

## Community Renaissance Three Cities Make Plans to Build on Historic Assets

by Brad Schide, Connecticut Circuit Rider

Every town in Connecticut has underutilized cultural and historic assets—buildings, districts, parks, and other places that, with a little creative thinking and strategic investment, have the potential to make valuable contributions to the life of the larger community.

Beginning in 2009, the Connecticut Trust was able to look more deeply at this issue. Thanks to a generous grant from Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism (CCT), the Trust offered grants that helped three municipalities take steps toward putting some of their underutilized assets to new and better use (see CPN, November/December 2009). The grants, called Community Cultural Grants, helped the cities to analyze historic resources and, we hoped, to position historic preservation as an engine of revitalization and debunk some of the myths that characterize preservation as incompatible with economic growth.

Through a competitive request for proposal process, the Trust selected, Danbury, New London and New Britain to the

program. Each city identified historic resources it wished to enhance, and the Trust weighed the proposals based on what was actually possible with the funds available and on the potential for preservation to make a significant difference.

In **Danbury**, officials had long identified the renovation and reuse of the National Register-listed Palace Theater as a priority for downtown revitalization. The grant permitted the City to hire JCJ Architecture to coordinate an evaluation of the financial, design and market feasibility of the theater.

JCJ brought in AMS Planning and Research to examine the theater market for the city and region. A nationally known

*continued on page 6*

### In This Issue...

New Projects at the Trust	3
New on the National Register	8
Around the State	14

Making downtown Danbury more appealing will help the Palace Theater succeed.

G. Farmer

B. Schide



## From the Executive Director

This fall, activity at our office, the Eli Whitney Boarding House for Single Working Men (1827), has been front and center.

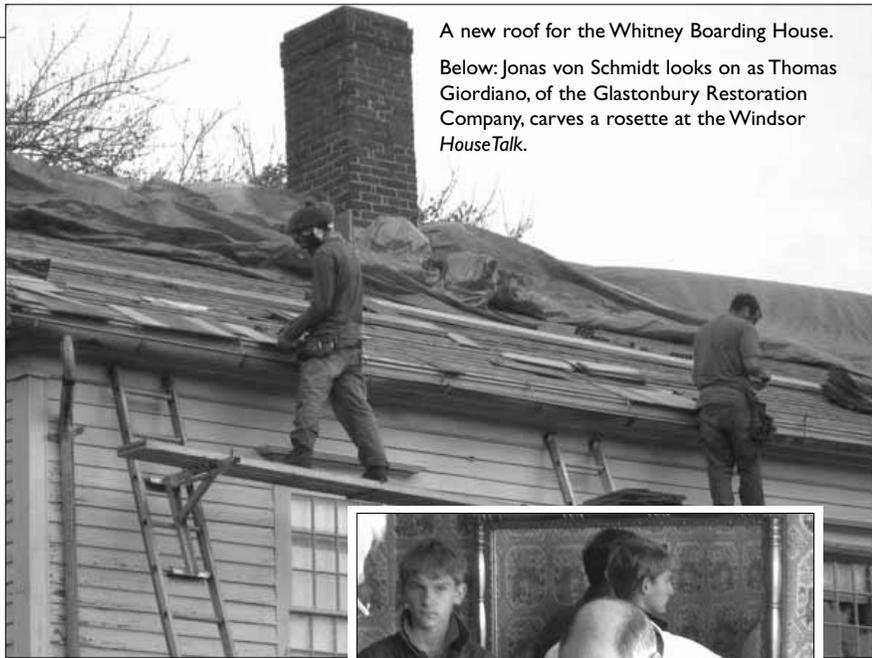
We started with a cloud of black smoke that signaled the end of life for our basement furnace and followed that with theft of all our copper piping in the basement. The good news is that we now have a new furnace, a new hot water heater (its pipes were also cut), new plastic pipes, and to top it off, literally, a new cedar roof. The roof was in the plans for the fall, not the others. Roofers from Christopher Wuerth Restoration Contractor did a fine job removing old roofing and installing yellow cedar shingles.

Since we had a plumber on site, we decided to ask Bender Plumbing of New Haven if they would donate a low-flush toilet to the Trust, which they generously did.

Next steps are insulation and then exterior restoration of the building, including painting and adding storm windows.

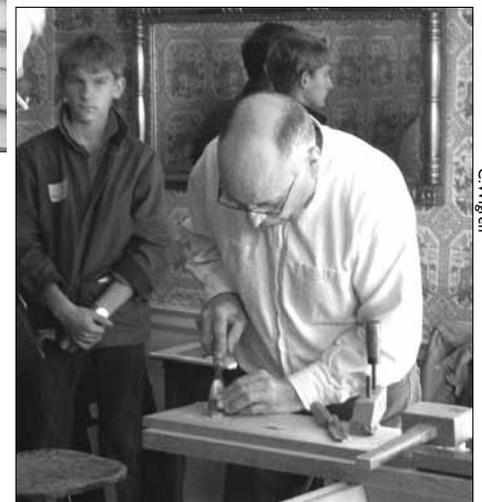
On November 13<sup>th</sup>, in association with Windsor Historical Society and the First Church in Windsor, the Trust hosted a well attended HouseTalk program at the Rev. William Russell House on the Palisado Green in Windsor. Constructed in 1755 by Windsor builder and furniture maker Timothy Loomis, the house is one of the best documented construction projects of its era. And, it is at risk of demolition. Many, many thanks to the talented panel of preservationists who entertained and enlightened us that day: Bill Hosley of Terra Firma Northeast, Rick Wies of Gregg, Wies and Gardner Architects,

G. Farmer



A new roof for the Whitney Boarding House.

Below: Jonas von Schmidt looks on as Thomas Giordiano, of the Glastonbury Restoration Company, carves a rosette at the Windsor HouseTalk.



C. Wilgen

Steven Bielitz of Glastonbury Restoration Company (and his skilled crew: Thomas Giordiano, Thomas Gasser and Rick Krynicky), Hap Shepherd from Maurer & Shepherd and Marisa Chirico from Chimney Works of Connecticut.

—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.

### Board of Trustees

#### Officers

Edmund Schmidt, Chairman, *Darien*  
William Crosskey, II, AIA, Vice-Chairman,  
*Bolton*

Jeffrey Muthersbaugh, Secretary, *Bethel*  
Edward W. Munster, Treasurer, *Haddam*  
Walter Fiederowicz, Assistant Treasurer,  
*Litchfield*

#### Additional Members of the Board of Trustees

Scott D. Bates, *Stonington*  
Serena Bechtel, *Greenwich*  
James Blansfield, *Danbury*  
Leroy Diggs, *Danbury*  
Robert Faesy, AIA, *Wilton*  
Lynn Friedman, *Madison*  
Ruth Harvey, *Glastonbury*  
Adrienne Farrar Houel, *Bridgeport*  
Charles Janson, *Darien*  
Theresa Kidd, *Haddam*  
Ralph Knighton, *Bloomfield*  
James McLaughlin, *Durham*  
Garry S. Leonard, *Madison*  
Jeffrey Morgan, *South Kent*  
Donald Poland, *Hartford*  
George Purtil, *Glastonbury*  
The Hon. Kelvin Roldan, *Hartford*  
Robert Svensky, *Southport*  
John B. Toomey, Jr., *Bolton*  
Jane Vercelli, *Thompson*  
Jeanne Webb, *Hartford*  
Richard N. Wies, AIA, *Branford*  
Douglas Williams, *Thompson*  
Hiram P. Williams, *South Kent*

### Gubernatorial Appointees

Theodore F. Ells, *Branford*  
Natalie Ketcham, *Redding*  
Edith Pestana, *Hartford*

### Advisory Council

Martha Alexander, *New Haven*  
J. Barclay Collins, *Sharon*  
William R. Crowe, *Canton*  
Jared Edwards, FAIA, *West Hartford*  
Inger Elliott, *Stonington*  
Gerald Farrell, Jr., *Wallingford*  
Mimi Findlay, *New Canaan*  
Glenn Geathers, *Hartford*  
John Herzog, *Southport*  
Lee Kuckro, *Wethersfield*  
Stephen S. Lash, *Stonington*  
Charles T. Lee, *Greenwich*  
Peter Malkin, *Greenwich*  
Cesar Pelli, FAIA, *New Haven*  
The Hon. Andrew Roraback, *Goshen*  
John W. Shannahan, *Suffield*

### Staff

Helen Higgins, *Executive Director*  
Christopher Wigren, *Deputy Director*  
Brad Schide, *Connecticut Circuit Rider*  
Gregory Farmer, *Connecticut Circuit Rider*  
Jane Montanaro, *Preservation Services Officer*  
Kathleen von Jena, *Membership and Office Manager*  
Todd Levine, *Director, Historic Barns of Connecticut*  
Charlotte Hitchcock, *Lead Researcher, Historic Barns of Connecticut*

### Connecticut Preservation News

Editor: Christopher Wigren  
Editor, *Historic Properties Exchange*: Jane Montanaro  
Graphic Design: David Wolfram, *Middletown*  
Printing: Kramer Printing, *West Haven*

Connecticut Preservation News is published bimonthly by the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, Connecticut 06517. Publication is made possible by support of the members of the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation and by funds provided through the Community Investment Act, Public Act 05-228, Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, State of Connecticut, M. Jodi Rell, Governor. The contents and opinions stated herein do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the State of Connecticut. The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation assumes no responsibility for the advertisements.

This program receives State financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin or handicap in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

© 2011, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation. All rights reserved.  
ISSN 1084-189X



Connecticut Commission  
on Culture & Tourism

### Upcoming Meetings of the Connecticut Historic Preservation Council

February 2, 2011, at 9:30 a.m.

March 2, 2011, at 9:30 a.m.

### State Historic Preservation Board

March 10, 2011, at 9:30 a.m.

All meetings take place at the Commission on Culture and Tourism Main Conference Room  
1 Constitution Plaza

For more information call (860) 256-2800

# State Grants to Fund New and Expanded Projects

On December 6, 2010, the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism (CCT) approved three grants totaling \$1.087 million to the Connecticut Trust. Funding for the three grants comes from the Community Investment Act for the State of Connecticut.

## Vibrant Communities

With this grant the Connecticut Trust will expand its successful Community Cultural Planning Project, funded by CCT's Strategic Initiative Grant funds (see page 1), to encompass ten municipalities over a two-year period. The Vibrant Communities project will have a two-year budget of \$575,000 that re-grants up to \$50,000 to each of the selected municipalities and also covers project management and administration. Using grants and intensive public/stakeholder outreach in the ten municipalities, Vibrant Communities will demonstrate that historic preservation is an economic engine that helps make our communities desirable places to work, live and play. The aim is to build a constituency, especially among community leaders and stakeholders, for using historic preservation tools to create livable communities.

Grants will be given for projects that stimulate investment in stalled historic preservation projects; for underutilized historic places/structures; and for developing town- or city-wide preservation ordinances. Projects that leverage other investment and combine arts, culture, neighborhoods and community spaces with historic preserva-

tion will be given a priority. Working closely with the CCT, the Trust will encourage applications for CCT sponsored programs like Certified Local Governments, historic rehabilitation tax credits and preservation/restoration grants, and the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

## Studying effects of local historic districts on property values

The Trust also received a grant of \$70,740 to study the economic effects of local historic districts on property values and to disseminate the study conclusions. Essential to our work in historic preservation is the ability to demonstrate that the tools of historic preservation are economically viable and contribute to the state's economic growth. This is especially true with local historic district (LHD) designations.

The CCT is currently commissioning a study of the impact of some of its historic preservation programs, especially the economic impact of the restoration grants and the historic tax credits. A detailed study of the economic effect of historic district designation on private property is a critical next step. The study will

be completely objective, evaluating both positive and negative impacts. Some districts may see an increase in property values; others may not. It is important that we gather this information, in order to understand how LHDs can be most effective.

## Historic Barns of Connecticut

The Trust received \$441,617 in grant funds to complete its ground-breaking Historic Barns of Connecticut project by January 1, 2013. Included in the grant request are funds to write the context statement for a thematic nomination of 200 barns to the State Register of Historic Places and for a final report of publishable quality that will be highlighted at a culminating statewide conference on the future of Connecticut's barns in the fall of 2012. 🌿

Visit [www.cttrust.org](http://www.cttrust.org) to follow these projects as they develop.

No Job Too Big  
No Job Too Small


**WILLIAMS GENERAL**  
**CONTRACTING**  
*Residential • Commercial*

CT Lic. # 0625160

203.848.9821  
Matthewjohnwilliams@yahoo.com

857 Totoket Rd.  
Northford, CT 06472



**17th and 18th Century  
Millwork**

Windows, Doors & Entryways  
Raised-Panel Walls  
Old Glass, Moldings  
Wide Pine Flooring  
Beaded & Feather edge boards  
Send \$4.00 for catalog.  
CUSTOM WOODWORKING

**Maurer & Shepherd Joyners**  
122 Naubuc Avenue  
Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033  
(860) 633-2383  
[www.msjoyners.com](http://www.msjoyners.com)

*"I look forward to an America which will not be afraid of grace and beauty, which will protect the beauty of our natural environment, which will preserve the great old American houses and squares and parks of our national past, and which will build handsome and balanced cities for our future."*

*John F. Kennedy - October 26, 1963*

We are proud to serve the architects, engineers and planners who are preserving the past for the future.

*Schwartz & Hofflich* LLP

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS  
FINANCIAL ADVISORS

37 NORTH AVENUE, NORWALK, CONNECTICUT 06851-3832  
(203) 847-4068 (212) 397-0090 FAX (203) 849-0624 • E-MAIL: [INFO@SHCPA.COM](mailto:INFO@SHCPA.COM) • WEB: [HTTP://WWW.SHCPA.COM](http://WWW.SHCPA.COM)  
MEMBER OF  DFK INTERNATIONAL WITH AFFILIATED OFFICES WORLDWIDE

# Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grants Awarded

In November, the Connecticut Trust awarded \$144,255.00 in Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grants. The grants will make possible a total initial investment of \$302,145.00 in these historic sites.

The grants are part of a comprehensive historic preservation technical assistance program of the Trust, in collaboration with and with generous funding from the Connecticut General Assembly, the Connecticut Humanities Council, and the Commission on Culture & Tourism, through the Community Investment Act. The grants are intended to encourage and support community efforts in planning for the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of historic buildings and places.

In the following list, "NR" means that a building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, "SR" means that it is on the State Register, "LHD" means that it is in a local historic district, and "NHL" means that it is a National Historic Landmark.

**Bridgeport, Friends of Seaside**

**Park** (co-sponsored by Black Rock Community Center): \$7,500 for a conditions assessment of Fayerweather Lighthouse located in Seaside Park. Built before 1840, it is one of the oldest remaining lighthouses in New England. (NR)

**Bridgeport, Barnum Museum:**

\$10,000 for structural and environmental assessment of tornado damage. (NR)

**Chesterfield, New England Hebrew Farmers of the Emanuel**

**Society:** \$2,500 for engineering analysis of foundation ruins of a synagogue and creamery and for some landscape planning for this state archaeological site. (SR)

**Deep River, Deep River Historical**

**Society:** \$3,755 for a capital needs assessment of the Stone House and its carriage barn. The house was built in 1840 by Ezra Southworth using local granite; it was added to in 1881 and 1899, the same year that the carriage barn was built. (SR)

**Greenwich, Audubon Greenwich:**

\$12,000 for a capital needs assessment of the Benjamin and Zebediah Mead farmhouse (c.1742) located at the Audubon Center.

**Hartford, Charter Oak Cultural**

**Center:** \$5,000 for an energy audit of the Charter Oak Temple. Erected in 1876, it was the first building in Connecticut

constructed as a synagogue and now serves as a community center in a multi-ethnic neighborhood. (NR)

**Hartford, Church of the Good Shepherd:**

\$14,750 for ADA and fire safety upgrades to the Caldwell Colt Memorial Parish House. The Romanesque Revival structure was commissioned by Elizabeth Colt and erected in 1895 in memory of her only son. (NR, NHL)

**Killingworth, Town of Killingworth:**

\$10,150 to develop a long-range plan for the use and maintenance of the Parmelee Farm by analyzing and documenting the farm's historic assets, preparing a nomination to the National Register, and determining present and future public uses.

**Litchfield, Greater Litchfield**

**Preservation Trust:** \$19,500 for a conditions assessment and feasibility study for adaptive re-use of the Old Litchfield Jail, which currently is owned by the Connecticut Department of Public Works. The GLPT hopes to support efforts to return this unique structure to productive use. (NR, LHD)

**Mystic, Mystic and Noank Library:**

\$11,000 for plans and specifications for the exterior restoration of the library. Built in 1892-1893 in a transitional style between Queen Anne and Classical Revival, the library is a prominent feature in the Mystic River Historic District. (NR, LHD)



Specializing in Historic Millwork including Windows, Entranceways, Raised Paneling, Doors & Mouldings

Over 700 Authentic Moulding Profiles IN STOCK

Antique Oak & Chestnut Flooring

CALL TODAY for our FREE Moulding Catalog on disk.

860-599-2481  
www.ExpertMillwork.com

Kronenberger & Sons Restoration Inc., founded in 1946, is a three-generation firm specializing in the restoration, preservation and adaptive re-use of period structures.

We are craftspeople, with the knowledge, skills and experience to return usability to older structures while helping them meet the requirements of the 21st century.

It has been our goal to balance passionate interest in historic preservation with level-headed professionalism.



Years of successful projects and satisfied clients are a testament to that goal.

Our clients have included museums, municipalities, architects, historical societies and homeowners. As varied as our clients, so are their projects.

They have included barns, carriage houses, covered bridges, churches, town halls and a vast array of period homes and out buildings.

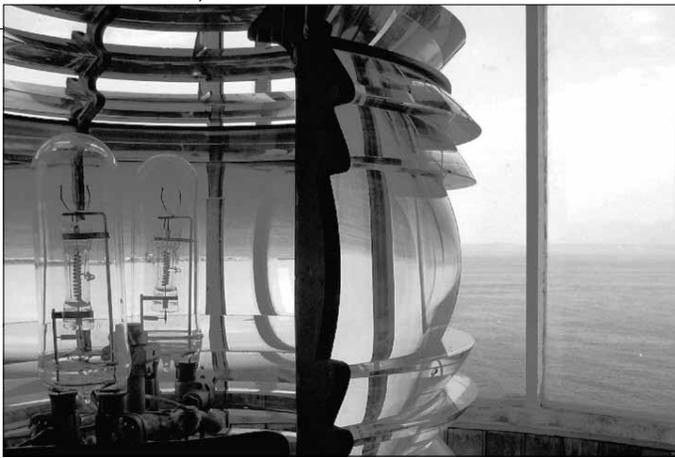
For history in the remaking, call us, toll-free in Connecticut 1-800-255-0089.

**KRONENBERGER & SONS RESTORATION Inc.**

Home Improvement Contractor #552121



KRONENBERGER & SONS RESTORATION, INC. • 175 INDUSTRIAL PARK ROAD, MIDDLETOWN, CT 06457 • 860-347-4600 • FAX: 860-343-0309 • www.kronenbergersons.com



Above: Saint John's Episcopal Church, Washington

Left: The lens at New London Harbor Light

**New London, New London Landmarks** (co-sponsored by the City of New London): \$16,000 for a conditions assessment and feasibility study of 147 & 153 Bank Street, aimed at returning these commercial buildings to active use. (NR)

**New London, New London Maritime Society:** \$4,600 for a conditions assessment and preservation plan for the New London Harbor Light (1801), the fourth oldest lighthouse in North America and the oldest on Long Island Sound. (NR)

**Town of Newtown:** \$5,000 for an energy audit of Edmond Town Hall. Begun in 1929, the building is the centerpiece of Newtown's Main Street and a center of community life. (NR, LHD)

**South Kent, South Kent School:** \$12,500 for an historic structures report of an 18th-century farmhouse on the former Beard estate. The report will be used to guide the restoration of the house and serve as the basis for involving students in its documentation, research and restoration.

**Washington, St. John's Church:**

up to \$20,000 for a conditions assessment of the exterior of the church, designed in 1917 by Ehrick Rossiter, as well as its rectory and cottage. This assessment is expected to be the first phase of an overall preservation master plan. (NR, LHD) 🌿

*For more information on Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grants, visit [www.cttrust.org](http://www.cttrust.org) or call Jane Montanaro at (203) 563-6312.*



**Prudential**  
Connecticut Realty  
98 Park Street  
New Canaan, CT 06840  
203 322-1400  
203-966-7970 x4036  
800 778-6228 x4036  
Fax 203 972-6157  
[tnissley@prudentialct.com](mailto:tnissley@prudentialct.com)



**Tom Nissley**  
Sales Executive  
(Member, CT Trust)

*"I know antique houses, and others, too!"*

An independently owned and operated Member of the Prudential Real Estate Affiliates, Inc.

**GLASS INTERIOR Storm Windows**

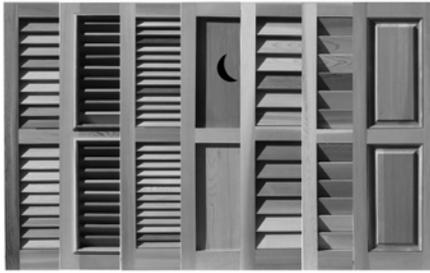


- Reduce heating & cooling bills up to 30%
- Maintain the charm & beauty of your existing windows
- Eliminate drafts completely
- Greatly reduces outside noise
- Custom sizes
- Perfect for enclosing screen porches
- Easy no tool snap in & out

**Innerglass**  
WINDOW SYSTEMS  
the better alternative

1-800-743-6207 • FAX (860) 651-4789  
15 Herman Drive, Simsbury, CT 06070  
[www.stormwindows.com](http://www.stormwindows.com)

**shuttercraft.com**  
mortise & tenon exterior cedar shutters  
any size - any style - unfinished or painted



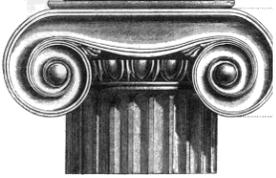
Call (203) 245-2608 - Madison, CT  
Interior & Exterior Shutter Types in all Sizes  
Free Brochure - Family Owned - Made In USA

*Over 30 Years' Experience*

**Joseph Ransohoff**  
**Antique Furniture**  
**Restoration**

(203) 606-4506

details in  
**Connecticut Trust**  
**Restoration Services Directory**



***We love old houses!***

**CHRISTOPHER WUERTH**  
RESTORATION CONTRACTOR LLC

203-430-6020 [wuerthrestoration.com](http://wuerthrestoration.com)

Licensed - Lead Certified - Insured - References



B. Schide



M. Scott

Left: The Cultural Grant study has inspired a developer to look into reviving two Bank Street buildings.  
Right: Consultants recommended restoring two-way traffic to Bank Street.

**Community Renaissance**, cont'd from page 1

marketing firm, AMS worked with the theater's owner and City to determine budgeting needs and an ownership structure. AMS concluded that the theater could be successful and have a positive impact economically, socially and culturally to Danbury and the region.

In addition to understanding the theater market, JCJ and its consultants looked at the building's rehabilitation needs. They analyzed its historic features and looked at current codes as well as the modern needs for staging, lighting, rigging and seating. JCJ has estimated the cost of rehabilitation to be \$16 million. Through the research done to date by the team, the federal historic rehabilitation tax credit appears to be

one viable source of funds for the project. Most important, the study concluded, the theater needs to find dedicated partnerships to champion its revival.

In **New London**, the City wanted a revitalization plan for an historic neighborhood—part of a larger National Register district—near the waterfront and downtown, an area with a mixture of commercial and residential buildings. Grant funds were used to hire Cecil Group, Inc., who brought in other professionals to help sponsor public meetings, interview community stakeholders, and meet public officials to establish specific steps that the City can take to make the neighborhood more functional and livable.

The consultants recommended four immediate priorities: clearly define City leadership; create a redevelopment coordinator position, ideally a joint effort by the City

and the Chamber of Commerce; focus on a short list of key properties and projects; and reconfigure circulation along Bank and Green streets.

A permanent committee has been set up to monitor the recommendations made in the study and present action ideas to the City Council and City Planning Commission. Best of all, since the report's release a developer has come forward to redevelop two key buildings on Bank Street in the study area. Working with New London Landmarks and the City, the Trust approved an Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grant to explore ways of redeveloping these properties (see page 5).

The City of **New Britain** wanted to create a preservation plan as a way to protect its downtown historic resources from demolition and unwanted development. In recent years the city has seen several significant preserva-

**GULICK & SPRADLIN**  
RENOVATION CONTRACTORS

Design/Build  
Repair  
Restoration

gulickspradlin.com  
203 996 6151

**Bring new life  
to old chimneys**

FEATURING thermocrete<sup>®</sup>, an efficient, cost effective sprayable cement system for enhancing the safety of old, unlined chimneys. It has a lifetime warranty and is tested to UL Standards. Excellent references throughout Southern New England. See our website [www.thermocreteusa.com](http://www.thermocreteusa.com)

**ERIC JACKSON CHIMNEY, LLC**  
SINCE 1982

Chimney Relining Experts • Repair and Restoration • Complete Chimney Service  
Burlington, CT 06013 • Phone/Fax: (860) 480-8212  
MEMBER, CONNECTICUT TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

**Leonard J. Baum Architect**  
401 941-1650 [www.LJBArch.com](http://www.LJBArch.com)

**For the Purist  
Center Chimney House Plans**



The City of New Britain is pursuing a preservation plans to preserve and enhance its downtown.

Left: Miss Washington Diner, New Britain



B. Schide

tion projects—the conversion of Trinity United Methodist Church into Trinity on Main, a performing arts center, by local residents; renovation of the Commercial Trust Building into senior citizen apartments and retail; and the decision by First Lutheran Church of the Reformation to restore their Gothic Revival building rather than demolishing key elements (see page 10).

The City wanted to expand on this growing sentiment for preservation. The consultant, Thomason and Associates, prepared a preservation plan that included enacting a preservation ordinance or a local historic district, a delay of demolition ordinance, and revised design guidelines. Other suggestions include new National Register nominations, public programs on historic building repair and maintenance, the creation of a preservation/economic development planning position within the city government, and a preservation web page developed and maintained by the city or a nonprofit.

An ad hoc committee was formed to review the plan and develop next steps. Early in 2011, the City and the committee will begin the process of establishing a local historic district. Follow-up is also being done on the delay of demolition ordinance.

The most significant result of these grants is not the specific recommendations, but rather the increased commitment on the part of each city's elected and professional leaders to historic preservation as a key part of their revitalization efforts. Each municipality devoted extensive time and effort to reviewing bids, selecting the consultants, attending meetings, setting timelines, organizing community process, and studying recommendations. This investment increased the cities' stake in reaching successful outcomes.

A key difference in this program is that the Trust played an ongoing role as project manager. By this involvement, we were able to connect directly with municipal and community leaders and make sure preservation remained the focus of the projects. We hope that the relationships preservationists and community leaders have built in this process will continue to affect municipal decision making in the future.

In fact, even though the grant projects are complete, efforts continue, and the Trust is still involved in each city. In Danbury, the Trust is working with the theater owner to decide on next steps, identify funding sources, and determine how to structure a partnering non-profit entity. In New London, the Trust is represented on the committee that is working to carry

out the consultant's recommendations. And in New Britain, the Trust is working with the study committee to implement the next steps, beginning with establishing a downtown local historic district.

The Connecticut Trust and the CCT have been so pleased with the results of these grants that the program has been continued and expanded under the new name of "Vibrant Communities" (see page 3). Over the next two years, the Trust will offer grants to ten towns and cities for similar preservation-based revitalization efforts. Again, generous funding from the CCT will make the work possible, and again the Connecticut Circuit Rider program will work closely with each municipality. By continuing to strengthen partnerships with municipalities we hope to help make Connecticut's towns and cities better places to live and work, and to make historic places a key part of that effort. 🌿

*Brad Schide, one of the Connecticut Circuit Riders, oversaw the development and implementation of the Community Cultural Grants. The grants were financed by the State of Connecticut using Community Investment Act funds administered by the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism.*



**PRODUCING CUSTOM MILLWORK FOR  
CONNECTICUT CONTRACTORS AND  
HOMEOWNERS FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS**

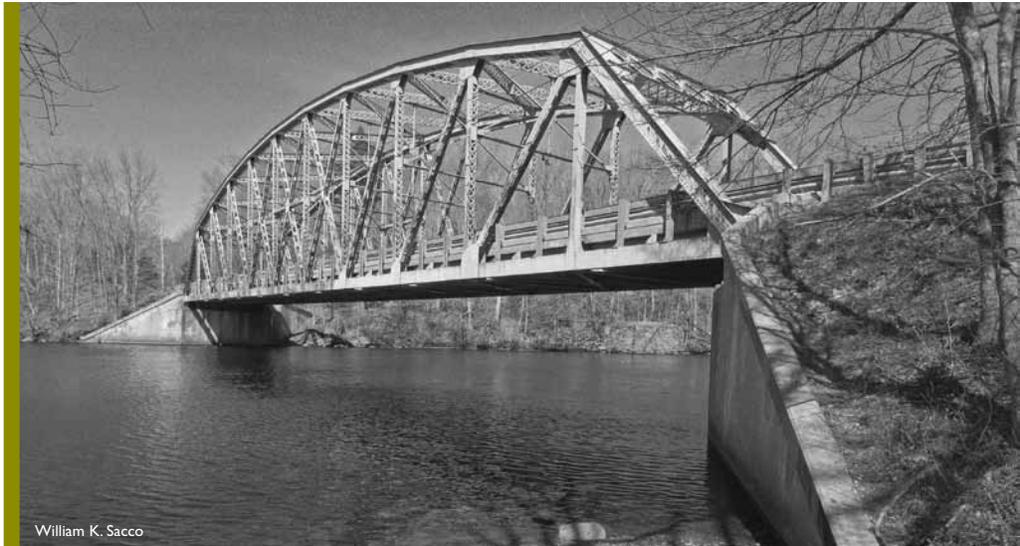
**SPECIALIZING IN PERIOD WOODWORK  
WINDOWS • DOORS • ENTRANCES  
MOLDINGS • BALUSTRADES  
PANELING • TURNING • CARVING**

**222 QUARRY HILL ROAD  
HADDAM NECK  
EAST HAMPTON, CT 06424  
PHONE: 860 267-4693  
FAX: 860 267-1611**

**WWW.JOHNSONMILLWORK.COM**

# Farmhouses to Fraternities: More than 50,000 Sites on the National Register in Connecticut

New listings on the National Register came quickly in the second half of 2010, with sites around the state, ranging from farmhouses to fraternities gaining recognition. In November, the Oxford-Whitney streets historic district, in Hartford, became Connecticut's 406<sup>th</sup> National Register historic district and brought the number of listed properties in the state to more than 50,000. Here are the latest entries, with summaries adapted from the nominations.



William K. Sacco



Cunningham Preservation Associates

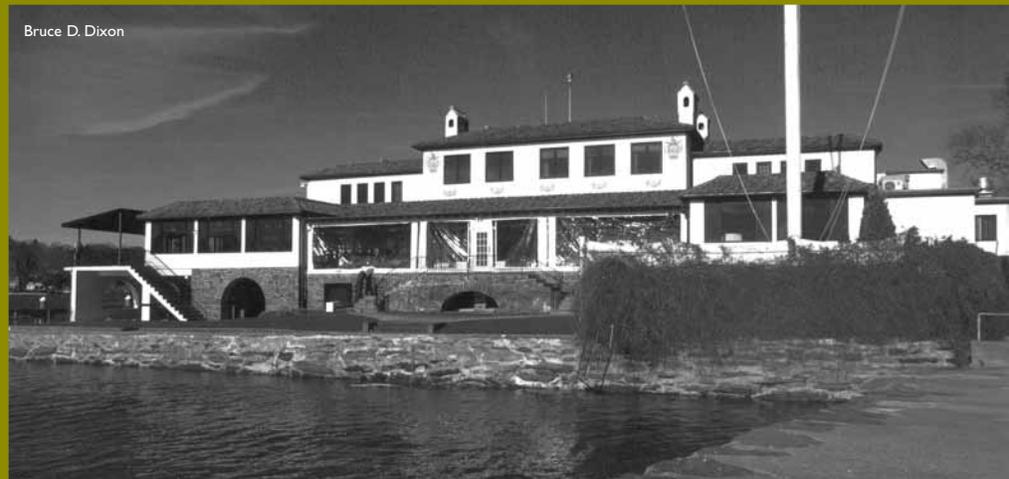
▲ **Butts Bridge, Canterbury.** Replacing an earlier town bridge over a flood-prone section of the Quinebaug River, this span was constructed by the Connecticut Highway Department in 1936, reflecting nationwide trends in establishing common standards for transportation improvements and in Depression-era public works assistance. Its truss design accommodated increasing vehicle weights and traffic volumes while using materials economically.

◀ **South Glastonbury historic district boundary increase, Glastonbury.** Listed in 1984, the South Glastonbury historic district focused on the economic and social development of that village center. Increasing the district boundaries to include the nearby farming district along Main Street adds the rural context in which that center existed. Of particular significance is the exceptional integrity of the Colonial-style farmhouses that have survived.

## Indian Harbor Yacht Club, Greenwich. ▶

Founded in 1889, this club was associated with the development of yacht racing, a sport that once was front-page news. Its members included not only famous racers but also founders and prominent leaders of regional and national yacht-racing associations. The present clubhouse, designed by Henry C. Pelton and completed in 1921, is an excellent example of Mediterranean Revival style, which enjoyed some popularity at the time despite its seeming incongruity in the cold Northeast.

Bruce D. Dixon



▼ **Underwood Computing Machine Company factory, Hartford.** By 1900, Hartford industry included national leaders in firearms, hardware, sewing machines, machine tools, and bicycles. With the arrival of the Underwood Computing Machine Company in 1909, the city evolved into a world leader in typewriter and computing machine production and development. This factory, constructed between 1917 and 1923, functioned first as a production plant and later as a research and development facility. It is one of the last surviving architectural examples of the precision industries once familiar in the city.



Lukas Karmazinas



James Sexton



Steven Bedford

▲ **Little Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Greenwich.** Founded in 1882, this was the first African-American congregation in Greenwich and a tangible sign of the changing place of African-Americans in the town. The present building, erected in 1921 on the site of an earlier structure, continues to be a religious and social center for the African-American community in Greenwich and elsewhere in Fairfield County.

◀ **Nathaniel Witherell historic district, Greenwich.** Local philanthropy aided the growth of charitable institutions in many communities in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but it was particularly notable in Greenwich because of the town's unusual concentration of wealth as a suburb of New York City. In 1909 the town established a public hospital for the treatment of smallpox, diphtheria, and scarlet fever on a 15-acre former farm. Over the years the town acquired more land and added an almshouse, a tuberculosis pavilion, a cemetery for indigent residents, and residential units for low-income elderly. Most of the buildings were designed by William B. Tubby, a prominent local architect.

► **Elam Ives house, Hamden.**

Elam Ives is credited with starting hardware manufacturing in Hamden and with mechanizing the production of carriage and harness hardware, contributing to the regional carriage industry centered in New Haven. Four of his sons followed him in manufacturing carriage hardware. The Ives house, built about 1790, is related to the "square plan" type of small houses found in New England in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. A highly unusual feature is the marking of the house's timbers with compass directions rather than the usual numerical marks. The house is owned by the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority.



James Sexton

*continued on page 10*

cont'd from page 9

**Oxford-Whitney streets historic district, ▶**

**Hartford.** An example of early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential development, this district is located in the West End, an area shaped by early suburbanization patterns that followed Hartford's economic expansion in the 1880s and '90s. While some residents were prominent in industry, commerce, or finance, the district historically has been home to a socially and economically diverse population. The houses, almost all built between 1906 and 1919, reflect the eclectic architectural tastes of the times, and include works by a number of local builders and architects.

**▼ Xi Chapter, Psi Upsilon Fraternity, Middletown.**

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the growth of fraternities paralleled the transition of Wesleyan College (now University) from denominational school to well-rounded liberal arts college. Psi Upsilon's chapter house, built in 1893, set a high architectural standard for those that followed, with yellow brick walls that set off its rugged brownstone masonry and intricate terra cotta trim. The design, more akin to an urban townhouse than institutional housing, was the work of a little-known English architect, Colin C. Wilson.



Lukas Karmazinas



Cunningham Preservation Associates

**Old Westfield Cemetery, ▶**

**Danielson (Killingly).** Established in 1728, this cemetery has generally maintained the egalitarian layout of colonial burying grounds, rather than hierarchical arrangements of later ages, in which social position determined location. Its early stones illustrate the progression of the vernacular ornamental style of funerary art that flourished in eastern Connecticut in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest stones are incised, but now generally too eroded to read. Later development brought, first, carved motifs such as soul effigies with abstracted wing patterns and double-bordered eyes, then increasing abstraction and a shift to portraiture, and, finally, the use of conventional symbols such as urns or willow trees.



J. Cunningham

**First Lutheran Church of the Reformation, New Britain. ▶**

Among the immigrants who came to work in Connecticut factories were the Swedes of New Britain, who built this monumental Gothic Revival church in 1906. Designed by the local architect William H. Caldwell and constructed of white marble with two lofty towers, it symbolizes the immigrants' success in their new home. Stained-glass windows by Henry Birkenstock Studios and paintings by a Olof Grafstrom, a Swedish-American artist, add to the church's artistic significance.



Dario Bitzaya

▼ **Oysterman's Row historic district, Rowayton (Norwalk).** ►

The village of Rowayton began as a small fishing and ship-building area, evolved into a center of the oyster business, served as a summer retreat for city dwellers, and then became a year-round suburban community. This collection of residential and commercial buildings, dating from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup>, reflects that historical evolution. Most are variants of vernacular styles common to the area, but there are also a few high style examples, built for oyster captains.



Rick Pank

▼ **Chatfield Farmstead, Woodbridge.** Dominated by a well-preserved Italianate farmhouse and terraces on its sloping site, this farmstead evokes the town's history and the role of the Chatfield family in the town's development. Much of the architectural significance derives from the exceptional barn, a vernacular architectural legacy derived from colonial custom that was enhanced and improved by late 19<sup>th</sup>-century technology. Though its form is traditional, the framing system, based on the new ready availability of uniform dimensioned lumber, simplified construction.



Cunningham Preservation Associates

James Sexton



▲ **Wall Street historic district, Norwalk.** Located at a nexus between travel by sea and travel by land, this area became the financial, commercial and governmental center of Norwalk in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. This history can be seen in the district's physical shape: a unified town center with commercial, financial and residential masonry buildings, in a variety of styles but consistent in scale. As in many small Connecticut cities, the names of the architects and builders who created the Wall Street district are for the most part no longer known.

◀ **Village Creek historic district, Norwalk.** Founded in 1949, Village Creek stands out from the many other subdivisions developed after World War II in the booming suburbs of Fairfield County. At a time when many homeowners' associations used deed restrictions to exclude certain ethnic, racial, or religious groups, Village Creek actively recruited them as homeowners. Common ownership of open spaces, design review, and emphasis on Modern architecture also set it outside the mainstream. Most of the houses were architect designed; there are also seven examples of prefabricated construction.



Tod Bryant

# Modern Houses in Connecticut

Despite its reputation for Colonial and industrial architecture, Connecticut also played an important role in the development of Modernist architecture in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In particular, Modern-style houses built in the state's growing suburbs were widely published and widely influential. A statewide thematic nomination accepted for the National Register in September will make it easier for these houses to achieve historic designation.

"Mid-Twentieth-Century Modern Residences in Connecticut, 1930-1979" is a Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF)—a document that provides basic information for an entire class of historic sites that then may be nominated individually. It saves re-writing the basic material shared by the entire class.

The Modern Residences MPDF outlines the development of Modern residential architecture in the United States, including not just architectural style but also the technological and social changes that influenced the architectural movement. The document outlines characteristics of Modern houses—including patterns of design and siting, construction methods and materials, and landscape—traces the introduction, development, and spread of Modern house-building in the state, and identifies common types of

Modern houses found in Connecticut.

Any Modern house built in Connecticut that meets the standards outlined in the MPDF document can be nominated to the National Register. The nomination will have to provide specific information about the house and how it fits the historic context outlined in the MPDF.

The MPDF was prepared by architectural historians working for Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc., a cultural resource management firm based in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, under the direction of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, in partnership with the Connecticut Trust, the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism, the New Canaan

Historical Society, and the New Canaan Preservation Alliance. The document grew out of and is based on the survey of Modern houses in New Canaan (see CPN, September/October 2009).

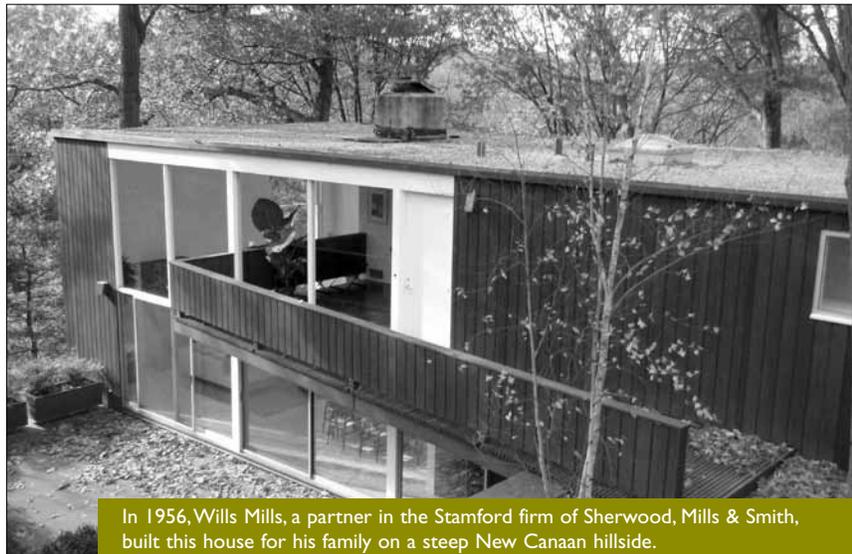
Along with the MPDF, an initial group of 18 Modern houses was listed on the National Register or the State Register (see sidebar). Future nominations will be added to document and further the preservation of this important piece of Connecticut's—and the nation's—architectural heritage.



Mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century Modern architecture radically changed the definition of building design and profoundly influenced culture in postwar America. The state of Connecticut experienced some of the earliest Modern houses designed outside of California, including the nation's first Modern country house, built in 1932. From the mid-1940s to the late 1970s... [a] creative social milieu of Modern architects, artists, and designer supported by progressive clients emerged in [Connecticut]... As a result, Connecticut's unique contribution to the development of mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century Modern residential architecture in the United States was nearly unparalleled in scope and impact.

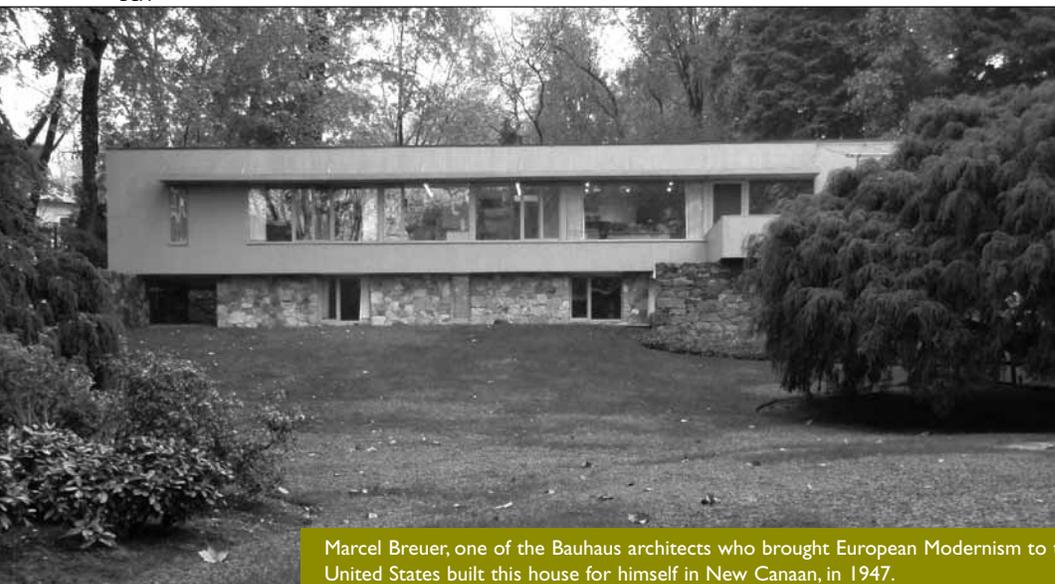
—From *"Mid-Twentieth-Century Modern Residences in Connecticut, 1930-1979"*

BCA



In 1956, Wills Mills, a partner in the Stamford firm of Sherwood, Mills & Smith, built this house for his family on a steep New Canaan hillside.

BCA



Marcel Breuer, one of the Bauhaus architects who brought European Modernism to the United States built this house for himself in New Canaan, in 1947.

BCA



A number of Modernist architects pursued prefabrication as a way of affordable housing. This New Canaan house was built in 1954 by Techbuilt, a Massachusetts company founded by architect Carl Koch.

The first batch of National Register nominations prepared under the Multiple Property Listing "Mid-Twentieth-Century Modern Residences in Connecticut, 1930-1979" are all in New Canaan. The following houses have been listed on the National Register or the State Register:

**Houses listed on the National Register**

- Marcel Breuer house II (1947, Marcel Breuer)
- Arthur and Lyn Chivvis house (1977, Eliot Noyes; 1982, Eliot Noyes and Alan Goldberg)
- Durisol house/Jens Risom house (1949, Sherwood, Mills & Smith)
- Elinor and Sherman Ford house (1954, Gates & Ford; landscape, c.1963, Friede Stege)
- Isaac Davis and Marion Dalton Hall house (1962, Pedersen & Tilney)
- John Black Lee house I (1952, John Black Lee)
- Beaven W. Mills house (1956, William Pedersen)
- Willis N. Mills house II (1956, Willis N. Mills of Sherwood, Mills & Smith)
- Charles and Peggy Murphy house (1964, 1971, Allan J. Gelbin)
- James Swallen house (1954, Carl Koch, Techbuilt; 1964, Landis Gores)
- System House (1961, John Black Lee and Harrison DeSilver; 1975 Gary Lindstrom)
- Corinne and George Liston Tatum, Jr., house (1962, Hugh Smallen; 1967, Dan Kistler)

**House declared eligible for National Register listing, but not listed due to owner objection**

- Russell Ford house (1961, Edward Winter and Russell Ford)

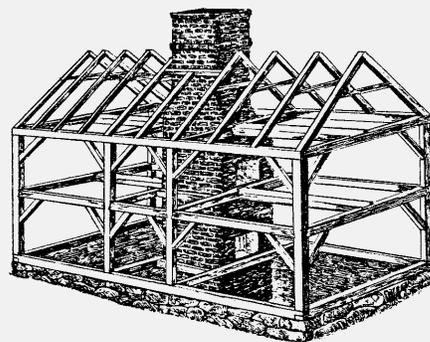
**Houses listed on the State Register**

- Arthur Brandon house (1977, Victor Christ-Janer)
- Alan Goldberg house (1952, John Johansen; remodeled, 1977, Alan Goldberg)
- Ernest and Chaillie Latham house (1967, Richard Bergmann)
- Gary and Janet Lindstrom house (1964-1976, Gary Lindstrom)
- Laszlo Papp house (1959-1964, Laszlo Papp)
- Samuel Parsons house (1964, Hugh Smallen; garage, 1971, John Black Lee)

# West River Restoration

18th and early 19th century structural repair, restoration and recreation.

Doors, windows, trim, siding, period rooms, floors, sills, framing, fireplaces, masonry, kitchens, baths, and barns.



**Thomas Linskey**  
 350 Middle Haddam Rd.  
 Portland, CT 06486  
 860-342-2289  
 860-463-1185

*"An old house craftsman dedicated to perpetuating early Connecticut architecture, one job at a time, large or small, for individuals and organizations."*

# R.J. ALEY

**The Old House Experts**  
 Westport ~ New Haven  
 (203) 226-9933  
 rjaley.com  
 CT Lic. # 570003

■ Kitchens & Bathrooms	■ Period Additions	■ Carpentry & Millwork
■ Window Restoration	■ Plaster Restoration	■ Structural Repairs
■ Repointing	■ Porches & Porticos	■ Lead Certified

C. Wigren



Rumsey Hall, in 2008

**Cornwall.**

After spending more than 20 years in preservation limbo, Rumsey Hall was demolished in late October. The temple-fronted landmark was built in 1848 as a boarding school and was listed on the National Register. After it suffered tornado damage, in 1989, and voters turned down a referendum to convert the building to town offices, in 1990, no one seemed to know what to do with the dilapidated structure. In 1990 the Connecticut Trust included Rumsey Hall in its first-ever list of the Most Important Threatened Historic Places.

Andrew Hingson, a real estate developer from Westport, raised new hopes when he bought the building from the town, in 1996, with plans to renovate and live in it (see CPN, May/June 1996). But nothing

more happened and it just continued to crumble.

In the end, the town building official deemed it structurally unsafe. A town meeting in October appropriated \$50,000 for the demolition, which the town attorney will try to recover. By Halloween, nothing was left but rubble. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway told the Waterbury Republican-American, "I'm sorry to see it go." 🌿

**Improve Your Old Wood Windows**

- Restored
- Double Paned
- Weather Stripped

**GO GREEN!**  
SAVE A WINDOW  
SAVE A TREE

**When only the original window will do!**  
Keep the beauty of your original wooden windows - and it costs less than quality wood replacement windows.

**CONNECTICUT BI-GLASS**  
When Only The Original Will Do!

**1.888.966.3937 • www.ct-bi-glass.com**

**HUDSON VALLEY PRESERVATION**

Visit us at: [www.hvpcorp.com](http://www.hvpcorp.com)  
Sherman, Connecticut (860) 355.0906

**Dream. Design. Build.**

**Preservation Circle**

- Chairman's Circle \$ 1,000
- Preservation Patron \$ 500
- Circuit Rider Sponsor \$ 250
- Heritage Partner \$ 100

**Basic Membership**

- Business \$ 100
- Non-profit/Municipal \$ 75
- Family \$ 50
- Individual \$ 40



You can join the Connecticut Trust online too, at [www.cttrust.org](http://www.cttrust.org)

**JOIN THE CONNECTICUT TRUST!**

Name  Mr.  Mrs.  Ms.  Miss \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Employer (for matching gift program) \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed (payable to "Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation") Charge my:  Mastercard  Visa  American Express

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:** 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, CT 06517-4002 Telephone: (203) 562-6312 All contributions are tax deductible.

Robert Grzywacz



The aldermanic chamber in Waterbury's newly restored city hall.

## Waterbury.

On January 1, the City and citizens of Waterbury rededicated their newly restored city hall, after a three-year, \$36 million restoration.

The building, originally opened in 1915, is the centerpiece of a civic cluster designed by Cass Gilbert and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. After nearly 90 years, however, it had fallen into disrepair. The roof and foundation were leaking, the Vermont marble fixtures and pavements were stained or badly worn, offices had been chopped up or cheaply remodeled as needs changed, and the building systems were badly outdated. After a lengthy debate and two failed referenda, the board of aldermen approved a restoration plan in 2007 (see CPN, July/August 2007).

The project included cleaning and repairing marble and brickwork, reconfiguring office spaces that had suffered numerous indignities over the years. Bringing the building into conformity with modern codes was key; in order to

keep historic halls and stairs open, two new fire stairs were inserted into the structure.

The principal public spaces, including the hallways and main stair, the aldermanic chamber, courtroom, and mayor's office, were carefully restored to Gilbert's original designs. Particularly important was the restoration of original multi-color paint schemes—the aldermanic chamber alone has more than twenty colors—by John Canning Painting Studios, of Southington. In many places, combinations of slightly varying shades subtly highlight architectural elements, while inspiring quotes are

painted on the walls to reinforce the building's civic function.

Beyond the practical needs and historic re-creation, a goal of the restoration was to enhance use of the building by the public. Taking some of Gilbert's woodwork as a starting point, new mahogany counters were installed in offices that deal with the public, such as the town clerk, the tax collector, and vital records. The project architect, Robert Grzywacz of DeCarlo

& Doll of Meriden, explained why this was so important, "Among other things this building is about the dignity of government and citizens. You're not just slouching in to pay your tax bill."

Another effort to emphasize public participation in government involved a change in the historic layout of the aldermanic chamber, where the aldermen originally faced the president's desk, with their backs to the public. At the request of Mayor Michael Jarjura, the desks were re-arranged so that aldermen will now face the public instead. 🌿

## EARLY NEW ENGLAND RESTORATIONS, INC.



HISTORIC RESTORATION  
CUSTOM BUILDING  
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Structural Repairs  
Plaster Restoration  
Painting

Many 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> century  
houses and barns available

860-599-4393  
www.WeRestoreOldHomes.com  
est. 1977

Preserving  
Connecticut  
history, one  
good story  
after another

Read, subscribe, advertise  
Find out more at  
[www.ctexplored.org](http://www.ctexplored.org)

Connecticut Explored



**Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation**

940 Whitney Avenue  
Hamden, CT 06517-4002

Phone: (203) 562-6312  
Fax: (203) 773-0107  
Email: web@ctrust.org  
Web: www.ctrust.org

Address Service Requested  
Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
NEW HAVEN, CT  
PERMIT NO. 72

“THE NOBLEST MOTIVE IS THE PUBLIC GOOD.”

—Virgil (painted above the doors to the aldermanic chamber)

Photos R. Grzywacz

**Waterbury City Hall:  
For the Public Good**

Architecture has the power to convey messages about the people who create and use it. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries that power was taken especially seriously in the design of public buildings. One of those buildings is Waterbury’s city hall, which has just been restored (see page 15). Built at the height of the Progressive era, the city hall was designed by its architect, Cass Gilbert, to be an expression of the power of democracy, the efficacy of government, and the dignity and duties of citizenship.

The building does this first through the high quality of its construction and decoration, which proclaim Waterbury’s prosperity and the value of its people. To that is added the choice of Colonial Revival design, a reference to the era of our country’s founding and therefore to the founders’ ideals, as well as to Waterbury’s own history. The final layer of messaging comes through the use of symbolism and the even more direct messages of the uplifting quotations found both outside and inside the building, which are intended to communicate the building’s function and inspire those who use it.

In restoring city hall to its original splendor, the city and people of Waterbury have rededicated themselves to the messages proclaimed by Cass Gilbert’s design.

