Schuyler Merritt said the road that bears his name was built “to enjoy as you go,” and since its first section opened in 1938 millions of people have found the Merritt Parkway to be one of those seemingly impossible things, a highway that actually is a pleasure to travel. This character has led the Merritt to be one of the few designated historic roadways in the nation. Although keeping it that way is ultimately the responsibility of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT), the Department has a dedicated helper in the Merritt Parkway Conservancy.

The Conservancy, founded by Deanne Winokur and Peter Malkin, was the brainchild of Peter Szabo, a former deputy commissioner of ConnDOT. They recognized that maintaining the Parkway’s unique historic and scenic character would always be beyond the capacity of ConnDOT alone and conceived a private organization on the model of New York’s Central Park Conservancy. Since then, the Conservancy has grown to an organization with more than 400 contributing members and a board that includes representatives of almost all the towns through which the Parkway passes. Its mission is to protect, preserve, and enhance the Parkway through a two-pronged approach of partnership and advocacy, in accordance with the Merritt Parkway Guidelines created in 1994 by the Merritt Parkway Working Group appointed by then-Commissioner Emil Frankel.

At first, the idea was that the Conservancy would focus on overseeing landscape and bridge maintenance and limiting structural changes along the Parkway. Early in its history, the organization took over the care of one intersection for a year, coordinating mowing and plant trimming and planting daffodils.

As its relationship with ConnDOT developed, the Conservancy’s focus has evolved to providing technical support to ConnDOT. In this role, the Conservancy has worked on projects such as the color study of the Lake Avenue bridge in Greenwich. Originally painted blue, the bridge was restored to its original colors, which included a black frame, dark-green vines and foliage, and gilded highlights, as seen in this rendering. The Merritt Parkway Conservancy commissioned the color study to aid the Connecticut Department of Transportation’s restoration efforts.

Photo courtesy of the Merritt Parkway Conservancy
Connecticut Trust Launches Barns Trail

Imagine a personal guided tour to farm stands, wineries, and other agri-tourism sites around the Connecticut countryside, with directions for driving or bicycling from site one to another along scenic roads. Now imagine that the tour includes added information on historic barns you pass along the way, with stories about the people who built and used them and detail about construction techniques and the changing face of Connecticut farming.

That’s the Connecticut Barns Trail, launched by the Connecticut Trust on June 7. The Trail consists of seven scenic routes in different areas across the state. Each route features barns that are open to the public, whether at working farms with farm stands, orchards, wineries, or historic sites.

Routes are designed to guide the visitor in a car or on a bicycle between these public sites, following scenic roads with landscapes accented by barns that can be seen from the road but are not open to the public. Some of these are active farms, while others are examples of the agricultural architecture that shaped the Connecticut landscape.

Guides to the scenic drives are a printed map and a free iPhone App. The print map gives an overview of the whole state and provides information about the public sites, including addresses, features, and hours of opening. The iPhone App puts the visitor on the map; in addition to the information from the brochure it offers details of the scenic routes and roadside barns along the way.

The Connecticut Barns Trail draws on the database of more than 8,500 barns that has been amassed by the Trust’s Historic Barns of Connecticut program, with the assistance of hundreds of volunteers all across the state. At least 2,000 of the entries include data on architecture, history, and use; and the Trust is currently completing the nominations of 200 of these barns to the State Register of Historic Places, giving them official recognition of their historic significance.

Funding for Historic Barns of Connecticut and the Barns Trail comes from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development. Mission Branding of New Haven designed the brochure, and Independent Software of New Haven designed and developed the iPhone App.

Look for the Connecticut Barns Trail brochure at tourism sites around the state; and download the free iPhone App at the iTunes App Store—just search for CT BARNS.

Ben Paletsky, of Morris, and Nancy Strong, of Vernon, received Barn Savers Awards, along with Chris Hopkins, of Cornwall (not pictured).
From the Executive Director

The Connecticut Trust’s long-anticipated Celebration of Barns held at historic Bushnell Farm on Friday evening, June 7, and all day Saturday, June 8, was a great success, despite a tropical storm. On Friday, more than 100 people drove through flooding roads and major traffic jams to join a lively crowd in our tent! Saturday, the sun came out and we had 140 registered, plus walk-ins, for our education sessions and the Hoedown.

We are very grateful and send our thanks to Sherry and Herb Clark, who own Bushnell Farm. Their support was considerable. Their preservation of Bushnell Farm is an outstanding example of how important the private sector can be in preserving our historic places.

We also thank the State Historic Preservation Office, DECID, for their support through our Historic Barns of Connecticut grant funded by the Community Investment Act of the State of Connecticut. Thank you to Kip Bergstrom, Deputy Commissioner of DECID, for his participation both days.

Iroquois Gas contributed significantly to the event as well as to the Barns Trail, as did The Farmer’s Cow. In addition, Farmer’s Cow donated delicious ice cream for Friday night and beverages on Saturday. Iroquois provided the much-needed umbrellas for Friday. Thank you to both.

The event would have stood still without the efervescence of WTNH-TV anchor Ann Nyberg who came dressed for a night of Farm Fun and was a wonderful master of ceremonies.

The National Barn Alliance was a great partner and many of our presenters are members of the Alliance. We thank them for coming from afar.

We were very fortunate to have Sarah True, principal of True Events, to help with detailed planning and bring to us the excellent catering firm of A Thyme to Cook from North Stonington.

Brenda Milksfay, curator of Bushnell Farm, was indispensable. From finding a podium, oil lanterns, and miscellaneous boards and tables to bringing in excellent demonstrators, Brenda was “on” all the time. And a special thanks to our new Honorary Director of Historic Barns of Connecticut, Todd Levine, who left the Trust in January but played an active role in the Celebration events, from leading the bus tour in the rain to emceeing most of Saturday.

On another subject, what do you think of our slowly moving to color for Connecticut Preservation News? Thanks to Renee Kahn of Stamford for the prodding! 🍃

—Helen Higgins

Upcoming Meetings of the Connecticut Historic Preservation Council

August 7, 2013, at 9:30 a.m. September 4, 2013, at 9:30 a.m.

All meetings take place at the State Historic Preservation Office Department of Economic and Community Development Main Conference Room 1 Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor Hartford, Connecticut For more information call (860) 256-2800
advice and historic preservation supervision. Today, the Conservancy retains a full range of professional consultants—landscape architects, arborists, architects, and bridge engineers—who review and advise ConnDOT on projects and it sponsors “extra” projects that are beyond the funding capabilities of ConnDOT. For instance, in 2009 the Conservancy, in partnership with Bartlett Arboretum, planted a demonstration garden to test plants for possible addition to the approved plant list in the Merritt Parkway Landscape Master Plan. Currently, the Conservancy is producing demonstration landscape designs to enhance Parkway service areas.

When the State contracted with a private company to renovate and manage the service areas, the Conservancy created a booklet of design guidelines (see CPN, January/February 2013). Executive director Jill Smyth and preservation architect David Scott Parker, AIA, of Southport (a Board member) meet regularly with the contractor and ConnDOT to assure the sensitivity of the project. Another Board member, Herbert Newman, FAIA, guided the company in locating and developing designs for the new gas canopies. The first service areas, in Fairfield, have been completed, and Mr. Parker and Ms. Smyth will continue to monitor work as it takes place in Greenwich and New Canaan.

The Merritt is perhaps best known and best loved for its bridges, an outstanding sampler of 1930s design choices, ranging from Neoclassical to Art Deco and designated as endangered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2010. As these face repairs and restoration, the Conservancy’s engineers, TranSystems and Jablonski Building Conservation, review plans and provide advice to ConnDOT.

In one of its most recent efforts, the Conservancy commissioned paint analysis to determine the original paint colors of the Lake Avenue bridge, in Greenwich. Researchers determined that under the current blue paint (apparently used simply because it was on hand at the time) was a subtle arrangement of dark green and black with gilded highlights, which will be replicated.

The landscape is a major focus of the Conservancy. The Merritt is, in essence, a 37-mile-long park, with the bridges serving as ornaments within this designed landscape. From that first demonstration project, the Conservancy has continued to seek ways to help ConnDOT maintain and improve the landscape. Unfortunately, safety regulations do not allow volunteers to work in the right-of-way, an early idea, so public participation through the Conservancy is by design and private funding of restoration and enhancements. Ms. Smyth speaks to community groups, such as the Federated Garden Clubs, which raised $10,000 for flowering plants along the Parkway.

Again, the Conservancy’s professional consultants are an important part of its work. The landscape architecture firm of Erskine Middeleeer Associates regularly reviews landscaping designs, removal of invasive plants, and maintenance plans. According to firm principal Sylvia Erskine, an important issue is translating the broad generalities of the Merritt Parkway Landscape Master Plan to the needs of a particular spots. The firm recently completed drawings for landscaping at the New Canaan service area to demonstrate the proper approach to doing this, starting with documentation of existing conditions, which in most cases does not exist and in the absence of original drawings provides the best available guide to the original plantings.

Although the initial vision for the Conservancy was as a private partner for ConnDOT, advocacy quickly became an inescapable part of the organization’s mission as well. The most visible incident involved ConnDOT’s plans for a massive new interchange with U. S. Route 7, in Norwalk, where the department proposed huge overpasses and a tunnel to serve a
highway that extends only three-quarters of a mile beyond the Merritt. Concluding that the new design would overwhelm the Parkway’s historic character and that ConnDOT had not adequately considered more preservation-friendly alternatives, as required by federal law, the Conservancy sued in 2005 in federal court to block the project, a suit that was joined by the Connecticut Trust, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and others. The preservationists won the suit and prevented this desecration, as it has been called.

Most advocacy efforts are less adversarial and less public. Instead, they take place as part of the Conservancy’s role of offering advice and technical assistance. In consulting on the rest areas, for instance, the Conservancy successfully advocated keeping signs at a minimum, to preserve the noncommercial appearance that is integral to the Parkway’s historic and scenic character.

Sometimes advocacy efforts reach beyond ConnDOT, as when Fairfield planning boards were considering zoning changes to permit a major commercial development on a hill overlooking the Merritt. Jill Smyth and board member Alloe Stokes, of Southport, urged residents to contest the project on the basis of its potential impact on the Parkway scenery, and the continued on page 12
Around the State

Briefly Noted

• Torrington
• Manchester
• Bristol

Montville
Norwich

New Haven
• Branford

Branford. A new future is in store for the Stony Creek Puppet Theatre (1903; NR). After standing vacant for several years, the building has been sold to The Legacy Theatre, a professional theater company with plans to renovate the building as a venue for art, music, educational, and theatrical programs. For more information, visit www.legacytheatrect.org.

Hartford. Governor Dannel Malloy, Hartford Mayor Pedro Segarra, and Senator John Fonfara toured the former Capewell Horse Nail factory (1903; NR), which has received a $2 million state grant to remove hazardous materials. The grant moves the long-vacant factory one small step closer to a new use. The Corporation for Independent Living, a nonprofit that develops low- and moderate-income housing, has secured an option to purchase the factory pending cleanup. CIL has successfully converted factories to housing in Windsor, Berlin, and Coventry.

Manchester. A town school modernization committee has recommended demolishing the Washington School (1912) for a new building. The school, part of the Cheney Brothers National Historic Landmark district, is considered highly significant for its association with the Cheney family, notable philanthropists whose silk mills dominated Manchester’s economy. Just a few blocks away, the former high school and the Bennet Academy, about the same age, are excellent examples of sensitive re-use of historic schools.
Montville. Excavation of the mikveh, or ritual bath, at the site of the Chesterfield synagogue (1892-1975; NR) has reshaped understanding of life in rural Jewish settlements at the turn of the 20th century. The study, by State Archaeologist Nicholas Bellantoni and Stuart Miller of the University of Connecticut, has shown how the small community maintained its traditional religious practices while adapting to the economic and social freedoms they found in Connecticut.

New Haven. At first, city officials wanted to demolish three crumbling 19th-century houses on Putnam Street, but preservationists convinced them that the houses were still usable. On April 29 the city held an open house of the newly rehabilitated structures, along with groundbreaking for new infill construction between them. In all, the project will add 22 new and rehabbed units to New Haven’s affordable housing stock. Funding comes from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Dodd-Frank Financial Reform Act, through the State of Connecticut.

continued on page 8
**Norwich.** The Norwich Community Development Corporation will issue a new request for proposals for redeveloping the Reid and Hughes building (1869, 1898; NR), after the city council rejected a proposal from Fairfield developer Bruce Becker, who redeveloped the Wauregan Hotel across the street. The council also commissioned a study comparing costs of completely demolishing the building versus keeping its façade, although City Historian Dale Plummer argues that demolition would actually make redeveloping the site more difficult, since it would remove the possibility of using historic rehabilitation tax credits.

**Torrington.** In early May the City decided to accept the Jacob Strong house (c.1750; SR), based on recommendations from a study supported in part by a technical assistance grant from the Connecticut Trust. The house, one of Torrington’s oldest buildings, was home in the 20th century to Paolo Abbate, a noted sculptor. Walter Lippincott, the current owner, will retain life tenancy in the property.
The Connecticut General Assembly wrapped up its 2013 session by passing two important preservation-related bills. One allows municipalities to establish historic preservation commissions; the other broadens the Historic Home Tax Credit.

In a gratifying success for the Connecticut Trust, the House and Senate both unanimously passed An Act Authorizing Municipalities to Protect Historic Properties and Districts, now PA 13-181, which allows municipalities to “protect the historic or architectural character of properties or districts that are listed on or under consideration for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places... or the state register of historic places.”

PA 13-181 addresses a critical gap in preservation protections available to Connecticut communities. State enabling legislation already allows communities to create local historic districts and local historic properties, but more than 75 percent of Connecticut’s historic buildings and sites remain unprotected. To close this gap, the Trust drafted the bill, which will function in parallel to local historic districts where they exist, or as the only preservation commission in the 91 towns and cities that do not have local historic districts but do have buildings listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places.

The Connecticut Trust is preparing a model ordinance that municipalities can follow in setting up their commissions; however, the law leaves room for tailoring commissions to a community’s specific nature and needs. This flexibility will allow towns and cities to encourage active reuse of historic properties. A 2012 study found that buildings designated as historic maintain a higher property value than those not designated. Stable property values attract new residents, businesses, and tourists to our towns and cities. We need all the incentives possible to stimulate investment in our historic buildings, rather than demolition.

The act will take effect on October 1. As enabling legislation, it depends on municipalities to adopt the new program. Preservationists must encourage their towns and cities to do so.

The second bill, SB 1131, An Act Concerning Changes to the Connecticut Historic Home Tax Credit, made modifications to the Credit, which is available to owner-occupants of historic buildings who complete substantial rehabilitation to historical standards.

Promoted by the preservation lobbying group Connecticut Preservation Action, the bill makes three principal changes to the tax credit:

- it makes the credit available statewide, not just in low-income census tracts;
- it reduces the minimum amount of money that owners must spend, from $25,000 to $15,000; and
- it increases the maximum credit per dwelling unit from $30,000 to $50,000 for nonprofits, which use this credit to provide affordable housing.

The effects of these changes will be to broaden the benefits of this underused preservation tool. The changes will take effect in October, 2014.
Connecticut Main Street Center Launches Pilot Program for Downtown Housing

The Connecticut Main Street Center (CMSC) has chosen three downtown properties to be models of adaptive use through its Come Home to Downtown pilot program aimed at bringing more housing to city centers. The program’s goal is to provide guidance and strategic tools to assist small building owners in redeveloping vacant or underutilized space into a mix of residential and retail uses. The three model buildings, all listed on the National Register, are:

**Middletown, 418-426 Main Street**, actually two adjacent structures (1866/1895 and 1868) located across the street from the owners’ long-established shop, Amato’s Toy and Hobby. They are the only 19th century commercial buildings surviving on this block in the Middletown central business district.

**Torrington, 11-21 Main Street**, a Romanesque Revival commercial block (1897) at the entrance to the downtown district. The owners, Torrington Downtown Partners, want to convert its existing apartments to smaller units to meet changing demand. In a novel venture, the partners are offering opportunities to invest in their projects through memberships; investors will get to vote on choices such as the aesthetics of renovations.

**Waterbury, 20 East Main Street**, an Art Moderne building (1930) located in the center of downtown Waterbury, and well positioned to take advantage of other revitalization efforts underway. The owner, John Lombard, currently maintains an office on the second floor and many of the ground floor spaces are full.

Now that the pilot buildings have been chosen, CMSC will work with an advisory team of professionals to provide recommendations on how the properties can be redeveloped, including financial requirements and conceptual drawings. CMSC deliberately chose buildings typical of Connecticut downtowns, with hopes that they can be models for other downtown property owners to redevelop vacant or underutilized spaces.

For more information on Come Home to Downtown program, visit http://ctmainstreet.org.
New Trustees

As of May 1, the Connecticut Trust welcomed seven new Trustees to its board. They bring a variety of experiences and interests to the Trust’s work.

Margaret Anderson (Southington) developed an interest in preservation at age ten, while helping her father dismantle, move, and reassemble an endangered barn. Thirty years later, with her father and husband she moved a threatened carriage shed to their property in the Marion historic district. Involvement with the Trust dates to in 1985, when she helped preserve Southington’s Wilcox house, and, recently, she and other local activists worked with the Trust to prevent demolition of the Andrews-Olney house. Ms. Anderson also incubates future historians by speaking on history and preservation in the Southington schools.

An architect and attorney, Sara Bronin (Hartford) is Associate Professor of Law and faculty program director of the Center for Energy and Environmental Law at the University of Connecticut School of Law. Her work focuses on property, land use, historic preservation, green building, and renewable energy, and she is co-author of Historic Preservation Law (2012). Outside the classroom, Ms. Bronin was lead attorney for the mixed-use, LEED-Platinum 360 State Street project, in New Haven. She has served on the Hartford Historic Properties and Preservation Commission and, from 2008 to 2010, the Trust’s board.

Henry Griggs (Madison) is a writer, editor, and media consultant specializing in nonprofit advocacy campaigns and the author of Strategic Communications for Nonprofits (1999, 2006). For twelve years he worked with the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a think tank focused on issues affecting low- and moderate-income people. Mr. Griggs serves on the boards of the Scranton Memorial Library, the Deacon John Grave Foundation (of which he is president), and the Charlotte L. Evarts Memorial.

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Connecticut Preservation News, July/August 2013
One of the most important issues facing the Merritt Parkway Conservancy is mitigating the effects of safety-related clear-cutting by the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

The thorniest advocacy issues involve the Parkway landscape. The original designs, by W. Thayer Chase, required a high level of maintenance—something the State could count on in the Depression, when labor was cheap. But with decades of steadily declining maintenance budgets, the landscape became more and more overgrown, and Chase’s landscape with its shaded groves and open vistas into the surrounding countryside, threatened to become a uniform and monotonous forest overwhelmed by invasive plants.

In addition to the constant need for maintenance, safety concerns increasingly threaten the Merritt. After two hurricanes and a freak snowstorm, ConnDOT this year announced a new policy of clear-cutting all trees within 30 feet of the roadway, a policy which ends up removing all other vegetation as well. The impact on the Parkway is drastic, but, as Jill Smyth points out, can be mitigated by appropriate replanting.

“Safety, of course, is paramount,” says Ms. Smyth. “But history shows clearly that safety improvements don’t have to make the Merritt less attractive. Just as the Connecticut Highway Department used landscaping to heal the scars of construction in the 1930s, DOT can use landscaping to heal the scars of clear-cutting today.” She adds that steadily urging ConnDOT to plan and carry out replanting to help blend the newly-cleared areas into the Parkway landscape is a continuing priority of the Conservancy. Other challenges face the Merritt Parkway Conservancy. At the request of community hiking and bicycling groups, ConnDOT is currently undertaking a feasibility study of a walking/biking trail within the Parkway right-of-way. While trails have been discussed on and off for decades, the Conservancy is concerned about the adverse effect of a modern paved trail, with structures crossing wetlands and grading for accessibility, cutting through the historic landscape of the right-of-way. A large salt shed and maintenance facility proposed by ConnDOT to overlook the Merritt in Fairfield is another concern, and there is always the ongoing effort of working with ConnDOT to sensitively design and carry out its continuing program of renovations to the Parkway section by section, which has been in process for years.

“It’s frustrating that a lot of the improvement projects take two years, three years, or four years,” says Ms. Smyth. “That’s the reality of DOT. The Conservancy, with contributions from concerned citizens, continues to develop a strong organization to protect this national treasure and encourages Parkway enthusiasts to join us in our efforts to keep the Merritt a special place.”

For more on the Merritt Parkway Conservancy, visit www.merrittparkway.org. To receive notices or calls to action, sign up on the “Neighbors” section.
New Trustees, cont’d from page 11

Archives. He is a member of the Madison Historical Society and the Friends of Hammonasset, and an associate fellow of Berkeley College at Yale.

Leslie King (Hamden) is a principal with Updike, Kelly and Spellacy, in New Haven, where she specializes in construction, professional liability and commercial litigation. Prior to joining that firm, she was a litigation associate in the professional practices group at Donovan Hatem, in Boston, where she was responsible for the defense of design professionals including architects, engineers and landscape architects. She also represented clients on general liability matters involving product liability claims, wrongful death and indemnity claims. Ms. King also provided loss prevention and contract review and drafting services to clients.

Matthew Peterson (Guilford) is a partner in the New Haven office of Carmody & Torrance, LLP, specializing in estate planning, estate administration, and litigation involving all areas of probate law. In addition to the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Mr. Peterson serves on the boards of the Connecticut Estate & Tax Planning Council, Inc. and Faulkner’s Island Light Brigade. He is a past President of the University of Connecticut School of Law Alumni Association, Inc., and has served on the boards of the Neighborhood Music School in New Haven and PLAN of Connecticut, Inc., an organization providing trustee services for disabled individuals.

A native of Texas, George Schoellkopf (Washington) has gardened since childhood. For many years he ran a gallery in New York specializing in American antiques and folk art. Mr. Schoellkopf now divides his time between Santa Barbara, California, and the 18th-century Hollister house, in Washington, where he has created an American interpretation of classic English gardens, formal in its structure but informal and rather wild in its plantings. He has written on gardening for Town & Country, House & Garden, House Beautiful, and Rosemary Verey’s The American Man’s Garden.

Myron Stachiw (Woodstock) is a visiting lecturer in Historic Preservation at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and a consultant in social and architectural history and historic preservation. He spent 2004 to 2012 in Ukraine, first as a Fulbright Scholar, teaching and researching “cultural rescue” of traditional culture in the territories irradiated by the 1986 Chornobyl nuclear accident, and then as Director of the Fulbright Program in Ukraine. Before that he worked as an archaeologist, historian, architectural historian, and museum professional. Mr. Stachiw served on the Trust’s Board from 2002 to 2004.

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Connecticut Preservation News, July/August 2013

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The architectural profession has a class system, which may most simply be divided into Big Names and Lesser Names. Big Names tend to have nationwide or even worldwide practices and they get the bulk of the attention, in professional publications while they are alive and in histories after they have died. Lesser Names may be published occasionally, but they stand in their colleagues’ shadows. Nonetheless, since their practices tend to be regionally focused, they often play a more important role than the stars of the profession in shaping the character of a particular place.

One of those Lesser Name architects was Ehrick Kensett Rossiter (1854-1941), who left his mark on western Connecticut where he designed country houses and institutional buildings in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Rossiter is fortunate to have received more attention than most of his peers, thanks to the Gunn Library and Museum in Washington, where he had a country home and which has the greatest concentration of his works. The museum mounted an exhibition of Rossiter’s Washington works in 1999, accompanied by a small book by Alison Picton. In 2006, it put out a larger, lavishly illustrated volume of Rossiter’s Washington houses, by Stephen Ketterer.

Now, Ann Y. Smith has looked beyond Washington to give a complete account of Rossiter’s life and career. Ms. Smith, a museum consultant and historian, and former director of the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury, examines Rossiter’s career both chronologically and through several themes that run through his work—relationships with clients, choices of style and image, and building for modern life. This last topic includes the influence of changing lifestyles and new technology on architecture, an increasingly appreci-
ated subject. Ms. Smith’s job was made particularly difficult by the loss of Rossiter’s office papers, forcing her to assemble fragmentary evidence from a wide number of sources over many years.

Rossiter blended the older image of the architect-as-artist with the professionalism that emerged in the late 19th century. His father, Thomas Pritchard Rossiter, was a well-known painter of the Hudson River School, which celebrated the American landscape. His influence can be seen in his son’s early picturesque designs and lifelong interest in the relationship between building and landscape. It can also be seen in Rossiter’s book, *Modern House Painting* (1882, written with his partner, Frank Wright), which offered guidance on the subtle and rich color combinations then in style.

At the same time, Rossiter was one of the early graduates of the first four-year professional program in architecture in the United States, at Cornell. This preparation helped him and his contemporaries meet the demands of an increasingly complex society and incorporate new technological advances in building construction and systems.

Ms. Smith makes the important point that Rossiter was not just a Connecticut architect. Working in partnership with Frank Ayres Wright (1880-1910) and John Muller (1913-c.1930), he always kept his office in New York and drew clients from the city as well as the entire region around it. The result is a vivid picture of an architect who skillfully provided a bridge between the Big Name style-setters and ordinary clients. For readers specifically interested in Connecticut buildings, this sets Rossiter’s and other architects’ works in a broader context.

Thanks largely to earlier attention, Ehrick Rossiter is one of those local designers who have become “brand names” known to every real estate agent. This book shows why he deserves that recognition. One hopes it will inspire similar studies of other designers, demonstrating that Lesser Names are not necessarily lesser architects.

Manchester’s East Cemetery was established in 1751 and over the years it gradually grew to 51 acres, following subsequent fashions in cemetery design on the way: irregular rows in the oldest section, followed in turn by a rectilinear grid, Romantic meandering paths, and easy-maintenance rows.

Off in one corner of the cemetery, the privately-owned Cheney Cemetery is a world of its own. Its occupants are the family who owned and operated the country’s biggest silk mills. A big multi-generational clan which produced inventors, businesspeople, writers and artists and philanthropists, the Cheneys touched every aspect of Manchester’s life for more than a century.

From the outside, their cemetery is scarcely recognizable as a burial place; the thick band of trees and shrubs could almost be a leftover woodlot that somehow escaped development as the town grew up around it. But follow a narrow path through the dense foliage and you find that it surrounds an open lawn dotted with small clumps of trees or shrubs, like a secluded glen in some distant forest. Giant hemlocks ring the opening, while laurel, rhododendron, and yews muffle the traffic noises. In the center, a young oak replaces the huge maple that dominated the space until it succumbed in 2012.

At first you don’t even notice the gravestones. All roughly the same size and shape and half-hidden in the greenery, they bespeak the same modesty seen in the lack of a grandiose central monument or an imposing gateway. The luxury product here is space, not marble, and the message proclaimed is artistic sensibility, not individual achievement—a vision of death as peaceful re-absorption into Nature.

Unfortunately, the author of this serene glade is unknown. A likely candidate is the architect and landscape designer Charles Adams Platt, a Cheney cousin who designed some of the family mansions and their gardens and who is buried here among his relatives. The cemetery’s naturalistic design is nothing like Platt’s usual formal gardens with their symmetry and strong axes, but its restraint and sensitivity are the same qualities that underlie his works—family traits that also shaped the Cheneys’ remarkable industrial community in Manchester.

The Cheney Cemetery is located in the northeastern corner of East Cemetery, at East Center and Porter streets in Manchester.