

COLTSVILLE

Connecticut Gets a New National Historical Park

Congress officially designated Coltsville as Connecticut's first national historical park in December. The provision was included in a defense authorization bill, and as CPN goes to press, President Obama has indicated that he will sign the bill into law.

The act, sponsored by Representative John Larson (D-1st district) in the House and by Senators Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy (both D) in the Senate, specifically establishes the Coltsville National Historical Park as a unit of the National Park System.

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C. Wigren

The Merritt Parkway: A Public-Private Partnership

Laurie Heiss and Jill Smyth, *The Merritt Parkway: The Road that Shaped a Region* (The History Press, 2014), 158 pages. \$19.95.

In Laurie Heiss and Jill Smyth's new history of the Merritt Parkway, New Haven architect Herbert Newman recalls childhood trips on the Parkway with his parents and squabbling siblings:

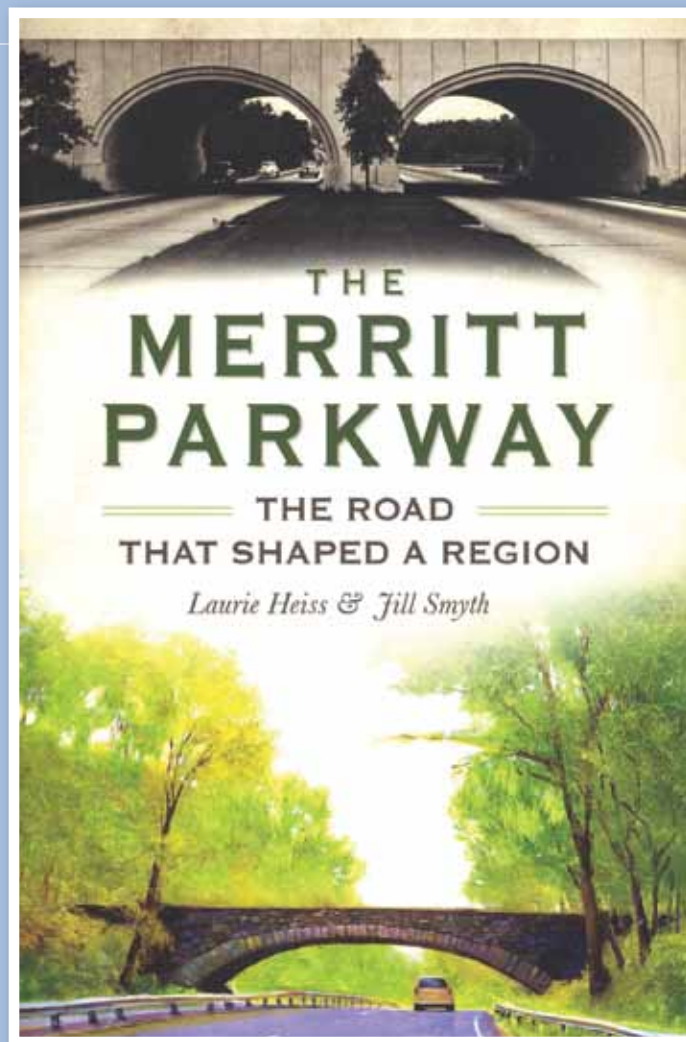
When we came to the Merritt we were distracted from our battles. Here we were on a beautifully landscaped roadway.... The wonder of the Merritt was that it was conceived as a place to experience the state, not just get from here to there. To my mind, it's Connecticut's longest, perhaps most wonderful, work of architecture. The joy of that experience compared to other motoring experiences has always stood out. That's what great works of art do: They renew you and get you in touch with your humanity. The Merritt does that. It's a great work of art, I think.

Constructed between 1934 and 1940, the Merritt ranks as one of the greatest achievements of the Connecticut Highway Department, forerunner of today's Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT). In the depth of the Great Depression, the Department bypassed professional parkway designers to create a road within a beautiful landscape and highlighted by a unique collection of decorative bridges—a road that brought wonder and delight to the mundane business of travel. Ever since, the Merritt has been an object of fierce pride for all who worked on it, from legislators to engineers to laborers.

Laurie Heiss and Jill Smyth have delved deeply into archives and private collections, scoured newspapers, and interviewed key figures to tell the Parkway's story, a job for which they are uniquely qualified. As the former and current executive directors, respectively, of the Merritt Parkway Conservancy, they and the organization they represent have played central roles in maintaining, preserving, and improving the Merritt for nearly two decades.

Most histories of the Merritt concentrate on its origin, design, and construction and devote only a final chapter to what happened after the opening in 1940. The great strength of *The Merritt Parkway: The Road that Shaped a Region* is that its decade-by-decade approach pays as much attention to post-1940 history as to pre-1940.

In many ways it's not a happy story. Almost immediately things started to go downhill: wartime restrictions and then changing attitudes and priorities about transportation ate away at maintenance budgets. At the same time, the explosive growth of the postwar suburbs—ironically made possible in part by the greater access that the Merritt itself provided—brought rising traffic levels, higher speeds, and pressures to expand the road at the expense of its distinctive landscape, almost always under the banner of safety improvement.



Although it created the Merritt, in later years, the Connecticut Department of Transportation has been both an ally and a threat. Under the leadership of Commissioner Emil Frankel in the 1990s, the Department instituted wide-ranging plans to preserve and enhance the Parkway. It formed the Merritt Parkway Working Group, which formulated design guidelines for the Parkway as a whole, as well as specific guidelines for the landscape and bridges; it formed a new Merritt Parkway Advisory Committee to maintain regular contact with the Parkway towns and preservation and professional groups that have a stake in the Parkway's preservation; it secured designation as a State Scenic Road; and it embarked on a program of restoration and sensitive upgrades that is still ongoing.

At the same time, entrenched road-building mindsets within and beyond the Department have continued to focus on making the Parkway wider, straighter, and faster, as most dramatically seen in the plans to rebuild the interchange with Route 7 in Norwalk. In response to this threat, the Merritt Parkway Conservancy departed from its original non-confrontational approach to lead the lawsuit that blocked construction and forced DOT to redesign the project. Most recently, massive tree-cutting in response to a heartbreaking accident and devastating storm damage in 2011 and 2012 has decimated stretches of the Parkway with only vague promises of repairing the landscape sometime in the future.

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From the Executive Director

Now that the **Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation Revolving Fund** is up and working (see Waterbury, page 9), Gregory Farmer, one of the Trust's Circuit Riders, has agreed to add managing its operations to his responsibilities. His charge is to build the fund into a major resource for financing historic rehabilitation projects. The REV fund, as it is called, provides short-term financial assistance that fills funding gaps for preservation projects. Pre-development and bridge loans and real estate purchase options will focus on towns and cities that have been served by the Trust's grant programs. These are places where our investment will serve as a catalyst to stimulate economic development and contribute to placemaking across the state. The REV fund is now its own 501(c)(3) organization, separate from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation; however, the two entities will work hand-in-hand. The Board of Directors of the REV fund includes

non-profit and for-profit developers, plus real estate professionals, attorneys, and architects. Please visit www.cttrust.org for more information.

In November, Jane Montanaro, Director of Preservation Services, Greg Farmer, and I attended Past Forward, the **National Trust for Historic Preservation's annual conference** in Savannah. A highlight of the week was an all-day convening of more than eighty representatives of organizations offering revolving funds. The session, which featured developers, funders, and practitioners of the funds, was sponsored by The 1772 Foundation, to whom the Trust gave our Harlan Griswold Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation in 2013. The 1772 Foundation is the major leader on preservation funding in the country and has provided much-needed capital to many revolving funds, including our own. Without their support we could never have sustained eighteen months of owning the

beautiful Lyman house in Durham.

2015 marks the **40th anniversary** of the Trust's founding as Connecticut's statewide non-profit historic preservation organization. Much has changed in the world of historic preservation since 1975; on the other hand, much is the same. With that in mind, the Trust will be presenting a conference on historic preservation in Connecticut, looking forward to the next 40 years as we build on the continuing interest in preserving our historic resources as the centerpiece of Connecticut's vibrancy. In addition to the conference in the fall, we will offer biking tours, historic bar crawls, and special-access tours of historic places.

Our social media outlets will feature stories on past preservation challenges and successes throughout the year. Make sure you are a friend on our Facebook page and receive our tweets. It's going to be an exciting year for the Trust, and we want you to be part of our celebrations. ❁

—Helen Higgins

The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation is a nonprofit statewide membership organization established by a special act of the State Legislature in 1975. Working with local preservation groups and individuals as well as statewide organizations, it encourages, advocates and facilitates historic preservation throughout Connecticut.

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Editor, *Historic Properties Exchange*:
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Upcoming Meetings

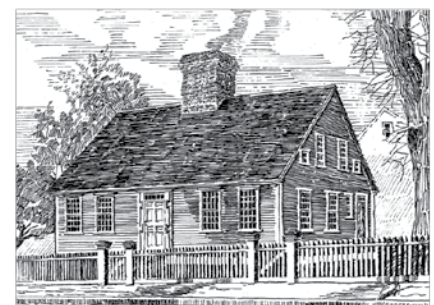
Connecticut Historic Preservation Council

February 4, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.
March 4, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

Meetings take place at the
State Historic Preservation Office
Department of Economic and Community
Development Main Conference Room
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THANK YOU TO OUR LEGISLATORS FOR CONTINUING TO PROTECT **The Community Investment Act**



Representatives Joe Aresimowicz and David Zoni at the Southington Community Cultural Arts Center



Senator Bob Duff at the Lockwood Mathews Mansion, Norwalk



Senator Martin Looney and Mayor Toni Harp at the English Street Community Gardens, New Haven

The Community Investment Act Coalition has recently held three events to highlight the success of the Community Investment Act (CIA), a fund created by the collection of recording fees for all documents entered into municipal land records. The proceeds of this account are distributed among historic preservation, affordable housing, agriculture, and open space programs. A portion of every CIA dollar collected stays in the local community for capital investment. The rest provides critical funding for CIA projects in nearly every town and city in the state.

Since 2006, the Community Investment Act has funded 894 projects in 157 towns for a total of \$122.5 million given back to Connecticut. This fund has been championed by several key legislators to protect and preserve the beauty and unique character of the state for future generations.

The goal of these events is to highlight the good work done in communities such as Southington, Norwalk, and New Haven with support from their local legislators, Senator Looney, Senator Duff, and Representatives Zoni and Aresimowicz.

Grants Fund Preservation Activity throughout Connecticut

In October and November, the Connecticut Trust approved \$280,419 in grants to municipalities and nonprofit organizations for preservation planning, maintenance and repairs, and technical assistance on industrial sites. With matches where required, the grants will make possible more than \$400,000 in total economic investment in historic sites around Connecticut.

The grants are part of the Trust's technical assistance programs and its Making Places program for historic industrial sites, in collaboration with and with generous funding from the Connecticut General Assembly and the State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development, through the Community Investment Act.

In the list that follows, NR indicates sites on the National Register of Historic Places, SR indicates State Register, and NHL indicates National Historic Landmarks.

Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grants

Women and Family Life Center, Guilford: \$16,000 for a condition assessment and preservation/expansion plan for the Abraham Woodward house (1785; NR) and Leete carriage barn (late 19th cent.; NR)

Deacon John Grave Foundation, Madison: \$2,000 to plan lighting and electrical upgrades to Deacon John Grave house (1685 ff.; NR)

Rockfall Center, Middletown: \$2,400 for an energy audit of the DeKoven House Community Center (c.1796 ff.; NR)

Grove Street Cemetery, New Haven: \$10,000 for a condition assessment and upgrades to the chapel (1872) for reuse as a visitor center (NHL)

Norwalk United Methodist Church, Norwalk: \$5,200 for a condition assessment of the church (1860; NR)

Christ Episcopal Church, Norwich: \$9,715 for a condition assessment of the roof (1846-1849; NR)

Preston Historical Society, Preston: \$8,025 for a capital needs assessment to stabilize and adapt the Long Society Meetinghouse (1817-1818; NR) for public use

Ward-Heitmann House Museum Foundation, Inc., West Haven: \$13,467 for a condition assessment of the house (c.1725 ff.; NR)

Maintenance and Repair grants

Saint John's Episcopal Church, East Windsor: \$13,800 for roof repair (1809, 1850s; NR)

Emanuel Lutheran Church, Hartford: \$15,000 for masonry repairs (1913; NR)

continued on page 14

Norwalk United Methodist Church



Norwalk United Methodist Church

Town of Lyme



Tin ceiling, Lyme town hall

Briefly Noted

Glastonbury. ▶

Ruins of the Hopewell woolen mill will remain standing in a park, the town council voted in December. Built between 1836 and the 1980s, the mill produced woolens, including uniforms, during the Civil War. In the 20th century it switched to making aircraft parts until closing in the early 2000s. The buildings were demolished in 2010, leaving just the chimney, dam, and ten-foot-high granite walls. The town has cleaned up contamination, rebuilt the chimney, and repointed the walls; it also is considering a protective fence. (Photograph, 2010, before repairs.)



C. Wigren

Greenwich. ▶

The Thomas Lyon house (c.1695ff.; NR) was added to the Connecticut Freedom Trail in September, in recognition of its role in a dramatic episode in African-American history. In 1830 Peter John Lee escaped from slavery in Virginia. Seth Lyon, the then-owner of the house, hired Lee to work on his farm. But in 1836 fugitive hunters in New York lured Lee across the Byram River where they kidnapped him and returned him to Virginia. Eventually Lee escaped again and successfully made his way to Canada, but the Lyon house represents the dangers that faced escapees.



Connecticut Circuit Rider

Middlefield. ▶

The state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection recently completed repairs to the Lake Beseck dam (the photo shows it before the repairs). The brownstone dam was built in 1848 to provide waterpower for local mills and was raised in 1852 and 1870; the curved shape helps it withstand the force of the impounded water. With the departure of industry, Lake Beseck is a popular recreational facility.



C. Wigren

Andrea Kretschmer, POKO Partners



Joseph Vallone



◀ **Pawcatuck.**

In December POKO Partners broke ground on the conversion of half the William Clark Company Thread Mill (1892, 1899; NR) to 58 apartments, along with 9,000 square feet of commercial space. Funding comes from the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority and Competitive Housing Assistance for Multifamily Properties, state brownfields funding, and state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits. The Connecticut Trust holds a preservation easement on the portion of the mill complex owned by POKO. (In the photo: CHFA Housing Chief Dara Kovel, DOH Commissioner Evonne Klein, Ken Olson of POKO, Stonington Acting First Selectman George Crouse, Selectman Rob Simmons, and DECD Director of Waterfront, Brownfield and TOD Tim Sullivan).

◀ **Rockville.**

Construction began in October on Loom City Lofts, the conversion of the Roosevelt Mill (1906; NR) to 68 apartments. Work on the concrete-framed former textile mill had been delayed as developers Marc Levine and Joseph Vallone assembled financing. Funding for the \$15 million project includes a \$5 million housing grant from the Department of Economic and Community Development and state historic rehabilitation tax credits. The developers hope to finish construction by the end of 2015.

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Date and location to be announced.

See www.cttrust.org for details.



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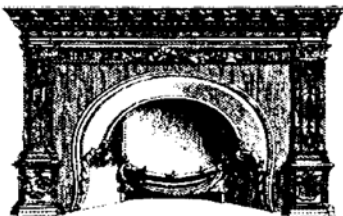
The Preservation Education Institute is part of Historic Windsor, Inc. (HWI), a nonprofit preservation organization based in Windsor, Vermont. Since 1982, HWI has offered preservation skills training programs for professionals and savvy homeowners.

This project is funded in part by a grant from the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development.

For information and reservations call the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, (203) 562-6312 or email contact@cttrust.org.



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Around the State, cont'd from page 7

Waterbury. ▶

Construction is nearing completion on the Trust's first Revolving Fund project, the rehabilitation of four historic houses on Gaffney Place, in the Hillside National Register district. The Trust lent \$240,000 to Mutual Housing Association of South Central Connecticut to renovate four historic houses and construct a new, fifth, one. The Trust received initial capital for the fund from the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority.

Westport. ▼

The Kemper-Gunn house (1885) was moved to a new site on November 18. Developer David Waldman offered to relocate the house to make way for his multi-use Bedford Square project on Church Lane. In its new Elm Street location (one corner of a town parking lot), Mr. Waldman's company will renovate the house as retail and office space.

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B. Schide

Bob Eckman



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“Today marks the culmination of more than a decade of work to preserve the legacy of American innovation and manufacturing that is Coltsville,” said Mr. Larson. “Connecticut is the cradle of our industrial revolution. The designation made possible by this Act not only honors the groundbreaking work of Samuel and Elizabeth Colt, but provides Connecticut greater and much-deserved representation in our National Park system.”

By drawing further attention and visitors to the National Historic Landmark complex, the park will also further the economic revitalization of Coltsville and the entire city of Hartford.

The designation culminates efforts led by Mr. Larson that stretch back more than a decade. He took up the cause almost as soon as he entered the House of Representatives, in 1999. In 2003, along with then Senators Chris Dodd and Joseph Lieberman, he secured the passage of the Coltsville Study Act, which commissioned an evaluation of Coltsville’s suitability as a National Park.

Based on favorable results from that evaluation, Coltsville supporters nominated the site to be a National Historic Landmark, building on NHL status already accorded to Armsmear, the Colt house, as well as National Register listings for the Colt Industrial District and the Church of the Good Shepherd and its parish house. After initial rejection, Coltsville became a National Historic Landmark in 2008.

In 2011, Mr. Larson and Senator Lieberman introduced the first Coltsville National Historical Park Act, but the measure failed in the House. The successful

bill was introduced in March of 2013.

Along the way, many individuals and groups have supported and taken part in the effort. In addition to the legislators, Hartford’s mayors and city council have offered support. The Hartford Courant, especially columnist and editorial writer Tom Condon, has tirelessly promoted Coltsville as key to revitalizing the city.

The Wadsworth Atheneum and the Connecticut State Museum have promised to lend Colt-related materials from their collections to a National Park, providing a rich lode of historic materials to use in telling Coltsville’s story. In fact, the push for a National Park has roots as far back as “Colt: The Making of an American Legend,” a major exhibition held at the Wadsworth in 1996 and 1997 and curated by William Hosley, who has continued to be an active booster.

The Connecticut Trust has also taken part in the preservation and revitalization of Coltsville. Since 2003 the Trust has been represented on the ad hoc Coltsville steering committee. *Connecticut Preservation News* has regularly reported on and promoted preservation efforts; including a listing as one of the Most Important Threatened Historic Places in Connecticut in 2001, at a time when redevelopment had stalled. The Trust administered a grant from the State Historic Preservation Office to create the Visitor Experience Survey which evaluated Coltsville’s potential as a National Park. And, in 2008, the Trust and the State Historic Preservation Office jointly awarded Mr. Larson the Harlan Griswold



Office of Congressman John Larson

U.S. Rep. John Larson (left) has shepherded Coltsville through the process of becoming a National Historical Park. He is seen here with Lawrence Dooley, Coltsville’s developer.

Award “for his unwavering dedication to the preservation and restoration of the Coltsville Historic District.”

Coltsville

Samuel Colt (1814-1862) first patented his revolver in 1836 and on that foundation built an international business whose success was as much a result of his larger-than-life personality and marketing wizardry as the excellence of the product itself. After failing in Paterson, New Jersey, Colt moved to Hartford and began acquiring land in the South Meadows,

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Coltsville: A Timeline

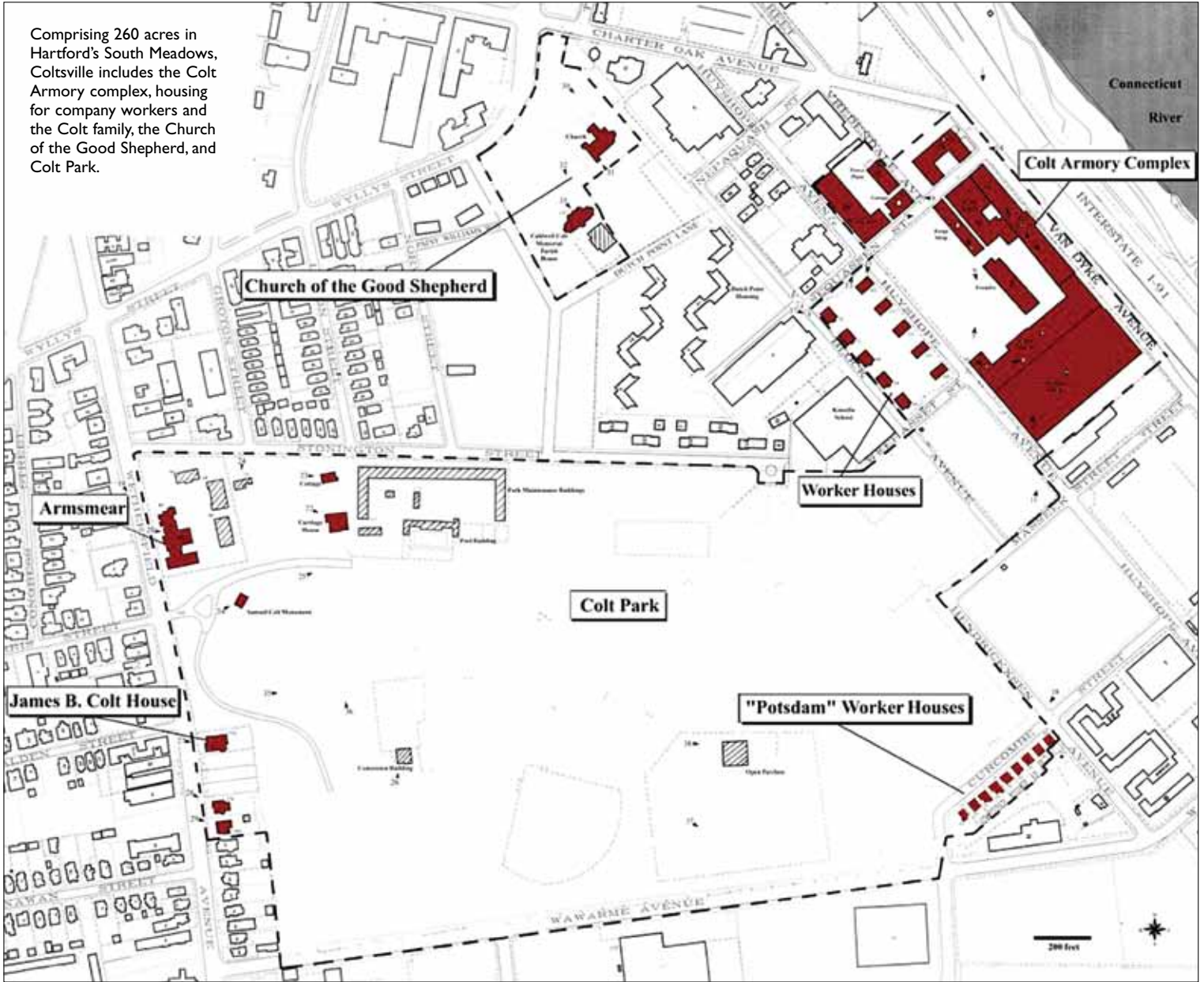
- 1836—Samuel Colt patents revolving-cylinder pistol and establishes his first factory, in Paterson, N.J.; it fails in 1842.
- 1847—Colt receives a contract to make revolvers for the U.S. Army for use in the Mexican War; they are assembled at Eli Whitney Jr.’s armory, in Hamden.
- 1849—Colt establishes a pistol factory in Hartford, in rented space.

- 1849—Elisha K. Root manages manufacturing processes at the Colt factory; he develops innovative production techniques until his death in 1865.
- 1854—Colt buys land in Hartford’s South Meadows, builds dikes, lays out streets, and constructs the first Armory.
- 1854—In Russia, Colt gets a contract to supply the Russian army, an event commemorated in the onion-shaped Armory dome, inspired by Russian architecture.

- 1855—Armsmear, the Colts’ opulent home, is built; it is enlarged in 1861.
- 1856—Colt builds 20 tenement buildings to house workers; 10 of them are demolished for parking in the 1920s.
- 1859—Colt Willow Ware Manufacturing Company is established to produce furniture and other items from trees planted on the dikes; its German Workers live in the Potsdam cottages.

- 1861—West Armory is built; demolished before World War II.
- 1862—Samuel Colt dies. Elizabeth Colt is the company’s controlling stockholder; her brother, Richard Jarvis, runs it as president.
- 1864—East Armory is destroyed by fire; it is rebuilt in 1867 under Gen. William B. Franklin, the company’s general manager.

Comprising 260 acres in Hartford's South Meadows, Coltsville includes the Colt Armory complex, housing for company workers and the Colt family, the Church of the Good Shepherd, and Colt Park.



1866—Colt Fire Arms is licensed to produce Gatling guns, the world's first effective machine gun.

1867—Elizabeth Colt builds the Church of the Good Shepherd in memory of Sam and their four children who have died.

1873—Colt Fire Arms introduces the Single Action Army Model 1873—known as the Colt .45, or the Peacemaker; it is produced until 1941.

1895—Elizabeth Colt builds Church of the Good Shepherd parish house in memory of Caldwell Colt, her last surviving child.

1901—Elizabeth Colt, lacking suitable heirs, sells the company to a New York limited partnership.

1905—Elizabeth Colt dies. She bequeaths art and furnishings to the Wadsworth Atheneum and grounds to the City of Hartford as Colt Park.

1911—Armsmear is converted to a home for Episcopalian women under Elizabeth Colt's will.

1916—During World War I armaments boom South Armory is built for manufacturing machine guns and North Armory for production of rifle barrels.

1920—Colt Plastics Division is established; manufactures firearm grips, electric plugs and outlets, and consumer products until 1955.

1921—Inventor John Browning, who maintains research space at the Colt armory, successfully tests .37 mm anti-aircraft cannon.

1934—A strike erodes the company's paternalistic traditions of retaining older employees and keeping more employees on the payroll than strictly needed.

1942—Company office building is constructed

continued on page 12

where he created an urban version of the textile mill villages that were popping up across the New England countryside.

After Colt's sudden death, in 1862, his widow, Elizabeth (1826-1905) retained ownership of the company and hired talented managers to run it. As owner of one of the city's foremost manufacturing concerns, Elizabeth Colt continued to be an inescapable presence in Hartford until her death. Among her principal philanthropies were the Episcopal Church, particularly the Church of the Good Shepherd, which she founded, had constructed, and endowed, and the Wadsworth Atheneum, to which she left her extensive art collection and furnishings, as well as architectural legacies.

The importance of Coltsville lies not just in armaments production over a period of nearly 150 years, but in the larger traditions of industrial innovation and the development of precision manufacturing that it represents. Colt himself developed the first reliable revolving-cylinder pistol, and he and his employees and successors like Elisha K. Root and John Browning continually refined its design, introduced new products, and developed new and better ways of manufacturing them. These improvements could be, and were, applied to a host of other products. Hartford and Connecticut's Central Valley were filled with companies founded and operated by former Colt employees, making everything from rifles to bicycles to sewing machines to, most importantly, machine tools. William Hosley, summarizing this atmosphere of innovation, refers to the Hartford-to-Springfield industrial axis as the Silicon Valley of the 19th century.

Renovated buildings at the Colt Armory now house schools, offices, apartments, and a restaurant.

However, the 20th century saw Connecticut industry decline. Although Colt's continued to manufacture firearms in Hartford until 1993, it dwindled to a shadow of its former self. As the Armory went quiet, its buildings deteriorated, and the surrounding neighborhood went into decline as well, until redevelopment efforts began in the late '90s. With the complexity of the site, economic ups and downs, and intricate financing, redevelopment has gone through several developers, each completing a portion before being overwhelmed by the scale and difficulties of the undertaking. However, under developer Lawrence Dooley, whose Colt Gateway took over in 2010, work has moved forward more consistently. Today sections of the complex house apartments, offices, and schools, and construction is proceeding on the East Armory itself.

Making the park a reality

As envisioned in the Visitor Experience Study commissioned in 2008 by the Connecticut Trust, the Coltsville National Historical Park will comprise about 250 acres including the factory buildings, the Church of the Good Shepherd and parish house, Armsmear and the James Colt house, Colt Park, Armory housing and the Potsdam worker cottages. As in Lowell, Massachusetts, and other recently established National Historical Parks, many of these buildings will remain in private ownership.



A portion of the East Armory (the factory building with the dome) will contain a visitor center and exhibit space. Through the rest of the site, tours and interpretive signs will guide visitors. Depending on the level of development, Coltsville could attract between 25,000 and 200,000 visitors per year.

The goal for the new park is twofold: to interpret the history of Coltsville and its place in the Industrial Revolution in America, and to reinforce the private redevelopment efforts in the district.

To make this happen, the new act requires that the park not be formally established until:

- the National Park Service acquires an interest in enough land within

1944—World War II: employment peaks at 16,000.

1955—Colt becomes a division of Penns-Texas, later Fairbanks-Whitney; the main plant moves to West Hartford but some production continues at the Armory.

1966—Armsmear is designated a National Historic Landmark.

1975—Church of the Good Shepherd and parish house are listed on National Register of Historic Places.

1976—Colt Industrial District is listed on National Register of Historic Places. Hartford Architecture Conservancy restores the James Colt house.

1980s—Artists set up lofts in the Armory buildings.

1994—Colt's Manufacturing Company moves its last operations to West Hartford, ending nearly 150 years of production in Hartford.

1996—Rampant Colt figure from dome is bought by Connecticut State Library and Museum.

1998—Coltsville Heritage Park, Inc., begins redevelopment by restoring the dome.

2000—Homes for America Holdings, Inc., becomes Coltsville's new developer.

2002—Congressman Larson, Senators Dodd and Lieberman introduce legislation calling for a Coltsville Study.

2003—Coltsville Study Act, introduced by Congressman Larson and Senators Dodd and Lieberman, is passed by Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush.

2003—Warehouse is converted to office and school space.

2004—Machine shop is converted to office space.



the park boundary “to constitute a manageable unit;”

- the NPS has acquired, by donation, at least 10,000 square feet of space within the East Armory for administration and visitor services; and
- an agreement is put in place to ensure that publicly-owned land within the park will be managed consistently with the park.

As these conditions spell out, the management of the park will require participation by the Park Service, local governments, and private owners—at the very least, Mr. Dooley, of Colt Gateway.

In light of the passage of the Coltsville National Historical Park Act, Mr. Larson says the next step is to make sure the

Park Service budget includes funding for implementation. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that it will cost about \$9 million over five years to set up the park; part of that can come from private donations. After that the estimated annual operating cost would be less than \$1 million. In return, the park could create one thousand jobs and generate \$150 million for the regional economy in the same five years.

Whatever the precise economic benefits, making Coltsville a National Park will bring well deserved recognition to an important part of Connecticut’s history. It will enrich the lives of the people who live and visit here. 🌿

2008—Coltsville is designated a National Historic Landmark. Connecticut Trust commissions Coltsville National Park Visitor Experience Study with a grant from the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism.

2010—Coltsville National Historical Park Act fails in House of Representatives. Colt Gateway, headed by Lawrence Dooley, takes over as developer.

2013—Congressman Larson and Senators Blumenthal and Murphy reintroduce the Coltsville National Historical Park Act.

2014—Coltsville National Historical Park Act passes as part of defence authorization bill.



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CONNECTICUT PRESERVATION AWARDS • 2015

The Connecticut Trust's Connecticut Preservation Awards recognize outstanding achievements in protecting and nourishing Connecticut's significant buildings, landscapes and communities.

The 2015 Awards will be presented at the State Capitol in early April.

DESCRIPTION

Connecticut Preservation Awards honor outstanding efforts in the preservation and enhancement of historic places throughout Connecticut, with the goal of inspiring others to do likewise.

Connecticut Preservation Awards recognize:

- outstanding efforts in the restoration, maintenance, preservation or adaptive use of historic buildings, structures, complexes, neighborhoods, cultural landscapes or landscape features
- outstanding studies, documentation or plans for preservation, enhancement, or revitalization of historic places
- individuals or organizations that have demonstrated effective leadership in community, regional, or statewide preservation efforts

Connecticut Preservation Awards are presented to:

- individuals
- nonprofit organizations
- private property owners
- municipalities or other governmental bodies

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Any individual, organization, or project involved in historic preservation in Connecticut is eligible to receive a Connecticut Preservation Award. Nominated projects must have been completed since January 1, 2012.

Nominations may be made without the knowledge of the nominee. Nominations must be made by members of the Connecticut Trust.

Trustees and staff of the Connecticut Trust are not eligible for Connecticut Preservation Awards during the period of their active service.



NOMINATION PROCEDURE

For forms and further information, visit www.cttrust.org or call (203) 562-6312 or email cwigren@cttrust.org.

Nominations must be received by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, February 20, 2015.

Grants Funding Preservation,

cont'd from page 5

Town of Lyme: \$4,037 to repair a tin ceiling in the Town Hall (former Baptist church; c.1860; SR)

Greeneville Congregational Church, Norwich: \$15,000 to replace the roof and gutters (1833; NR)

South Britain Congregational Church, Southbury: \$15,000 for lead abatement and repainting (1825; NR)

New London Landmarks: \$1,775 for a community visioning program on endangered properties, including City Hall (1854, 1912; NR), Post Office (1933; NR); Lighthouse Inn (1901; NR); and 25 Cleveland Street (1889; NR)

Making Places grants

Ball & Socket Arts Inc., Cheshire: \$50,000 to identify potential market and audience demand for an arts center at the former Ball & Socket Manufacturing Co. (1850-1946; SR)

Putnam Redevelopment Agency: \$49,000 for National Register nomination, condition assessment and redevelopment plan for the Belding-Corticelli mill (1872)

Torrington Historic Preservation Trust: \$50,000 for market feasibility analysis and redevelopment recommendations for the former Hendey Machine Co. (1892-1929)

For more information about the Connecticut Trust's grants programs, visit www.cttrust.org or call (203) 562-6312.

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Henley Machine Co., Torrington

The Merritt Parkway, cont'd from page 2

As the authors tell it, the best, most hopeful moments in the Parkway's history have resulted from the active involvement of committed citizens in partnership with enlightened public officials.

In the 1930s, civic groups, such as the Fairfield County Planning Association and local garden clubs, and public officials at the town and state level worked with imaginative designers and engineers in the Connecticut Highway Department to create a model of humane transport in the midst of financial difficulty. After construction was completed, a citizen board, the Merritt Parkway Commission, oversaw and protected the Parkway until Governor Abraham Ribicoff abolished the body, in the name of government efficiency, in 1959.

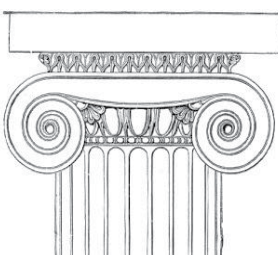
This left only grassroots groups to try to stave off some of the most drastic threats from the 1950s to the '80s. As the massive rebuilt interchanges with Routes 8 and 25 in Trumbull show, they didn't always succeed.

Since the 1990s, renewed cooperation between the Department of Transportation and individual citizens, local activists, and established groups such as the Connecticut Trust and the Merritt Parkway Conservancy have created a new attitude and, more importantly, put in place structures to help ensure that the Parkway will continue to be a beloved feature of the Fairfield County landscape.

But, as Ms. Heiss and Ms. Smyth insist, structures alone aren't enough. Only

ongoing public engagement will ensure the Parkway's survival. They conclude, "We believe the public is in favor of keeping the Merritt a special place. As the current custodians of this remarkable road, people well beyond the Merritt Parkway Conservancy and including representatives of the surrounding towns need to continue to advocate for their road. We hope these stories about the Merritt inspire the next generation of travelers, designers and planners to preserve the beauty of the Merritt." The people of Connecticut—government, individuals, and private organizations—created the Merritt Parkway together. If we're going to keep the Parkway, we all have to continue to work together. 🌿

—*Christopher Wigren*



Christopher Wuerth

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Hogan's Cider Mill, land 522-532 Spielman Highway (Rt. 4) Burlington (pics attached)

Home of Hogan's Cider Mill, this 13-19 acre parcel is one of the most well known and most stunning parcels of land available in central Connecticut. The property, consisting of beautiful barns surrounded by gently sloping land, is being marketed for residential development. Some areas of the property have views of the Heublein Tower. Interested parties may purchase the entire parcel or just the 13 acres suitable for development.

The Cider Mill complex was listed on the State Register of Historic Places through the Connecticut Trust's Connecticut Barn program: <http://connecticutbarns.org/find/details/id-9218> Rehabilitation of properties listed on the State Register may be eligible for tax abatements, tax credits, or grants.

Contact: Robert Gaucher (860) 761-6007
and Jeffrey Sikes (860) 761-6011 O,R&L
Commercial



Maple Grove Inn / Parley Converse House (1816)

111 West Main Street, Stafford Springs

Parley Converse, a farmer and founding father of Stafford's woolen mills, built this house in 1816, and his daughter and her husband extensively remodeled it in about 1870. One of Stafford Springs' finest early Victorian buildings, the house was a restaurant from the 1930s until 1999.

Listed on the Connecticut Trust's Most Important Threatened Places in 2005, the property is again threatened by demolition. The property is under deposit by a developer who plans to have the building demolished or removed from the site by May 2105.

Contact: David Bacchiochi (860) 985-9024 or
davidbacchiochi@yahoo.com.





W. L. Hatch Company building (1929) 24 Washington Street, New Britain

This handsome Art Deco commercial building, designed by the local firm of Perry and Bishop, is located in downtown New Britain, just around the corner from City Hall. The City-owned property is included in the proposed downtown National Register district, as well as the City's Walnut Hill Historic District Revitalization Plan, funded by a Vibrant Communities Initiative Grant from the Connecticut Trust. In need of stabilization and rehabilitation, the property may be eligible for historic preservation tax credits and grants.

Contact: Kenneth Malinowski (860) 826-3333 or
kmalinowski@newbritainct.gov

Howland Hughes Co. (Reid & Hughes), 1903 114-138 Bank Street, Waterbury

A developer is being sought for the rehabilitation of the 110,000 SF Howland Hughes Building, designed by Griggs and Hunt and located within the Downtown Historic District. The National Register of Historic Places nomination describes the building as "... [a] very large 5-story, 15-bay, commercial building, constructed of glazed brick with limestone trim; details, which are mainly confined to the fourth floor and above, include: ... an elaborate cornice consisting of an ornate corbel table with cartouches and large modillions with incised, fishscale-like decoration."

The City of Waterbury has purchased a six-month option on the Howland-Hughes Building. Waterbury Development Corporation is accepting requests for expressions of interest.

The Waterbury Development Corporation (WDC) is the City of Waterbury's designated economic and community development agency. Founded as a partnership of public and private sectors to help the City of Waterbury, its businesses and residents revitalize the city, stimulate and support economic development, promote investment

in education, rehabilitation and maintain the city's housing stock, eliminate urban blight and decay, manage construction projects, and improve quality of life.

Visit <http://www.wdconline.org/HHproject> for information.



Deadline for submission to the March-April 2015 issue is February 13, 2014.

Historic Properties Exchange is published to advertise endangered properties in Connecticut by the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, a statewide nonprofit organization located at 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, Connecticut 06517. Real estate advertised in this publication is subject to the Federal Housing Act of 1968. Neither advertisers nor the Connecticut Trust are responsible or liable for any misinformation, misprints, or typographical errors contained in *Historic Properties Exchange*.

To list a property, learn about properties listed or to subscribe, contact Jane Montanaro, Director of Preservation Services, at jmontanaro@ctrust.org or call 203-562-6312.

Around the State, cont'd from page 9

Windsor Locks. ▶

Amtrak officially transferred the town's former railroad station (1875; NR) to the town of Windsor Locks in December. After ten year's effort to gain ownership, the town hopes to renovate the building as a visitors' center, art gallery, and community meeting place. The first step is to raise money to secure the station. For more information, visit <http://www.wltrain.org/>.



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C. Wigren



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D. Carvings of pistol parts incongruously ornament a doorway at the Church of the Good Shepherd.

E. At the Church of the Good Shepherd's Caldwell Colt parish house, aquatic siblings of the trademark Rampant Colt flank Caldwell's yacht, *Dauntless*.

F. Of Armsmeat, *The Art Journal* wrote in 1876: "There is no doubt that it is a little Turkish, among other things...for it has domes, pinnacles, and light, lavish ornamentation, such as Oriental taste delights in—a compliment paid, perhaps, by the great inventor to his distinguished friend the Viceroy of Egypt, to whom he sold, in 1854, five thousand revolvers!"

G. The Samuel Colt Memorial, by sculptor J. Massey Rhind, stands in Colt Park. It depicts Colt as both successful businessman and teen-aged inventor.

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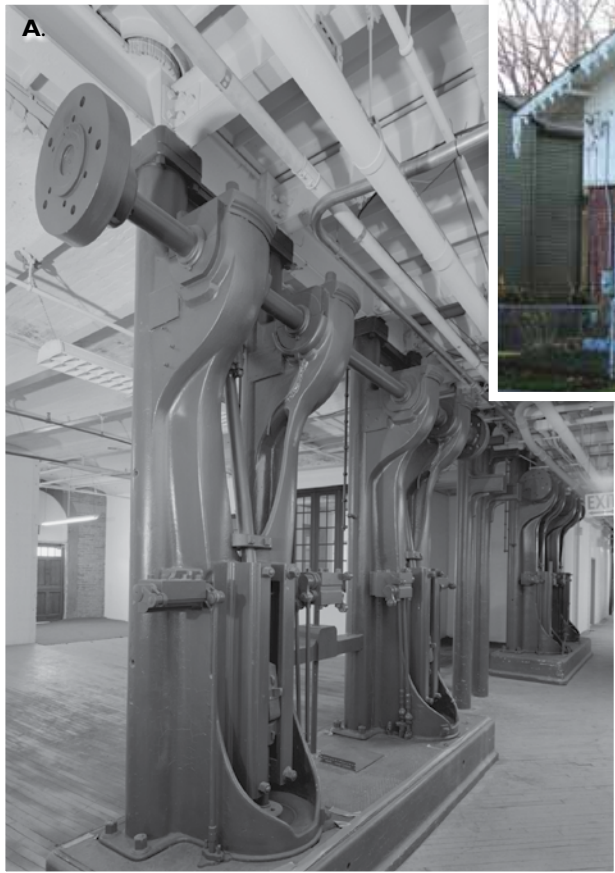
Scenes around Coltsville

CONNECTICUT Close-ups



While Samuel Colt's blue dome has been a landmark for travelers from the age of steamboats to the age of the automobile, Coltsville offers a wealth of attractions for a new National Park—a complete industrial village within the city.

Library of Congress, Historic American Engineering Record



C. Wigren

A. In the East Armory, parts of the high-speed steam engines that once drove the machinery help to support the building.

B Swiss-style cottages for employees of Colt's willow ware factory supposedly recalled their homeland, Germany. Referring to the unfamiliar half-framed construction, Hartford's Henry Barnard described the cottages as "turned wrongside out."

C. This scene resembles Mark Twain's description of the Armory from 1868: "On every floor is a dense wilderness of strange iron machines that stretches away into remote distances and confusing perspectives—a tangled forest of rods, bars, pulleys, wheels, and all the imaginable and unimaginable forms of mechanism."

continued on page 19

Library of Congress, c.1915