

*Normal School*

# Loose bricks in school HQ tower causes closing of parking areas

By MARILYN BRAYNE  
(Herald Reporter)

Two loose bricks toppled from the bell tower of the 102-year-old New Britain school administration building last week, landing in the parking lot below.

Since then, loose bricks have been discovered in four other sections of the Hillside Place building, a national historic landmark.

School officials said no one was in the building at the time. The fallen bricks were discovered Dec. 27.

Driving rain, followed by freezing, caused the bricks to dislodge and fall, said School Plant Manager Al Hinds.

Concerned that other loose bricks might fall and hit a person or car, school officials blocked off sections of the north and east parking areas.

**Snorkel couldn't reach**

The fire department snorkel went to the scene in an attempt to remove loose bricks, but Hinds said the snorkel couldn't reach the 120-foot-high tower. A city building inspector also was called in.

Hinds said seven contractors were invited to supply cost estimates for emergency repairs. The price quotes aren't in yet.

With over half the parking spaces blocked off, secretaries and paraprofessionals who work in the administration building were asked to park in the municipal parking garage on Washington street.

A shuttle bus was hired for two days this week, at a cost of \$45 a day, to transport them from the parking garage to the administration building.

But Asst. Supt. Donald W. Friday said the bus was discontinued yesterday after Walnut Hill Convalescent Home on Grand street offered some space in its lot. Secretaries were asked to park there or car-pool to work, he said.

Friday said the building has had no major renovations other than installation of thermal-pane windows and some preservation work done several years ago with federal grant money.

**Comes as surprise**

The assistant superintendent said he was surprised the bricks fell since the building has had no serious problems in over a century of service.



HERALD PHOTO — GAUDIO

## No parking

A section of the parking lot at the New Britain School Administration Building on Hillside place is barricaded since the discovery that two bricks have fallen from the 120-foot bell tower.

In the past, officials have said that the historic building has held up a lot better than many new structures.

But Hinds said the building has been "steadily deteriorating" in recent years

and that requests to have work done were not funded.

The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It was built in 1882 as the State Normal School, the forerunner of the Teachers' College, now Central Connecticut State University. The building has housed the Board of Education and school administration offices since 1922.