

= Berkshire No. 7 =

Berkshire No. 7 is a wood and steel barge constructed in 1935 . It is historically important as a transitional canal barge and as one of the few surviving wooden @-@ hulled canal boats . It was used to transport bulk cargo , including shipping fertilizer , from Connecticut to Long Island Sound . It sank in 1974 along with the Elmer S. Dailey and the Priscilla Dailey . The sunken vessel has deteriorated to the point that a salvage operation could result in breaking it apart . The Berkshire No. 7 was added to the National Register of Historic Places on December 21 , 1978 .

= = Description = =

The Berkshire No. 7 is a small wood and steel canal barge that measures 104 feet ( 32 m ) long with a 20 feet ( 6 @. @ 1 m ) beam . The depth of the hold is listed at 10 feet ( 3 @. @ 0 m ) and it had a listed capacity of 216 tons . It is a transitional canal barge with steel framing and wood planking over the skeleton . Clouette describes the hull as being " nearly rectangular in profile , section and plan , with squared @-@ off stern and bluntly rounded bow . Low bulwarks with scuppers rise slightly to a peak where they join the prominently projecting stem " . The superstructure is primarily of a single low coaming with convex hatch covers that runs almost the full length of the ship . A rectangular cabin rises up above the coaming and has a companionway in the rear . The Berkshire No. 7 is listed in the U.S. Registry as # 172071 .

= = History = =

The Berkshire No. 7 was constructed in 1935 by Jacobson and Peterson , Inc. in Brooklyn , New York , for Stewart J. Dailey , a former mule driver on the Erie Canal who later became a partner in a Tonawanda , New York , shipbuilding company and afterwards opened his own business , S. J. Dailey Company . The barge was used to ferry materials , including shipping fertilizer from Connecticut to Long Island Sound between 1941 and 1972 . Afterwards it was moored in Bridgeport Harbor together with the Elmer S. Dailey and Priscilla Dailey . In the spring of 1974 , one of the barges began to take on water , dragging down the other two . No part of the Berkshire No. 7 is visible above water .

= = Importance = =

The Berkshire No. 7 has historical importance because of its design , which reflects the construction of 19th @-@ century canal boats . However , there is no record that the barge was ever used on a canal . The barge is one of two surviving wooden @-@ hulled canal boats in existence . It was added to the National Register of Historic Places on December 21 , 1978 . Its nomination and listing is unusual because the Berkshire No. 7 was not yet 50 years old at the time of its nomination , and it sank in 1974 . It and the other two barges that sank with it are the only shipwrecks in Connecticut listed on the National Register of Historic Places .

In 1998 , the historic status of the barges was a concern for the Port Authority of Bridgeport Harbor , as the sunken ships interfered with a billion @-@ dollar redevelopment project . Over the years , the barges had deteriorated so that a salvage operation would likely result in them breaking apart . No action had been taken by 2003 , but a report noted that prior to any activity of the Berkshire No. 7 , the Federal Transit Administration and / or the City of Bridgeport should document the barge with photos and a technical description . Specifics regarding the documentation based on the activity would be archived at the State Historic Preservation Office and the Mystic Seaport Museum .