayside comfort stations. Because most states, including New Hampshire, lacked funding, the introduction of turnouts became the earliest feasible response rather than rest areas. The wayside turnout accomplished similar goals but at a lower expense because they lacked water and sanitary facilities. Various states began using these wayside areas to promote natural resource conservation, as well as historic sites and scenic vistas.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Travel Habits of the Motorist in New Hampshire, Part 1 – Summer*. Concord: State of New Hampshire State Planning Project, September 1964, p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> *Engineering News-Record*, August 12, 1920, p. 299.

<sup>5</sup> Kristy J. Medanic and Abby M. Glanville. *Places of Repose: The Evolution of Interstate Rest Areas in Iowa and their Role in the Culture of Travel*. Wapsi Valley Archaeology, Inc., Ames and Anamosa, Iowa, 2013, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *New Hampshire Highways*, June 1967, p. 6.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3.

### **Early Roadside Rest Areas Built by Public Works and Highways**

In New Hampshire a program for providing roadside rest areas was initiated in the 1930s by Frederick A. Gardner (1885-1947), who worked as the state highway department's public relations engineer from 1922 to 1947 and was a pioneer in the state in terms of roadside beautification. Gardner began the program with plantings, encouraging local groups such as garden clubs and constructing small parks and turnouts. The rest areas were constructed and controlled by the Public Works and Highways Department.

By the 1960s over 200 small rest areas had been built throughout the state by the department, offering tourists a place to stop and a scenic view.<sup>9</sup> In 1964 the State Department of Public Works and Highways was maintaining "136 roadside picnic areas and wayside areas which supplement the system of state parks operated by the Department of Resources and Economic Development. It also has worked with civic groups interested in roadside rest areas adjacent to state-maintained highways."<sup>10</sup>

Ten additional unmanned roadside rest areas were developed throughout the state in the mid 1960s.<sup>11</sup> Seven rest areas with limited facilities were constructed by state highway workers in their spare time. These were located on Route 2 in Lancaster; Route 3 in Bethlehem; Route 25 in Sandwich; Route 4A in Springfield; Route 28 in Epsom; Route 11 in Rochester and Route 12 in Marlborough. It is not known if these still exist.

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<sup>9</sup> Frank H. Merrick, "Roadside Areas: 26 Fully Equipped Havens State Goal", *Portsmouth Herald*, April 16, 1966, p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> *New Hampshire Highways*, December 1964, p. 38. It is presumed that a number of the small rest areas were maintained by civic groups.

<sup>11</sup> Memo from Malcolm J. Chase to William H. Messeck, Director, Division of Resources and Development, April 2, 1966.

## Information Booths

Another precursor to the later rest areas, small information booths were erected in many New Hampshire towns and cities in the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to provide information and assistance to passing motorists and visiting tourists. A statewide system of official tourist information booths was inaugurated in 1927, operated by local chambers of commerce or similar organizations in cooperation with the State. There were just eight booths in 1927 but by 1934 the number had increased to 24.<sup>12</sup>

In 1955 there were 30 special Tourist Information Booths, some of which were located at important highway intersections and others at popular resort centers. The attendants at the booth answered specific questions about the town or area, provided maps and brochures and could help motorists find overnight accommodations.<sup>13</sup>



Milford Information Booth  
Source: Milford Historical Society website

At one time “Official Information Booths” were located in communities including Berlin, Claremont, Franklin, Keene, Lake Sunapee, Lancaster, Lebanon, Littleton, Manchester, Meredith, Nashua, New London, Newport, North Conway, Plymouth, Profile, Rochester, West Ossipee, and Woodsville. Later, Information Booths were renamed Visitor Information Centers and Welcome Centers. As of 2014, the following Welcome Centers were still standing: Coos County, Concord, Gorham, New London, Pittsburg, Portsmouth, Sunapee, Whitefield, Wolfeboro, North Conway, North Woodstock, Conway, Hooksett, Meredith, and Lincoln.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> First Biennial Report of the State Planning and Development Commission, 1936-7, p. 105. It is suggested that New Hampshire was the first state to have such a system but this was not verified.

<sup>13</sup> *New Hampshire Profiles*, April 1955.

<sup>14</sup> Janice Brown. “New Hampshire Missing Places: Information Booths”, Cow Hampshire Blog, December 5, 2014.



The small Information Center on Rt. 2 in Gorham is a later example, erected by members of the Gorham Task Force in 1974.



The basic intent of the information center was to disseminate information on lodging and attractions to the passing traveler. These small buildings did not typically have discreet parking lots but were tucked on the side of the road or highway. There also were no sanitary facilities.

### Wayside Picnic Areas Maintained by Recreation Division (State Parks)

Another branch of State Government – the Recreation Division (later State Parks) was also laying out wayside picnic areas for the traveling public in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. These were typically scenic areas but did not usually offer information or sanitary services.

The Recreation Division established its first four wayside areas in 1948 - the Chesterfield Wayside in Spofford, the Fay Wayside on U.S. Rt. 3 in Lincoln, the Honey Brook Wayside on Rt. 10 in Lempster, and the Dixville Notch Wayside on Rt. 26, east of Colebrook. The Annett Wayside Area in Rindge opened in 1951 as a convenience for visitors to the nearby Cathedral of the Pines. The land, part of the Annett State Forest, was a gift from Albert Annett, a conservationist, member of the Governor's Council, and owner of Annett Lumber & Box in 1922. A CCC camp operated here in the 1930s.

In 1957 the New Hampshire State Legislature appropriated \$10,000 for five more wayside picnic areas, mostly in the White Mountain area. The areas were designed by Malcolm Thomas, Assistant State Park Technician of the New Hampshire Recreation Division (later State Parks).<sup>15</sup> Among these was the Fred Gardner Memorial Wayside on Rt. 3 in Shelburne which was dedicated on September 15, 1959 and included picnic grounds and toilet facilities. The land had been given to the State back in 1932 by Mark and Maud Rix. The wayside area was dedicated to Frederick Gardner, (mentioned above) who worked for the state highway department for more than 25 years, encouraging the construction of small roadside rest areas. The work was completed by Public Works and Highways.

<sup>15</sup> Letter from Russell B. Tobey, Director of Recreation, New Hampshire Recreation Division, to Lawrence Philbrook, October 8, 1959.



Dedication of the Gardner State Wayside Picnic Area, 1959  
Source: *New Hampshire Highways*, October 1959

In 1960 New Hampshire State Parks operated nine wayside areas that offered picnicking and parking facilities: Annett, near the Cathedral of the Pines in Rindge; Chesterfield Gorge on Route 9 in Chesterfield; Honey Brook on Route 10 in Lempster; Fay on Route 3 in North Woodstock; Dixville Notch on Route 25; Wallis Sands State Beach on Rt. 1A, south of Portsmouth; Sculptured Rocks between Routes 118 and 3A on the Cockerhough River in Groton; the Fred Gardner Memorial Wayside on Rt. 2 in Shelburne near the Maine border and Androscoggin Wayside Area on Rt. 16 in Errol. The Beaver Brook Wayside in Colebrook was preserved as a state park on July 19, 1967. Wayside areas could also be approached by car or by boat. One such example was the Bedell Bridge River Wayside Area in Haverhill, planned in 1967 by Stephen H. Foster of Cheshire, Connecticut. The picnic tables and fireplaces were designed by the Division of Parks (the Bedell Bridge was subsequently destroyed by wind in 1979).<sup>16</sup>

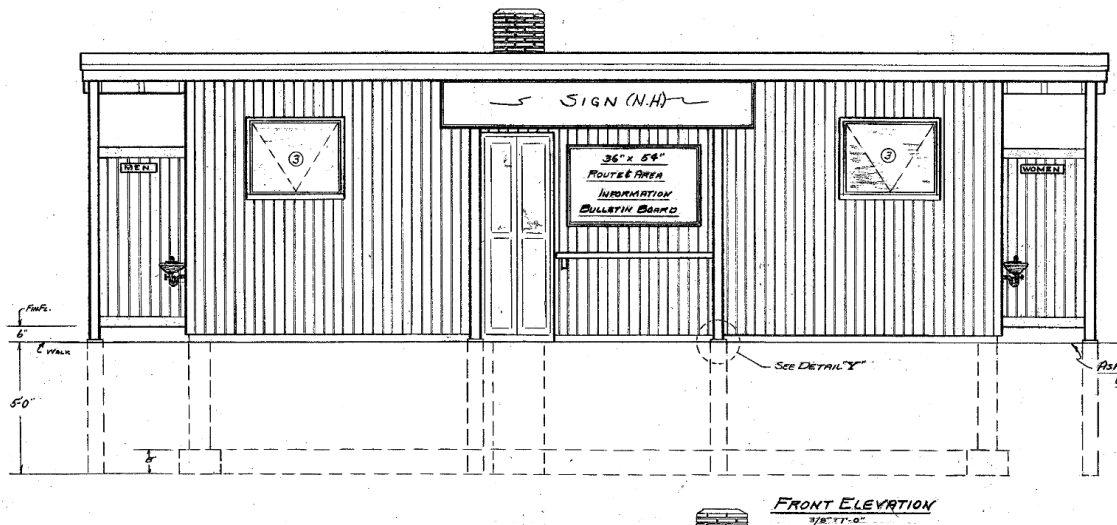


<sup>16</sup> New Hampshire State Parks files.

### Early Federally-funded Rest Areas in NH

In 1964-5 the state apparently constructed at least three rest areas under a federal program that paid 50 percent of the cost of building rest areas. These were located on Route 25 in Rumney, Route 28 in Alton and Route 12 in Charlestown. Two others were planned on Route 102 in Londonderry and Route 202 in Antrim but it is not clear if these were completed at this time.<sup>17</sup> All of these rest areas were built with rudimentary sanitary facilities, picnic areas and rubbish barrels.<sup>18</sup>

Drawings in the Department of Administrative Services archives show the Rumney (aka Baker River) Rest Area which opened in 1965 on the new Route 25 (F030-1(4), P-4992). The parcel had been acquired from the Boston and Maine Railroad in 1963; the State used the retired railroad alignment as ROW for NH Route 25. The simple contemporary building with quarter sawn fir vertical siding and a flat roof was designed by Paul A. Tolman, a civil/electrical engineer who worked for the Bureau of Public Works.<sup>19</sup> Hastings Construction Inc. served as the contractor, submitting a low bid of \$18,474 to construct the building. The modest building in Rumney was expanded slightly the next year and ultimately demolished in 1986 to make way for a new rest area. No additional information has been found on the rest areas in Alton and Charlestown that were reportedly built at the same time.

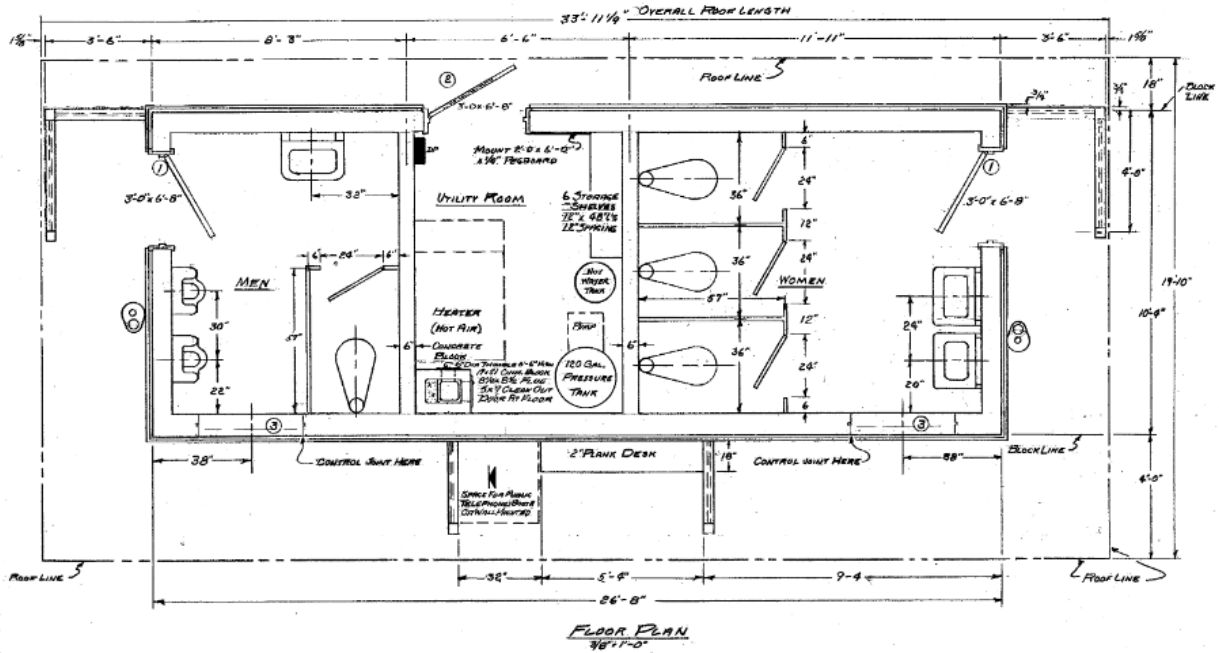


Rumney Rest Area, 1965  
Source: Department of Administrative Services Archives

<sup>17</sup> According to Lee R. Belanger, Sr. there may have been an earlier building, more temporary in nature, that preceded the current 1966 Rest Area in Antrim.

<sup>18</sup> Merrick, opcit.

<sup>19</sup> Tolman went on to become Public Works Administrator after John Noble retired in 1969.



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS		
<b>TITLE:</b> REST ROOM FACILITIES		<b>PROJECT No.</b> P-4992 <b>DRAWN BY:</b> P. A. TOLMAN <b>SHEET:</b> 1 of 2 <b>DATE:</b> 11-13-64
<b>LOCATION:</b> ROUTE 25- RUMNEY, NEW HAMPSHIRE		1
<b>PROJ. NO.</b> FO30-1(4)	<b>SHEET NO.</b> 3	<b>TOTAL SHEETS</b> 5

15-129

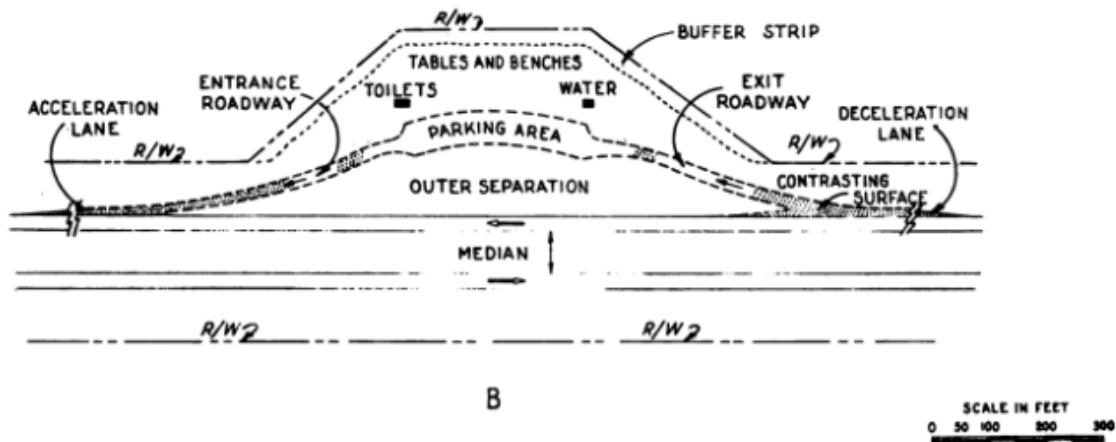
Rumney Rest Area, 1965  
Source: Department of Administrative Services Archives

**Safety Rest Areas and the 1956 Federal-Aid Highway Act**

“Safety rest areas” were to be an integral component of the U.S. Interstate highway system that was created by the 1956 Federal-Aid Highway Act. Modeled after roadside parks, safety rest areas were intended to provide minimal comfort amenities for travelers, consisting of toilet facilities, drinking water, picnic grounds and information offerings.

The first policy document on interstate rest areas was published in 1958 by the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO) and provides guidance on planning the locations of safety areas as well as the layouts and features. The document states:

Rest areas are to be provided on Interstate highways as a safety measure. Safety rest areas are off-roadway spaces with provisions for emergency stopping and resting by motorists for short periods. They have freeway type entrance and exit connections, parking areas, benches and tables and may have toilets and water supply, where proper maintenance and supervision are assured. They may be designed for short-time picnic use in addition to parking of vehicles for short periods. They are not to be planned for use as local parks.<sup>20</sup>



**SAFETY REST AREA - TERMS USED**

**FIG. 2**

Typical layout for small safety rest area

Source: *A Policy on Safety Rest Areas for the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways*, 1958, p. 23.

<sup>20</sup> American Association of State Highway Officials. *A Policy on Safety Rest Areas for the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways*. AASHO: Washington, D.C., 1958., p. 2.

The report recommended the planned development of many small to moderate size safety rest areas rather than a few more expansive areas. The size of a site was to be governed by topography and existing natural boundaries. The safety rest areas were also to be developed “with the minimum feasible disturbance to the natural terrain and existing plant growth. Wherever feasible, shade trees and other natural features are to be conserved and protected.”<sup>21</sup> The facilities that might be included in safety areas included toilets, drinking water supply, table-bench units, bulletin boards for the posting of travel regulations and information, fireplaces or grills for quick meal cooking, refuse cans, separate benches as at an overlook, arbors for shade in treeless country, signs or small monuments describing nearby points of scenic or historic interest, etc.<sup>22</sup> Telephone booths were another optional amenity.

It was envisioned that these safety rest areas would be funded in large part by the federal government. However, in 1959, a year after the standardized guidelines were published for rest area development, federal allocations for rest area developments were drastically reduced. States were notified that in the future federal funding for safety rest area construction would be limited to the purchase of land, construction of deceleration and acceleration lanes and parking areas with the actual buildings and all other structures and amenities delayed or built with state funds. In the early 1960s a limited number of rest areas were opened along Interstate Highways in states such as Ohio, Wisconsin and Oregon.<sup>23</sup>

Speaking in 1966, N.H.’s Deputy Commissioner of Public Works and Highways Robert H. Whitaker, noted that the state “could have been building rest areas with part of its federal funds but preferred to build the roads first.”<sup>24</sup> In 1966 New Hampshire had 212 miles of Interstate highway approaching completion.

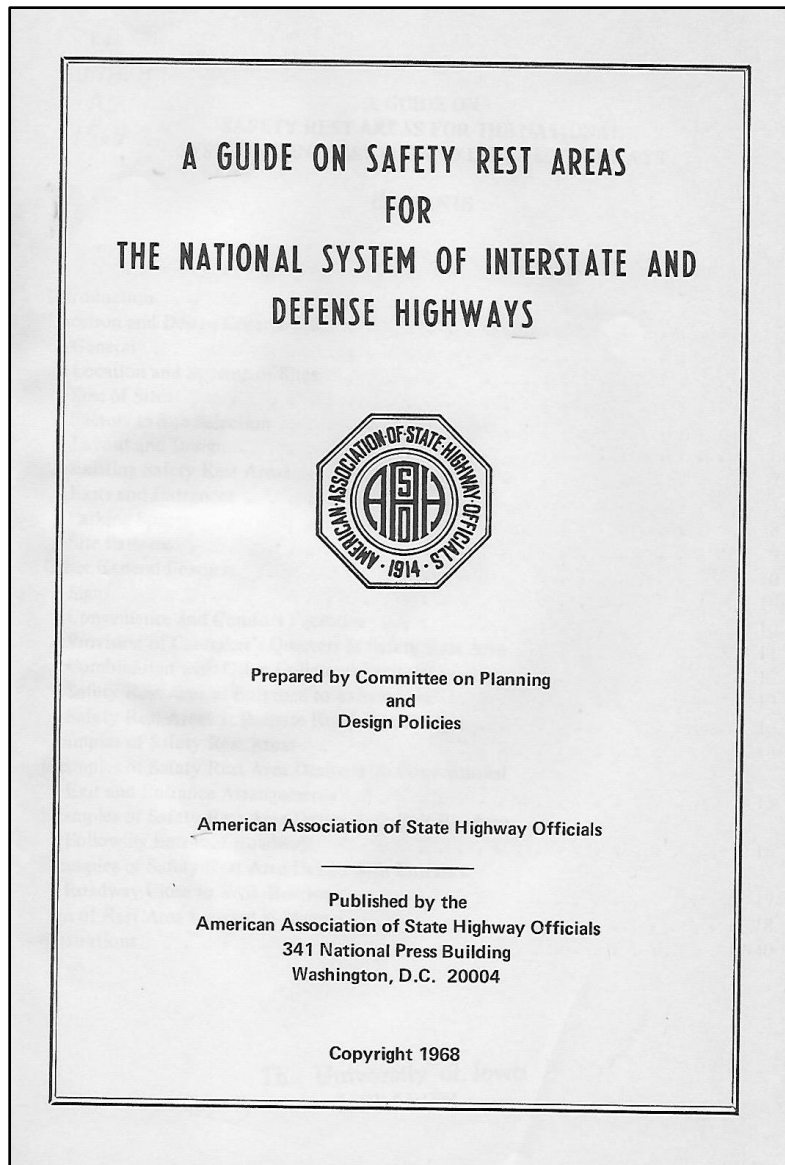
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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 9.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

<sup>23</sup> RestAreaHistory.org

<sup>24</sup> *Portsmouth Herald*, April 16, 1966, p. 20.



The concentrated construction of federally funded safety rest areas in New Hampshire did not occur until the late 1960s but the guidelines developed in the 1950s proved an important starting point for the future. AASHO issued a new updated publication in 1968 (above).

## **New Hampshire's Highway System**

In 1947, shortly after the termination of World War II and long before funding was in place, State of New Hampshire highway officials unveiled the first official map showing the future vision of automotive transportation in the state and identifying three major proposed highways. The three routes consisted of an eastern coastal route (what would become I-95), a central route running through the middle of the state (I-93) and a third route between Concord and White River Junction, Vermont (I-89).

The state's first modern highway to be constructed was initially known as the Eastern Turnpike (now Interstate 95). The 14-mile Eastern Turnpike from the Massachusetts state line at Seabrook to the Maine state line at Portsmouth was opened in sections from 1950 to 1952 and became I-95 in 1956. In 1950 the New Hampshire State Legislature authorized the extension of the Eastern Turnpike from Portsmouth to Rochester (later renamed the Spaulding Turnpike). The first six miles to Dover opened in 1953 followed by 17 miles from Dover to Rochester in 1957. Also authorized in 1950 was the Central Turnpike which linked U.S. Route 3 at the Massachusetts state line at Nashua to Concord. Construction of this road (the F.E. Everett Turnpike) began in 1953 and the section between Nashua and Manchester opened in 1955. It was extended 17 miles north to Concord in 1958.<sup>25</sup>

New Hampshire's interstate highways (other than I-95) were made possible by the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 enacted during the administration of President Dwight Eisenhower. In 1957 the first piece of the future I-93 was constructed from Concord to Tilton. The lower section between Salem and Manchester opened by 1963, as was I-293 extending from I-93 in Manchester to the Queen City Bridge.

The construction of Interstate 89 from Concord to Vermont took more than a decade. By 1960 21 miles of Interstate Route 89 had been completed. An additional eleven miles of highway south of Sutton opened in the fall of 1967. Eleven miles of roadway between Warner and New London was dedicated in January 1968 and later that year the Interstate reached Springfield. The final six mile stretch through Grantham and Enfield was opened in 1973.

Additional progress on I-93 took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The New Hampshire portion of the I-93 roadway was completed on June 2, 1988 when Franconia Notch Parkway was dedicated after being redesigned sensitively to the surrounding landscape.

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<sup>25</sup> Patrick Harshbarger. Historic Context Statement: The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) Statewide Historic Bridge Inventory Update, Interim Draft Report, April 2017, pp. 3-46 to 3-54.





### **The Highway Beautification Act of 1965**

As discussed above, the passage of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 introduced the concept of the “safety rest area” and resulted in some planning documents on the national scene and the construction of some Interstate Highway rest areas elsewhere in the country but had little impact on New Hampshire. It was the Highway Beautification Act of 1965 that reinvigorated rest area development and construction and proved the impetus and funding for nearly all of New Hampshire’s rest areas. Following the legislation each state was required to develop a master plan for rest area development.

The Highway Beautification Act of 1965 provided Federal Funds to be used “for landscape and roadside development within the highway right of way and for acquisition of interests in and improvement of strips of land necessary for the restoration, preservation, and enhancement of scenic beauty adjacent to such highways, including acquisition and development of publicly owned and controlled rest and recreation areas and sanitary and other facilities within or adjacent to the highway right of way reasonably necessary to accommodate the traveling public, without being matched by the State.”<sup>26</sup> In 1965 it was anticipated that the bill would bring some \$560,000 annually into New Hampshire and planning began for the construction of safety rest areas. In 1966 the Highway Beautification Act earmarked \$274,000 for New Hampshire with \$550,000 forecast in fiscal 1967.<sup>27</sup> It was anticipated that the safety rest areas would provide “parking for trucks and automobiles, picnic facilities, an attractive building containing modern toilet facilities, telephones, and space that will be used to disseminate information on recreational attractions and tourist accommodations that serve out of-state visitors and citizens”.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Annual Report of the NH Department of Public Works and Highways, 1965.

<sup>27</sup> *Portsmouth Herald*, April 16, 1966, p. 20.

<sup>28</sup> Annual Report of the NH Department of Public Works and Highways, 1966.



Intervale/North Conway Rest Area under construction  
Source: *New Hampshire Highways*, October 1967

Responsibility for the administration of the highway beautification funds in New Hampshire was given to the Department of Public Works and Highways. Commissioner John O. Morton established a Special Services Division overseen by Malcolm J. Chase. Records from the Department of Public Works and Highways indicate that initial planning for the safety rest areas was underway in 1965 and was far more ambitious and optimistic than was eventually achieved. In a memo dated April 2, 1966, Special Services Engineer Malcolm J. Chase indicates that the Department had plans for 35 complete supervised rest areas that would include a heated building with sanitary facilities, information services, parking for trucks and cars and picnic sites with fireplace accommodations; 19 of these were to be located on the Interstate System (see Table 1) as well as 15 Primary Route rest areas and one Turnpike rest area.

In 1966 future plans included the construction of rest areas on Route 11 in Rochester and at Routes 125 and 11 in Epping. These were never built. There also appears to have been at least one other rest area, on the southbound side of I-89 in Hopkinton, which was built and open in 1968 but closed soon after. Its location has not been pinpointed nor is it known why it was so short-lived.

**Table 1****Tentative Construction Schedule for Interstate Rest Areas in NH, 1967**

## 1966 Fiscal Year Funds

I-89	SB	Lebanon – Just north of City (includes weigh station)
I-93	NB	Salem – Near State Line (includes weigh station)
I-93	NB	Northfield
I-93	SB	Sanbornton

## 1967 Fiscal Year Funds

I-95	NB	Seabrook - Near state line
I-89	NB	Sutton – Just south of King's Hill Road (Springfield in concept?)
<i>I-89</i>	<i>NB</i>	<i>Hopkinton - Just east of Jct. of Route 202 &amp; 9 [P-7520]</i>
I-89	SB	Hopkinton – West of Jct. of I-89 and I-93 [P-7599] built and removed??

## 1968 Fiscal Year Funds

I-89	SB	Springfield – Just north of Route 11 (Sutton in concept?)
<i>I-93</i>	<i>SB</i>	<i>Concord – Just north of City</i>
<i>I-93</i>	<i>NB</i>	<i>Manchester – Just south of Jct. of I-93 and I-293 [P-7519]</i>
<i>I-93</i>	<i>SB</i>	<i>Derry – Near Route 102</i>

## 1969 Fiscal Year Funds

<i>I-93</i>	<i>SB</i>	<i>Campton – just north of Plymouth</i>
<i>I-93</i>	<i>NB</i>	<i>New Hampton – Just south of Route 104</i>
<i>I-93</i>	<i>NB</i>	<i>Plymouth – Just south of Plymouth</i>
<i>I-89</i>	<i>NB</i>	<i>Enfield – Just south of Lebanon</i>
<i>I-93</i>	<i>NB</i>	<i>Lincoln – Just south of Village</i>

## 1970 Fiscal Year Funds

<i>I-93</i>	<i>SB</i>	<i>Littleton – Near Moore Reservoir</i>
<i>I-93</i>	<i>NB</i>	<i>Franconia – Just south of Bethlehem</i>

Note: Those shown in italics were never built.

Source: Memo from R.H. Whitaker, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Works & Highways to E.B. Hodgins, Maintenance Engineer, March 4, 1966

The first two safety rest areas to be constructed in New Hampshire with funding from the Highway Beautification Act were located on Interstate highways.<sup>29</sup> Lee R. Belanger, a young Public Works draftsman designed the first building in Sanbornton (drawings are dated September 1965) and it served as a prototype for the rest areas that followed. It was decided to make the rest area Colonial in style and Belanger gathered books on Colonial architecture to inspire what was intended to be a welcoming and warm building.<sup>30</sup> The Sanbornton rest area, on the southbound side of I-93, was opened on June 27, 1966 on a 24-hour basis. Governor John W. King, state officials and representatives of the Town of Sanbornton were in attendance (see below). The main building contained sanitary facilities and an information counter and outside fifteen family picnic sites were located throughout the pine and white birch covered slopes. During the first full week of operation which included July 4<sup>th</sup>, over 7,900 people stopped at the area and 4,659 used the rest area building. Richard C. Foss of Pittsfield served as the contractor for the Sanbornton project. (Note: A photo of the Sanbornton Rest Area appears on the cover of this report.)



Governor King and NHDPW members attending the informal inspection of the Sanbornton rest area, June 1966. From L to R: Nicholas Cricenti, assistant construction engineer; Richard Foss, building contractor; Lee R. Belanger, building designer; Paul A. Tolman, civil engineer; Governor John King; Howard Bassett, projects engineer; John Noble, NHDPW public works administrator

Source: *New Hampshire Highways*, July 1966

The original Sanbornton Rest Area building was replaced by a new building to the south in 1984. The 1966 building still stands and serves as storage. The main entrance and windows were removed when it was converted to its new use and the façade was covered with wood shingles. The center chimney has been removed although the fireplace is still visible inside.

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<sup>29</sup> The Rumney (Baker River) Rest Area was constructed before the Highway Beautification Act funds became available utilizing another federal program which provided 50% of the cost of construction.

<sup>30</sup> Information from Lee R. Belanger, Sr., February 18, 2019. Additional information concerning Belanger and all the architects/designers appears in the appendix of this report.



Rear elevation of original Sanbornton Rest Area (now storage)

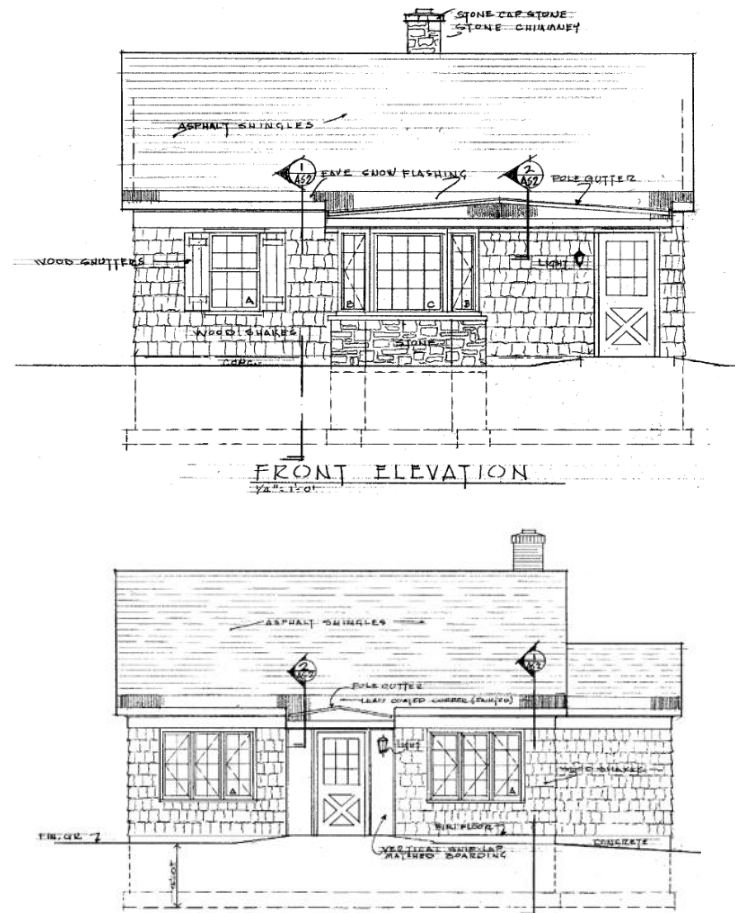
Construction of the Sanbornton rest area was followed by a facility at Canterbury on the northbound side. It was placed in operation on a 24-hour trial basis on October 11, 1966. The exterior design of the building was also designed by Lee Belanger who revised and modified the design for the Sanbornton rest area (drawings are dated January 1966). Exeter architect Edward Benton Miles prepared the February 1966 drawings for the interior details such as seating, benches, and literature racks which became standardized among all the rest areas. In addition to the building, the rest area included sixteen picnic sites in tree-shaded groves and equipped with running water, two covered shelters and charcoal cooking grills. Soon thereafter Belanger also designed the safety rest area building and two weigh stations in Lebanon.



Canterbury Rest Area

Source: *New Hampshire Highways*, May 1967

The next two rest areas completed, on Route 9 in Antrim and Route 4 in Epsom, were smaller Colonial-style buildings designed by Clifford Broker Associates. Broker was a former State Highway Department bridge designer who had established his own practice as a consulting and structural engineer in Concord in the late 1940s.<sup>31</sup> These two rest areas were located on Primary Roads rather than Interstates.



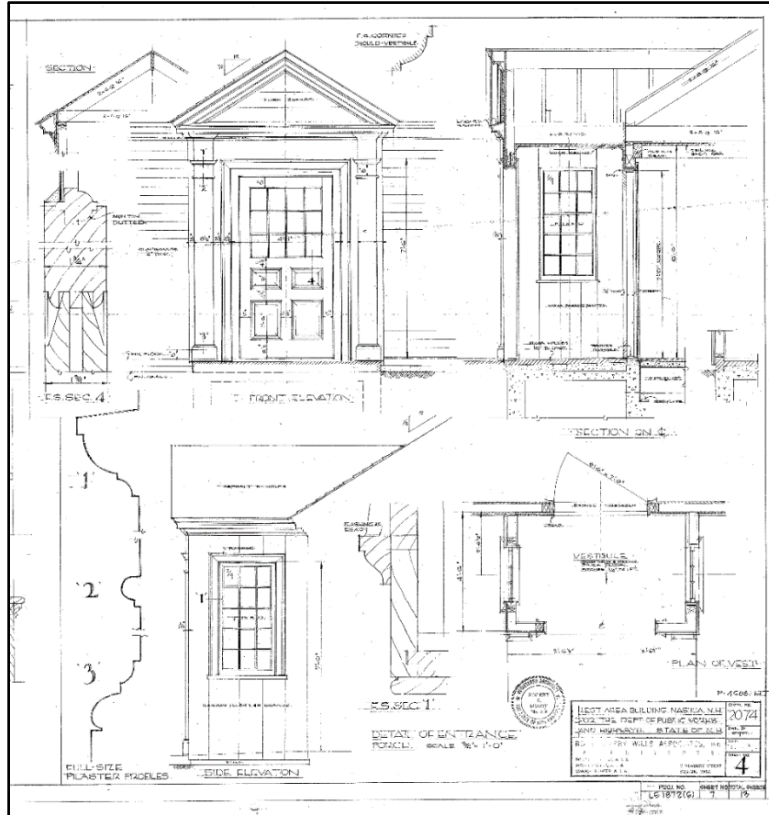
Drawings for Antrim (top) and Epsom (bottom) by Clifford Broker  
Source: NH Department of Administrative Services

By 1967 there were three safety rest areas complete on the Interstate system (Sanbornton, Canterbury, Lebanon) and two under construction (Salem and Seabrook). Four additional rest areas had been completed on the Primary System (Antrim, Epsom, North Conway and Shelburne).

On November 20, 1967 the connection between the north end of U.S. Route 3 in Massachusetts and the F.E. Everett Turnpike in Nashua was dedicated. This project was notable in that it was built without federal funds. The following year a safety rest area was constructed adjacent to the northbound lane, about a mile north of the Spit Brook overpass.

<sup>31</sup> Laura B. Driemeyer. *Clifford Broker, Sr.: A Monograph of his Career as a Bridge Designer with the New Hampshire State Highway Department ca. 1933-ca. 1945*. Preservation Company, 2010.

The Cape Cod-style rest area building was designed by Robert Minot of Royal Barry Wills Associates. In 1967 this firm was also retained to design the new State Supreme Court Building in Concord. In 1966 Minot had also designed Governor John King's home in Goffstown. The Nashua Rest Area was closed in 1992 and was removed.

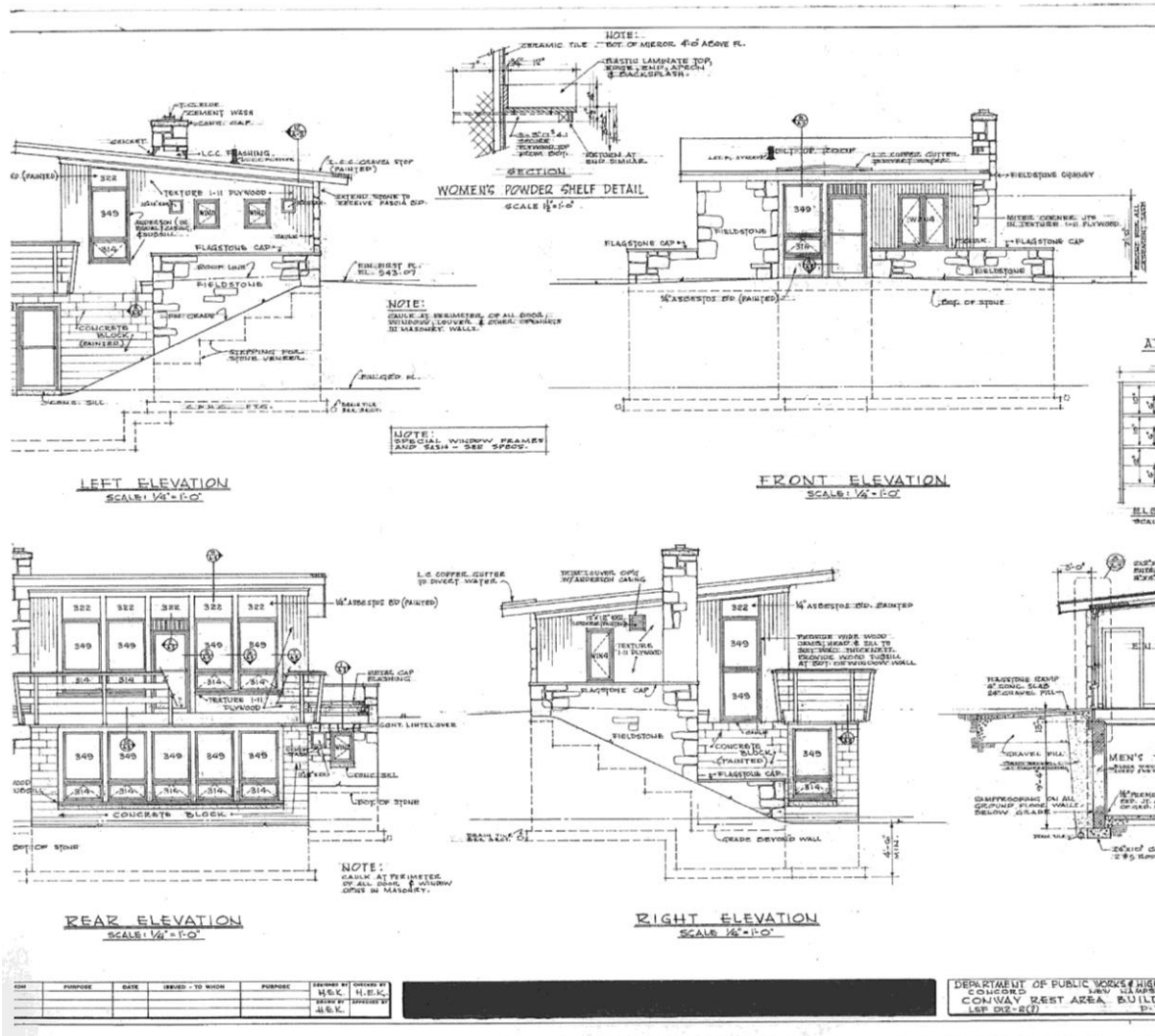


Detail of Nashua Rest Area Entrance by Royal Barry Wills Associates, 1968  
 Source: NH Department of Administrative Services



Nashua Rest Area  
 Source: *Nashua Telegraph*, July 28, 1972

At North Conway, the seventh complete safety roadside rest area was opened at the Intervale Scenic Vista on July 28, 1967. Unlike the previous Colonial-inspired buildings, the Intervale building was a “contemporary design, split-level rest area” that included a lounge area, observation deck, public telephone, public rest rooms and a small tourist information center.<sup>32</sup> It was designed by Clifford Broker Associates, Architects-Engineers.



Drawings for Conway Rest Area by Clifford Broker, 1966  
 Source: NH Department of Administrative Services

<sup>32</sup> *New Hampshire Highways*, October 1967, p. 5.



In 1968 another new rest area opened in the North Country, on Route 2 in Shelburne, not far from the Maine border. Rather than contracting with an outside architect or engineer, this building was designed in-house by Richard A. Brunel, Sr. of the Department of Public Works and Highways. Brunel also designed a similar building at Colebrook.

Staffing the completed Shelburne rest area however became problematic and illustrates an issue that continued to challenge the state's rest areas for years to come. Although the federal government provided 100% of the funds for construction of the buildings, the expense of operating the facilities was left to the State. Legislative appropriations for Fiscal Year 1969 did not include funds for the operation of the Shelburne facility. Local interests in the North Country led by the Greater Berlin-Gorham Chamber of Commerce raised enough funds so that the rest area and information building could be opened for the summer.

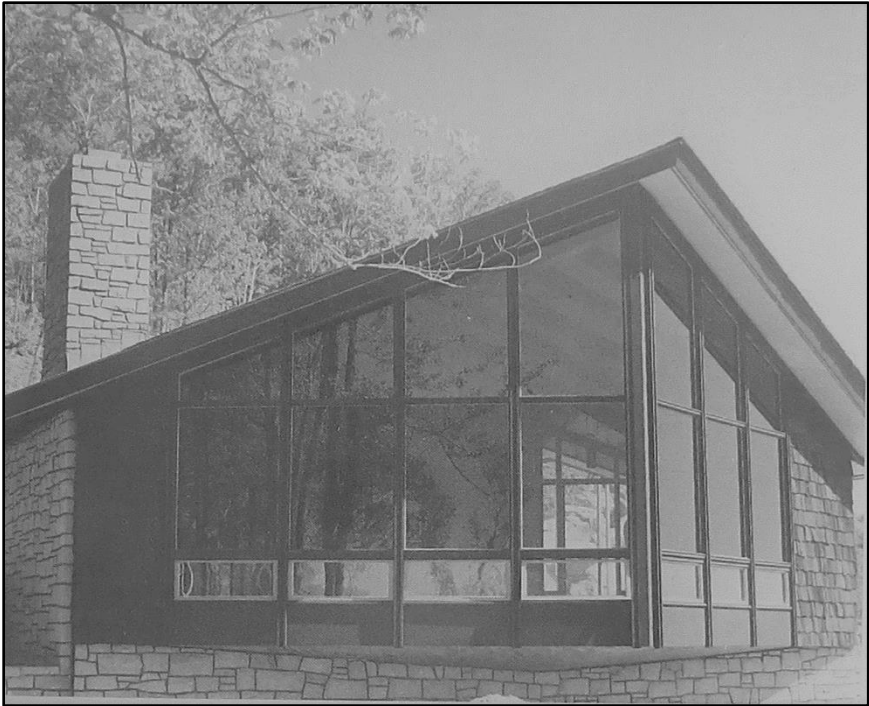
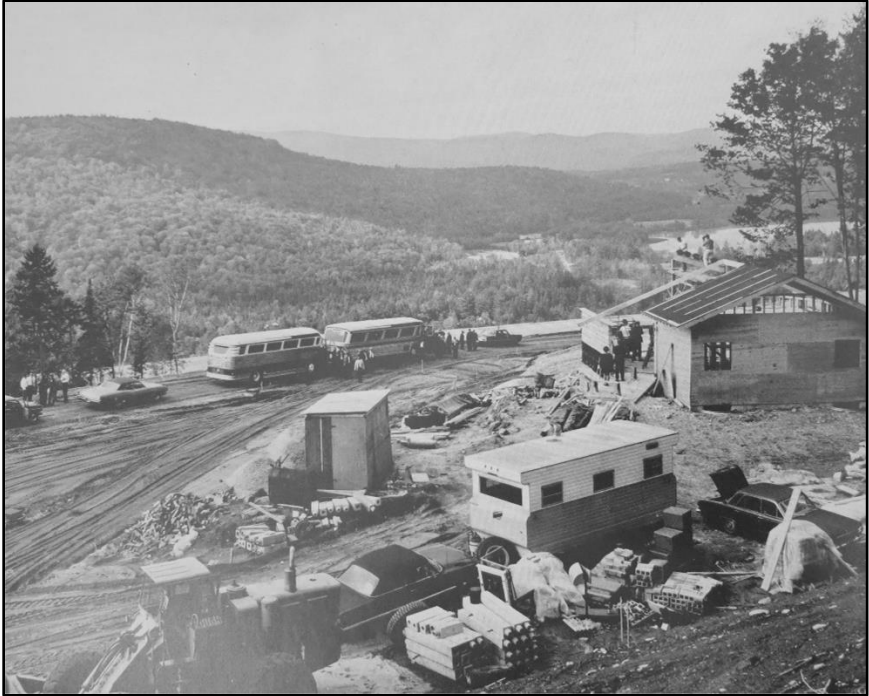


Shelburne Rest Area opened to public use on July 3, 1968

Chamber of Commerce Director Ted Dydowicz opens the door as Rest Area Attendant G. Milton Thurlow, Berlin Chamber Chairman Robert Strachan and State Division 1 Maintenance Engineer John B. Ross await their turn

Source: *New Hampshire Highways*, September 1968

As I-89 neared completion, a stone and wood shingle Contemporary rest area was constructed at Springfield in 1968, according to designs by Edward Miles. Like the North Conway rest area, this building had large expanses of glass oriented in this case to take in a striking panoramic view of the Croydon Mountain area and Stocker Pond.



Springfield Rest Area, under construction in 1968 and complete  
Source: *New Hampshire Highways*, Oct. 1968 (top) and Dec. 1969 (bottom)

Colonial was once again the style of choice for the rest areas at Salem and Seabrook, completed in 1968 according to designs by Exeter architect Edward Benton Miles.



Seabrook Rest Area

Source: *New Hampshire Highways*, Nov. 1968

**WANTED**  
**INFORMATION CENTER**  
**ATTENDANTS**  
3 Permanent Positions  
at SEABROOK REST AREA

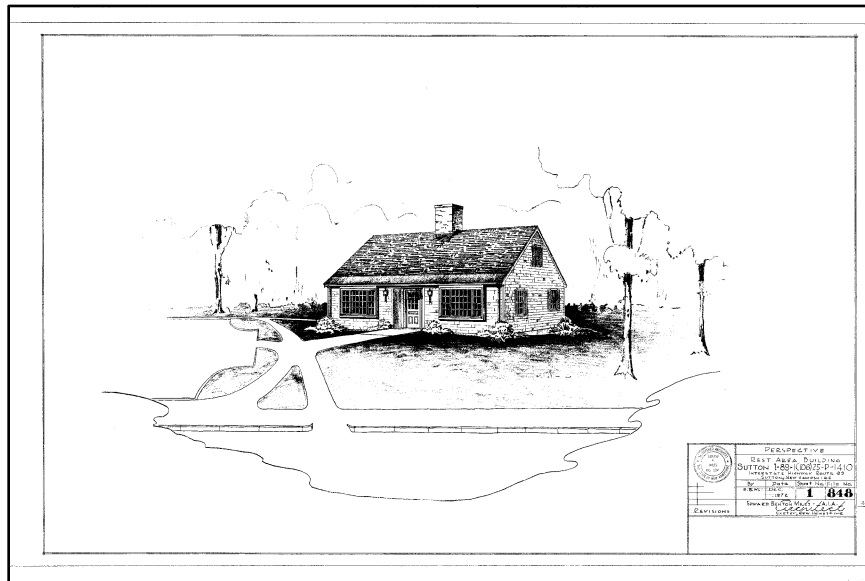
- Minimum Qualifications: High School Graduation
- Salary Range \$1.83 to \$2.18 Hour

Contact:  
**C. H. MULLINS**  
State Office Building, Concord  
Tel. Concord 225-6611 Ext. 7615

Source: *Portsmouth Herald*, June 15, 1968

In 1967 a contract was awarded to build a rest area building adjacent to the southbound lanes of I-93 at the Hooksett Toll Plaza. The one-story, wood-frame structure was to house public rest rooms, thus “reducing pedestrian traffic crossing the toll plaza”.<sup>33</sup> What was intended to be a temporary structure, this building was not replaced until 1979.<sup>34</sup>

On September 6, 1968 a moratorium on Federal Highway construction was ordered by the NH Department of Public Works and Highways. This appears to have delayed construction of the Colebrook safety rest area which was completed in July 1969. The Sutton Rest Area was the last of the original safety rest areas to be constructed on the Interstates and was built to shorten the long open distances for motorists traveling between the Connecticut River Valley and Concord. It is located about one mile south of the Sutton interchange, Exit Number 10, in the midsection of the General Frank D. Merrill Highway between Concord and White River Junction, Vermont. The rest area building was designed by Edward B. Miles who adapted the design from his earlier designs for the Seabrook and Salem rest area facilities. The Sutton Rest Area opened to the public on November 19, 1973.



Drawing for Sutton Rest Area by Edward B. Miles  
Source: NH Department of Administrative Services

The Sutton Rest Area marked the end of an era and was the last of the rest areas built in the state that was directly related to the Highway Beautification Act of 1965. The program only lasted a few years and because of the limited funds in the Federal Highway Trust Fund, the special program that included rest areas was eliminated.<sup>35</sup> The loss of these funds coupled with the difficulty in finding state funds to maintain and operate the completed facilities left New Hampshire far short of the 35 rest areas envisioned by ambitious state transportation planners back in 1966.

<sup>33</sup> *NH Highways*. This building does not appear to have been funded by the Highway Beautification Act.

<sup>34</sup> Information from Lee R. Belanger, Sr., February 18, 2019.

<sup>35</sup> Letter from John Flanders, DOT Commissioner to Chesterfield Board of Selectmen, June 18, 1985. State Parks files.

In addition to funding the construction of safety rest areas, the federal funds had also allowed the state to acquire scenic strips of land along major highways. In 1966-1967 the state purchased about 18 such easements which allowed the land to remain in private hands but required that it remain undeveloped. In 1967 the state planned to acquire a dozen more scenic strips.<sup>36</sup>

Beginning in 1971 and part of a national trend, a number of New Hampshire rest areas offered Safety Coffee Breaks, locally sponsored by Service Clubs and other organizations to be held on major holidays or summer weekends. Cooperative ventures extended to other areas as well. At some rest areas, Chambers of Commerce or other groups provided tourist information services.

### Later Developments and Changes

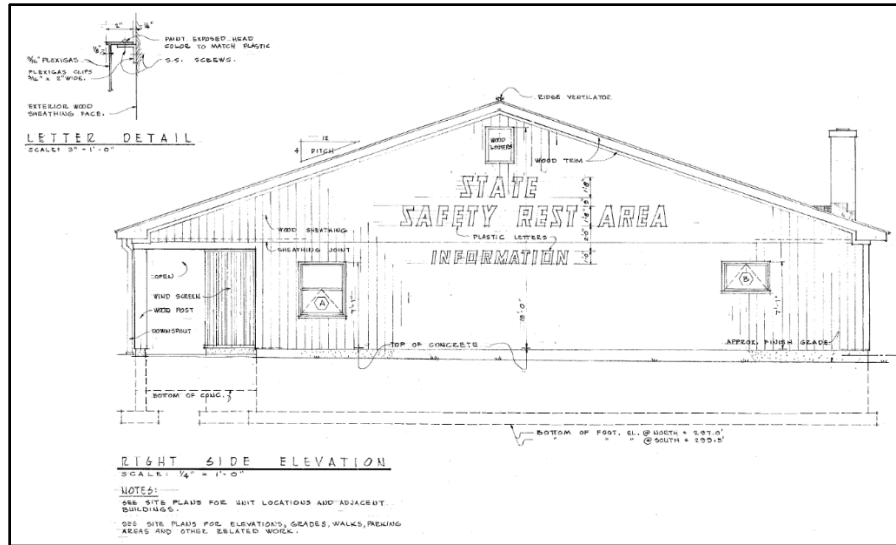
In 1979 a State Liquor Store and a Safety Rest Area building were built on both the north and southbound sides of I-93 in Hooksett. The largest of the rest areas built in the State, the modern structures were designed by Edward Carlson of the Bureau of Public Works (BPW) and marked a definite departure from the earlier Colonial-inspired structures. The rest area building was sheathed in vertical wood boards with large plastic letters that could be seen from the highway and a recessed corner entry with windscreen for inclement weather. The accompanying liquor store was designed by Lee R. Belanger and Conrad Desmarais and was meant to evoke the sense of a large barn.<sup>37</sup> The pre-engineered structure was sheathed in vertical plywood sheathing. Note: These buildings were replaced by a new complex in 2015.



Hooksett State Liquor Store and Safety Rest Area Building, constructed 1979

<sup>36</sup> *Portsmouth Herald*, April 16, 1966.

<sup>37</sup> Information from Lee R. Belanger, Sr., February 2019.



Drawing for Hooksett Safety Rest Area, 1978  
 Source: NH Department of Administrative Services

The first known art work installed at a New Hampshire rest area was the modernistic sculpture by Emile Birch (“The Mill Colonnade”) at the Lebanon Rest Area in 1980. The abstract sculpture consists of ten randomly arranged reinforced concrete “logs” placed vertically and horizontally along the rest area. It was fabricated while Birch was serving as an artist-in-residence at the Upper Valley Development and Training Center and was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and managed by the New Hampshire Commission on the Arts. Local businesses provided match in the form of materials and equipment. The artist was assisted by disabled clients of the Upper Valley Development and Training Center in the fabrication of the sculpture. The sculpture was designed to be played on by rest area visitors and is still located at the rest area today.



Sculpture at Lebanon Rest Area by Emile Birch

Over the years the Highway Department had reduced the number of hours of operation at the Rest Areas in the interest of economy. Highway construction and maintenance needs were felt to be so large that increased expenditures for the Rest Area program could not be justified. The early 1980s were lean years. For example, in 1981 the Epsom rest area operated on a very limited basis. In subsequent years it maintained a seasonal schedule – open from the end of May to mid-October.

In 1984 the original 1966 building at Sanbornton was relegated to storage and a new larger building was erected, designed by architects Sheerr & Gregor.



Sanbornton Rest Area

By 1985 the Rumney Rest Area was also considered obsolete. It lacked space, had failing water and septic systems and was unable to accommodate the handicapped. It was torn down in the fall of 1986 and replaced by a new building designed by Steve Gray of District 2. Bruce Haskell served as the Project Supervisor, contributing his building skills and leadership to the project. The structure was built by force account district labor; the cost of materials was approximately \$58,000.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> NHDOT District 2 files.



Rumney Rest Area Building constructed in 1986

In the 1980s additional features were added to some rest areas to accommodate the traveling public. These included designated dog walks and nature trails. An old preexisting trail at Sanbornton was reopened to use in the Spring of 1986. There was also a trail laid out at Epsom.

In 1988 a rest area was established at Littleton, the first new siting of a rest area facility in 15 years. A small wood-clapboarded building was constructed at Littleton on the east side of NH 18/135, south of the I-93 Exit 44 interchange. A few years later, on October 20, 1992, the Nashua Rest Area on the northbound side of the F.E.E. Turnpike, just north of the Massachusetts border, closed permanently as part of the planning for the Circumferential Highway.



Littleton Rest Area



The original Salem and Seabrook Rest Area buildings were replaced in 1994 and 1999 respectively with similar, larger facilities designed by Samyn-D'Elia, Architects. In 1995 ADA modifications were made at other rest areas according to designs by architect Christopher Holm (CH & A) of New London. In most cases this involved construction of a small addition to accommodate an accessible bathroom. Sometimes it also necessitated small modifications to the lobby that might include relocation of the information counter or seating. Flooring materials were matched and where possible materials such as paneling and benches were reused.



Salem Rest Area

During the summer of 1999 vending machine buildings were constructed by the Department at Lebanon, Canterbury, Sanbornton and Sutton. Additional vending buildings were later erected at Springfield, Seabrook and Salem. "Safety Coffee Breaks" became a thing of the past once vending buildings were installed.

In 2001 construction began on a large addition at the Colebrook Rest Area to house the Great North Woods Interpretive Center. Through the efforts of U.S. Senator Judd Gregg and State Senator Fred King, funding of \$250,000 was secured for the addition through the Silvia O. Conte Wildlife Refuge Service, which maintains the nearby Nulhegan and Umbagog refuges. Additional funding was provided by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. Construction was completed early in 2002. At one time the North Country Chamber of Commerce shared space in the building.

A new larger rest area was built at Springfield in 2002 according to designs by LouAnn Fornataro of Nashua. Several years later, in 2006, a new rest area building was also constructed at North Conway/Intervale. The granite and glass structure was designed by Gregory Goucher of the NH Department of Administrative Services.



North Conway-Intervale Rest Area

Source: AECOM, NHDOT Statewide Rest Area and Welcome Center Study, 2016

In 2012, the Bureau of Visitor Services which handles the operation and maintenance of the state's rest areas was transferred from the NHDOT to the Division of Resources and Economic Development (DRED). DRED managed the rest areas and welcome centers while DOT maintained ownership.<sup>39</sup> Due to budget cuts the Antrim, Epsom, Rumney and Shelburne rest areas were all closed permanently in 2012.



Antrim Rest Area

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<sup>39</sup> DRED was dissolved on July 1, 2017.

In 2015 two new welcome centers were opened on I-93 in Hooksett, replacing the NH Liquor and Wine Outlet stores and Safety Rest Area buildings constructed in 1977. The \$30 million project includes a visitor center, food court, country store and restrooms was funded almost entirely by private investment. As part of the project the 7,800 square foot state liquor store was replaced by a new store more than double in size. Samyn-D'Elia Architects of Ashland served as architects for the project.



Hooksett Welcome Center (north bound)

DRED was dissolved on July 1, 2017. The Rest Areas are now overseen by the New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs, Division of Travel and Tourism Development.

Currently (2019) there are sixteen Safety Rest Areas/Welcome & Information Centers in the state. Nine are operated year-round, three are seasonal and four are closed.

#### List of Associated NHDHR Historic Contexts

- Automobile highways and culture, 1900-present
- State government, 1680-present
- The federal government in NH, 1776-present

## **Associated Property Types**

### ***Rest Area Buildings***

Across the U.S. the design of rest area buildings offered an opportunity to show off an area's regional character. Memorable examples of the period included distinctive and whimsical designs such as teepee rest areas in South Dakota and picnic tables under oil rig towers in Texas. In New Hampshire, the first-generation rest area buildings were for the most part constructed in a simple Colonial Revival style that was intended to be welcoming and homey, with details such as fireplaces and wooden benches.<sup>40</sup>

New Hampshire's first-generation Colonial Revival rest areas came in several sizes and there were subtle variations in details, even between those designed by the same architect. For example, Sanbornton, Canterbury and Lebanon were all designed by Lee Belanger but were not identical, nor were Epsom and Antrim both of which were designed by Clifford Broker. The rest area buildings constructed on the primary roadways were smaller, with less than 1,000 square feet, while the Interstate versions were slightly larger and contained about 1,400 square feet before additions. The rectangular, single-story buildings<sup>41</sup> were constructed on concrete foundations, some with partial or full basements. All but one of the early buildings have gable roofs that are sheathed in asphalt shingles; the Shelburne rest area was later covered in metal. Antrim and Epsom were designed by the same architect and have projecting eaves ending in returns on the gable ends. Shelburne and Colebrook have overhanging eaves but no real returns. Lebanon and Canterbury display close eaves. Chimney placement and materials are also varied. All but one of the chimneys was constructed of brick; in Antrim the chimney is cut stone. Most of the buildings have large central brick chimneys centered on the ridge. The Lebanon chimney is more decorative and paneled. Epsom and Shelburne were constructed with off-center brick chimneys.

Most of the side-gabled rest area buildings were constructed with three-bay facades and a center entrance. Shelburne and Antrim had entrances in one of the outer bays. The original Sanbornton building was a more typical Cape Cod design with a five-bay façade and a center entrance. The early rest area buildings were sheathed in either wood shingles or clapboards. In recent years, the exterior of the Lebanon building has been covered in vinyl siding.

As originally designed, fenestration on the rest area buildings included double-hung windows, large picture windows and sets of casement units. The windows were flanked by shutters in various designs including board shutters and louvered kinds, at least some of which were accented by metal shutter hardware. At Antrim the front bay window rests on a stone base.

The first-generation rest area buildings all had a single main entrance which opened into a lobby furnished with tiled or flagstone/slate flooring and walls that were covered with birch paneling. On one side of the lobby there was a counter behind which the attendant was stationed. Literature racks were provided on the face of the counter as well as on the walls. Bulletin boards and poster display panels were attached to the lobby walls.

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<sup>40</sup> Besides the original eleven rest areas built in a Colonial mode, there were also two contemporary rest area buildings, in Springfield and North Conway, but these are no longer extant.

<sup>41</sup> The Sutton building also has an attic.



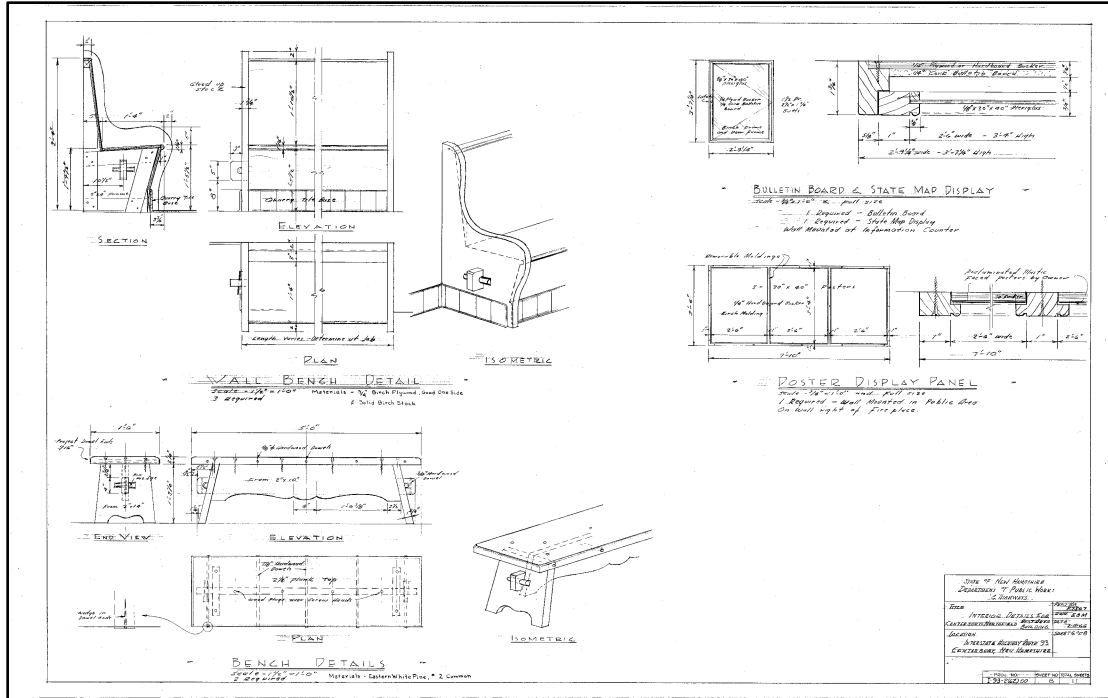
Information Counter in Lobby, Sutton Rest Area

The larger rest areas on the Interstates were built with a fireplace, capped by a State Seal, as a focal point.



Fireplace, Canterbury Rest Area

There were benches with backs and without backs in the lobby, all of which were constructed according to standard State designs, as were the literature racks and counters. The earliest drawings for these features were dated February 15, 1966 and were for the Canterbury Rest Area. The drawings bear the initials "E.B.M." (Edward Benton Miles).



Drawing for Interior Details at Canterbury Rest Area by E.B. Miles, dated 2/15/66  
Source: NH Department of Administrative Services



Original bench at Canterbury Rest Area



Literature racks at Sutton Rest Area



Original bench at Sutton Rest Area

The interiors of the rest area buildings also included a small room for the attendant as well as men's and ladies' bathrooms. All of the buildings witnessed some degree of alteration or addition in the 1990s in order to meet ADA requirements. The original bathrooms are fairly intact in most cases, and retain original tilework.



Original doors to Mens' and Ladies' Rooms, Colebrook Rest Area



***Rest Area Grounds***

Most of the 1960s rest areas are sited to provide scenic views, incorporate natural features or are located in close proximity to rivers. The Shelburne Rest Area was sited opposite Moses Ledge and Sanbornton had Sanbornton Boulder. The Epsom Rest Area included Philbrick Dam on Cass Pond. Both Springfield and Conway are overlooks with spectacular vistas.

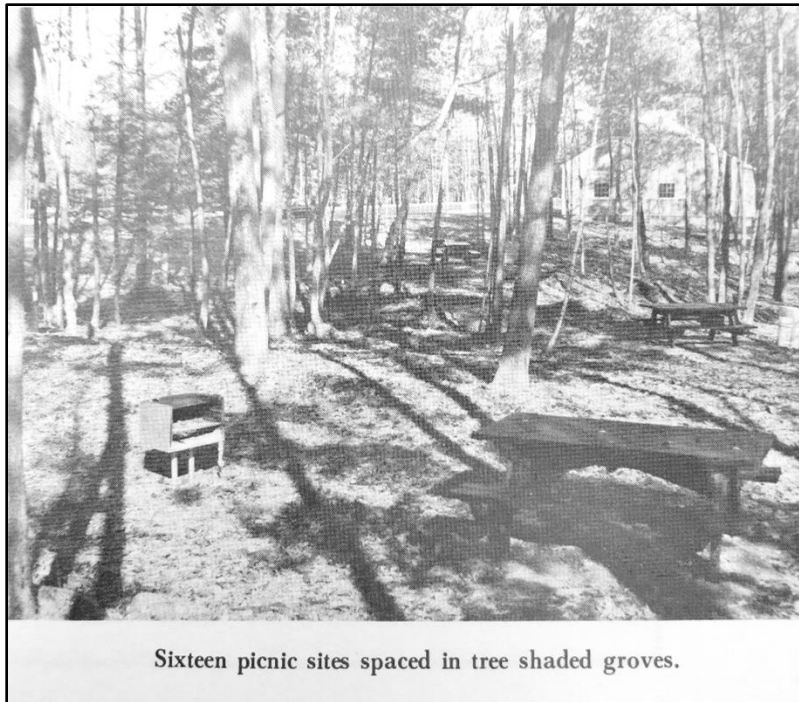


View from Springfield Rest Area

As built, the rest areas did not include any formal landscaping. When plantings were added to any of the rest areas, the work was set up as force account project with labor supplied by maintenance forces.



Stand of Birch trees at Shelburne Rest Area

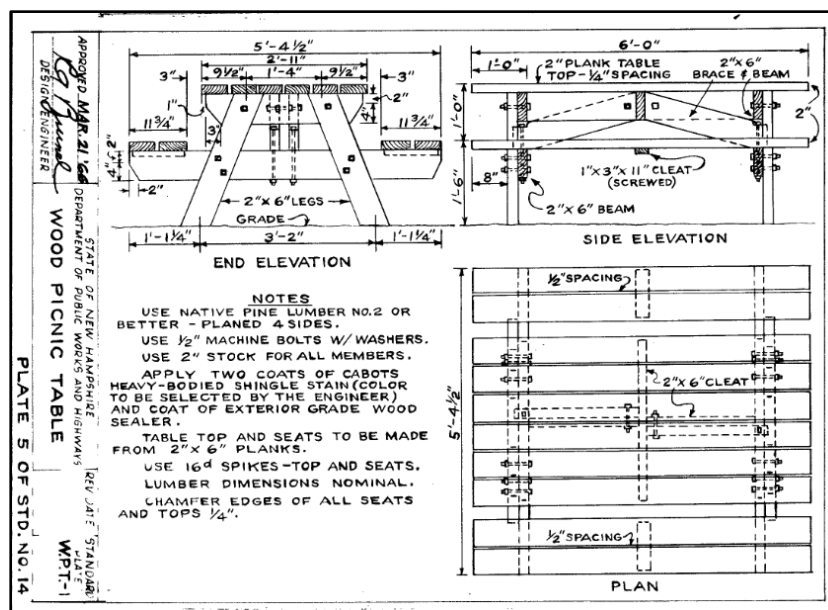


Sixteen picnic sites spaced in tree shaded groves.

Canterbury Rest Area

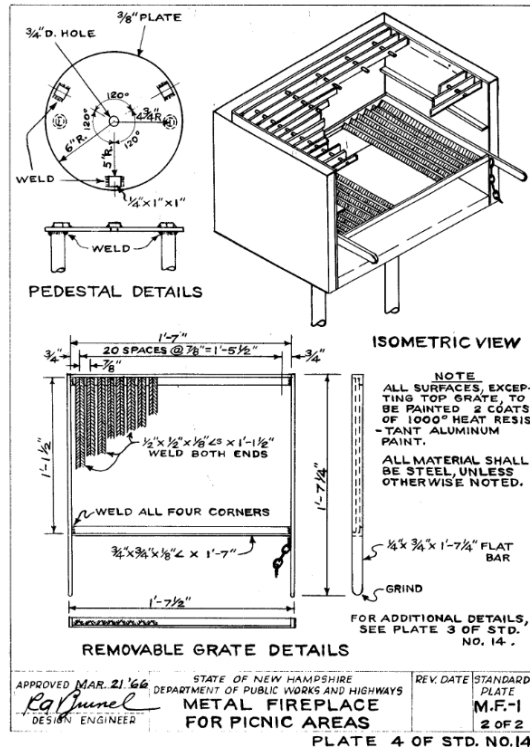
Source: *New Hampshire Highways*, February 1967

Each of the Rest Areas was equipped with multiple picnic tables (originally pine), one or more gable-roofed picnic shelters, and barbeque grills, scattered informally beneath large shade trees. The Special Projects Division developed standards for each and state workers built them. At some sites, the original picnic tables have been replaced by picnic tables with metal frames.

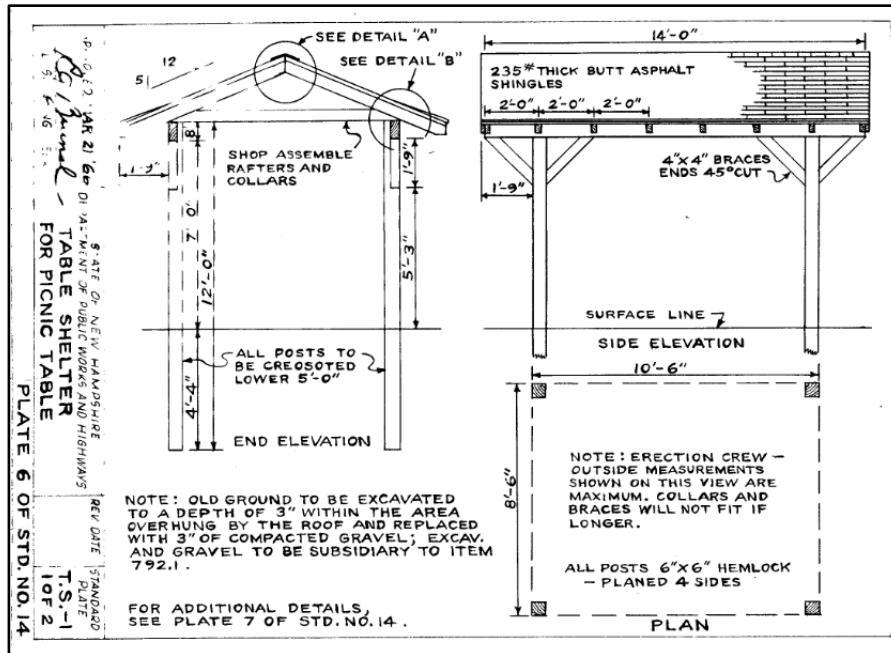


Standard Wood Picnic Table, March 1966 (drawn by Richard Brunel)

Source: NH Department of Administrative Services



Standard Design for Metal Fireplace for Picnic Areas, March 1966 (Drawn by Richard Brunel)  
 Source: NH Department of Administrative Services



Standard Design for Table Shelter for Picnic Table, March 1966 (Drawn by Richard Brunel)  
 Source: NH Department of Administrative Services



Table Shelter, Colebrook Rest Area

Flagpoles were a standard feature and outside phone booths were found at most. The aluminum light poles were also standard across the 1960s rest areas and many survive today.



Standard light pole and pay phone booths at Canterbury

New Hampshire rest areas of the period sometimes also featured various interpretative and commemorative signage. In 1986 there were efforts to establish nature trails at rest areas. An old preexisting trail at Sanbornton was reopened to use in the Spring of 1986.



Weathered sign marking the Sanbornton Boulder Trail at Sanbornton Rest Area

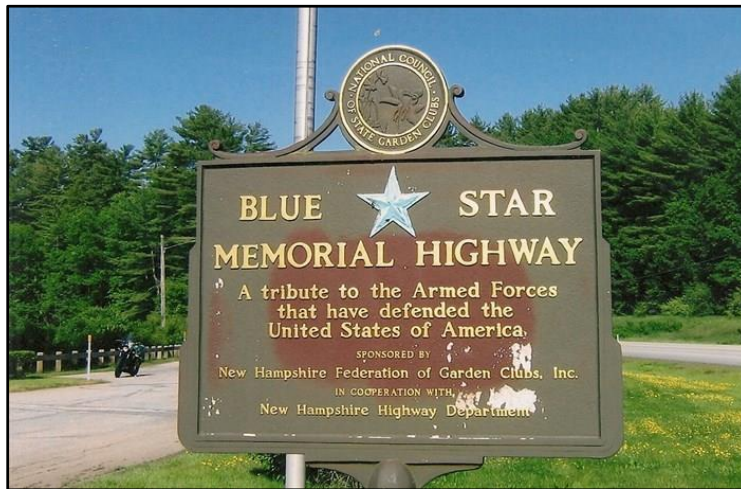
Blue Star Memorial Highway markers were installed at several of the state's rest areas. The Blue Star Memorial Highways were developed as a tribute to the United States armed forces. The idea originated in 1944 when the New Jersey State Council of Garden Clubs undertook the beautification of a five mile stretch of road in Somerset County by planting flowering dogwoods. At the close of World War II, the New Jersey model became a national program. Statewide Garden Clubs undertook individual projects, in collaboration with the State Highway Department. Beyond placing markers, "the project was organized as a demonstration of roadside beautification, to show what could be accomplished through united strength, as a protest against billboards, to educate the public to higher standards of roadside development, and to determine how the National Council could best work with the civil authorities for major achievement".<sup>42</sup> The improvements promoted by the National Council of Garden Clubs included memorial plantings of native trees and shrubs, special features such as roadside rests, bird sanctuaries and playgrounds, the elimination of blighted areas, etc. In 1950 the "new seacoast toll highway" was named the Blue Star Memorial Highway and a plaque was unveiled at Seabrook.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Richard F. Weingroff. "Blue Star Memorial Highways", General Highway History, Federal Highway Administration.

<sup>43</sup> *Portsmouth Herald*, June 26, 1950.

In 1974 Rt. 3 and Interstate 89 were also declared Blue Star Memorial Highways. That year the Blue Star Memorial Highway System marked its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary and national organizers set a goal of 30 new markers across the country for the year. In 1974 markers were erected in New Hampshire – at the rest areas in Nashua and Colebrook.<sup>44</sup> An additional marker was erected in 1975 at the Springfield rest area.<sup>45</sup> The Epsom Rest Area also had a Blue Star marker at one time, as did Shelburne. All of these are no longer in these locations and it is not known if the markers survive. The only known remaining Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker at a New Hampshire rest area is located at the Seabrook Rest Area.



Marker formerly located at Epsom Rest Area

Vending machine shelters are another common element at state rest areas but were not introduced until the late 1990s.



Vending machine shelter at Sutton Rest Area

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<sup>44</sup> *Nashua Telegraph*, July 11, 1974

<sup>45</sup> *Nashua Telegraph*, April 19, 1975.

### **Integrity Considerations**

As originally constructed, the safety rest areas built or inspired by the federal Highway Beautification Act of 1965 all shared certain character-defining features. All of the rest areas were small, single-story buildings of wood-frame construction, sheathed in wood shingles or clapboards and capped by asphalt-shingled gable roofs. The buildings had varied Colonial Revival-inspired decorative elements such as large chimneys, double-hung windows with shutters, and panels below windows. Inside there were homey touches including paneled walls, benches and in the case of the larger rest areas, fireplaces with prominent State Seals mounted above. The grounds also had their own character-defining features including picnic tables, shelters and grills all built according to standard State designs.

The surviving rest areas in New Hampshire display slight variations in integrity. They all retain integrity of location and setting. Although not all are currently in use, their integrity of feeling and association, similarly remain intact in nearly all cases. The renovations and additions that occurred in 1995 as part of ADA compliance do not adversely affect integrity of design. In most cases, these additions are subservient to the original and echo materials and details. Inside, the materials are generally carefully matched. The multiple additions at Colebrook however, in 1995 and 2002, overwhelm what was originally a modest rest area and are a serious hit to integrity of design. Two of the rest areas have experienced some loss of integrity of materials. At Lebanon the rest area has been sheathed in vinyl siding and the Shelburne asphalt roof is now covered in metal.

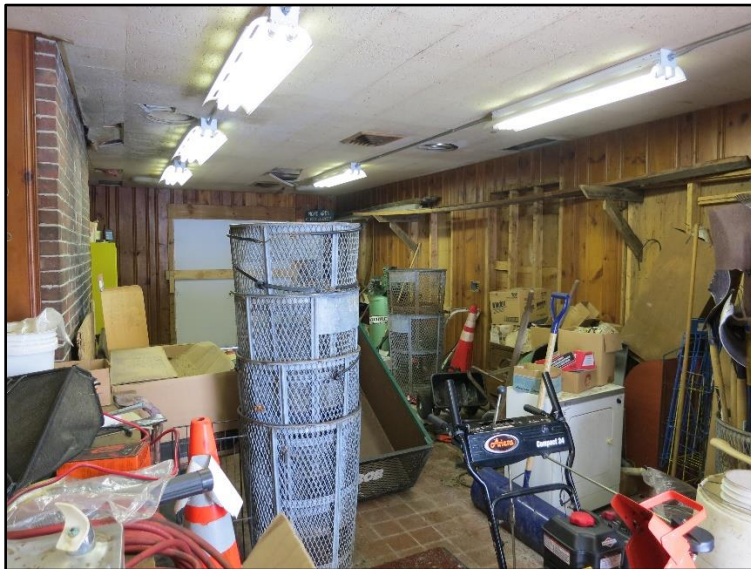
Where integrity has not been seriously compromised, the rest area buildings, together with their period interior furnishings and their surrounding grounds with mature trees, picnic tables and table shelters are eligible for the National Register under Criterion A as local expressions of the federal Highway Beautification Act of 1965 which provided Federal funding for safety rest areas and other facilities to accommodate the traveling public while improving highway aesthetics through controlling billboards and other nuisances. In New Hampshire this funding resulted in the construction of thirteen rest areas between 1966 and 1973 on the state's Interstate Highways and Primary routes. Eight of the twelve rest area buildings remain today.

## Recommendations

Individual inventory forms have been prepared for the following resources:

- Antrim
- Canterbury
- Colebrook
- Epsom
- Lebanon
- Shelburne
- Sutton

An inventory form was not prepared for the original 1966 Sanbornton rest area due to a loss of integrity. The original windows and doors have been removed and the original façade is covered in wood shingles. Inside, the fireplace, paneling and tile floor are still in place but all of the interior furnishings have been lost/removed.



Interior of 1966 Sanbornton Rest Area Building

Additional Study Recommendations:

- Continue to gather information on the careers of DPWH/NHDOT engineers and designers.
- The status of the 200 small unmanned rest areas maintained by Public Works and Highways in the 1960s remains unclear. Additional research may be of interest.
- Attempt to locate and reinstall the missing Blue Star Memorial Highway Markers.



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Antrim Rest Area

## APPENDIX

### Architects/Designers

#### Lee R. Belanger, Sr. (1939- )

Worked for NHDOT/Bureau of Public Works for about 47 years beginning in 1961 and ending in 2009 (35 ½ years as a full-time employee; five years as a consultant/construction administrator and 7 years as a temporary employee/project manager). Attended NH Technical Institute in Manchester from 1957-1959 taking classes in engineering/drafting while working for Manchester Planning Board. Designed the first rest area at Sanbornton in 1965, as well as Canterbury and the rest area and weigh stations at Lebanon in 1966. In addition to the rest areas, over his long and distinguished career he also designed a number of other state buildings including state liquor stores and patrol sheds, was involved in the conversion of over 50 old-style liquor stores to self-service stores, managed countless projects across the state including courthouse projects, the addition to the State Supreme Court, the construction of the State Prison in Berlin, etc. Also served on BPW Capital Budget Team for many years.

#### Clifford Broker (1903-1992)

Clifford Broker, Sr. was a structural engineer who was active in New England from the early 1930s to the 1980s. He was educated at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn and Tufts University. During his career at the State Highway Department in the 1930s and 1940s he designed at least twenty-five bridges. He left the State Highway Department about 1946 and opened his own office as a consulting and structural engineer. Clifford Broker Associates employed a small number of engineers and architects and designed multi-story buildings in Concord during the Urban Renewal era. Known commissions include Blue Cross-Blue Shield Building at 1 Pillsbury Street (ca. 1961, altered) and the former Christian Mutual Building at 6 Loudon Road.<sup>46</sup>

Clifford Broker Associates designed the rest areas at Antrim, Epsom and North Conway (not extant) in 1966 (the drawings bear the initials "H.E.K." and Broker's stamp). The firm is not known to have designed any other commissions similar in scale or function to the Rest Areas.

#### Richard A. Brunel (1910-1981)

A Hopkinton resident, Brunel had a long career with the NH Department of Public Works and Highways/DOT. In the 1960s his title was Design Engineer. The initials "R.A.B" appear on 1967 drawings for the Colebrook and Shelburne Rest Areas as well as on the standardized designs for picnic shelters, picnic tables and grills generated by the Department in 1966.

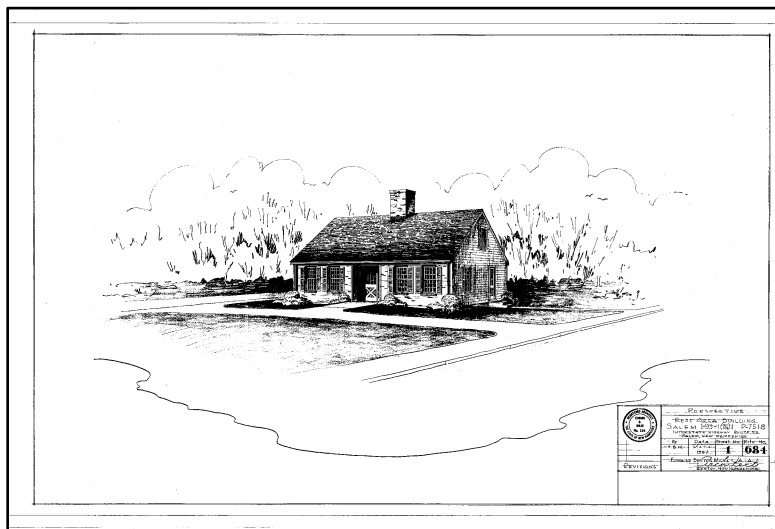
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<sup>46</sup> Laura Dreimeyer, *Clifford Broker, Sr.: A Monograph of his Career as a Bridge Designer with the New Hampshire State Highway Department ca.1933-ca.1945*. Preservation Company, 2010.

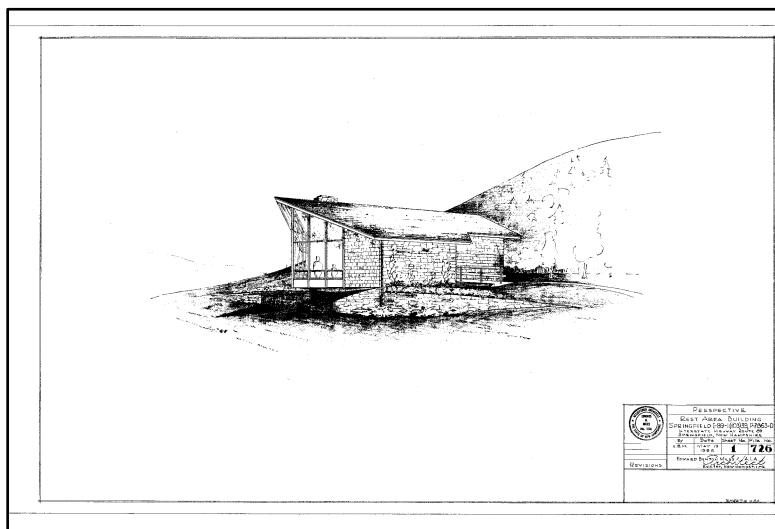
**Edward Benton Miles (1917-2002)**

Born in Westerly, RI. Received a Bachelor's degree in architecture from UNH in 1939 and a Master's from Cornell in 1949. Worked with Maurice Witmer in Portsmouth and later on his own out of his Exeter home. Miles designed a number of residences in the Exeter area in the 1950s.

Miles served as the architect for the restoration of the Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion in 1966 (Abbott Lowell Cummings was the technical consultant to the parks division). As a consultant to NH Public Works and Highways he designed Rest Areas at Seabrook, Salem, Springfield and Sutton. In 1969 the State of New Hampshire awarded him the contract for design of Peabody Slopes Base Lodge at Cannon Mountain.



Salem Rest Area (drawn by Edward Miles)



Springfield Rest Area (drawn by Edward Miles)

**Robert E. Minot, Royal Barry Wills Associates (1907-1996)**

A partner in the firm of Royal Barry Wills Associates. Royal Barry Wills Associates was the successor firm formed after the death of founder Royal Barry Wills in 1962. Minot also designed the New Hampshire State Supreme Court Building and the Goffstown home of Governor John King in 1966, the same year that the Nashua Rest Area was designed.