

# Quarry Park: An Illustrated Walkthrough



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Main Street

A Brief History: The Quarry began operation first in twenties, and it continued to operate into the fifties. During this time, it grew and developed, adding crushers and expanding operations. After its closing it was used by the Town until the State took possession of it as a park. Now, it is owned by the state and maintained by the town.

## Quarry Locations:

1. Duke of Cumberland Inn: As you enter the Park, you will see a substantial brick house. When it was built, it was unique in its elegance and convenience. Throughout its life, it has served many purposes; one of which was that of a tavern. During that period, it is said George Washington stopped by there.
2. 1936 Buick: Following the Blue Trail, you are proceeding along an old roadway into the quarry. On this trail you will find the rusty remains of an old 1936 Buick that had been set-up to run a ski tow. The club that used it was organized in 1948, at which time the hillside was devoid of trees.
3. Soldiers' Camp: If you continue along the Blue Trail, you come eventually to the Quarry Park lookout. When you do, you will have passed the location where a small U.S. Army encampment had been in 1942 at the start of WWII. Stationed here, the soldiers maintained searchlights and listening devices to protect from possible air raids on Pratt & Whitney Aircraft or Colt's Patent Firearm plants in the Hartford area.
4. Lookout: A part of the Blue Trail, this location is one of the Northern most areas of the Quarry. Elevated and largely unobstructed by trees, it provides an excellent view of the area, including Glastonbury and the Meadows.
5. Phragmites Pond: Looking down into the Quarry from the ridge, you can see a large pond that is filling in with the invasive species Phragmites. Before they arrived, the pond had been inhabited by many animals; as cattails grew on the banks and provided a ready food source. Next to this pond, is a smaller, deeper pond that served as a swimming area. Before being tested and found polluted, it had had a makeshift diving board to take advantage of its depth.
6. Connecticut Gun Guild: At the base of the ridge where the Lookout is best, the Connecticut Gun Guild had a target range in the late 1940's. Here, they fired a variety of firearms using the rock wall as an effective backstop for any fired rounds.
7. Cement Pilings: Continuing south on the Blue Trail, and a short way beyond the pond on your left, there are some low cement pilings. In this area there had once been a forge and blacksmith shop, in addition to a water tower. Below and to the south of this location, the Rocky Hill Vault Co. had its business in 1947. Later, from 1960 to 64, the Rocky Hill Public Works parked equipment there.
8. Aircraft Tower: On the high ridge at the south end of the quarry excavation area is where the aircraft-spotting tower was located during World War II. Maintained by citizens of both Rocky Hill and Wethersfield, it watched for possible enemy aircraft 24-hours a day. Near here was the Shipman's Tavern, well known for parties and balls.
9. Compressor House: Used in the thirties, and perhaps the late twenties this location was used as the housing for air compressors. Running the pressurized air iron pipes, these compressors were used to power the drills up top, in order to mine the stone. It was taken apart in the fifties, when the mine closed.
10. Secondary Crusher: Of the other locations, this is the largest. Encompassing both the concrete structure at the base of the hill and the pillars further down the trail, it would further crush up the mined rock. From there, it would load up the pulverized stone onto the nearby trains, then distributed to buyers.