Looking for Connecticut’s 17th-Century Settlers

Brian D. Jones, Connecticut State Archaeologist

Sites reflecting the arrival and settlement of the Dutch and English in Connecticut remain very poorly documented. This period was therefore selected as a particularly important focus for research-directed excavations by the Office of State Archaeology (OSA). In the summer of 2015, OSA undertook three archaeological surveys aimed at identifying 17th-century sites in the towns of Windsor and Glastonbury. The three sites discussed here are the Windsor Meadows site, the Windsor Palisade site, and the Lt. John Hollister site in Glastonbury.

The Windsor Meadows site is located south of Plymouth Meadow along the bank of the Connecticut River. Plymouth Meadow, lying on the river terrace east of Loomis Chaffee School, is believed to have been the location of the first English settlement in the state. This small 1633 settlement was primarily established as a trading post by enterprising Plymouth Plantation men under William Holmes. It is said that Holmes and his crew carried with them a prefabricated structure which was rapidly “clapped up” and fortified with a palisade in late September of that year. They had consciously positioned themselves to intercept trade north of the Dutch Fort of Good Hope, established earlier that same year at the present-day site of Hartford. While the Dutch were not pleased about this English encroachment, there was little they were able to do to prevent it, and in the following years settler families from Massachusetts began arriving in significant numbers.

I selected this location at the north end of Windsor Meadows State Park because of planned trail and utilities work in the

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Although several states have created approaches for protecting archaeological resources, Connecticut is the only state that has a State Archaeological Preserve program. Established in 2001, this state-sponsored program sets up public-private coordination for the recognition and preservation of the state’s diverse archaeological heritage. Preserve designation provides regulatory protection and the technical guidance of the State Historic Preservation Office regarding short and long-term management of significant archaeological sites.

Between 2001 and 2010 thirty-one sites were designated as State Archaeological Preserves. After that, the program languished, but it has been successfully revived with the addition of five newly-designated preserves. The Friends of the (Connecticut) State Archaeologist, in partnership with the State Historic Preservation Office, researched and designated five industrial archaeological resources that range from aboriginal stone working to Cold War military complexity.

The Walt Landgraf Soapstone Quarry, located in People’s State Forest in Barkhamsted, recognizes Native American quarrying and processing of soapstone (steatite) bowls, associated debitage (waste material), quarrying tools, and a quartzite workshop that have been identified across the Ragged Mountain landscape. The manufacture of soapstone bowls and other vessels in Connecticut was confined to a period between 3,750 and 2,750 years ago. The seemingly abrupt change to manufacturing such labor-intensive cooking vessels has raised many questions about whether this technology was brought to southern New England by migrating groups, acquired through contact with neighboring people, or developed in place as an adaptation to a changing environment. The quarry has been remarkably undisturbed since it was abandoned and offers important insight regarding the procurement, processing, and finishing of these unique Native American artifacts.

The Charcoal Mound Site, also located within People’s State Forest in Barkhamsted, is a rare surviving, unharvested early 20th-century example of the once ubiquitous rural charcoal-making activities associated with the iron furnaces located in Connecticut’s northwest hills. Colliers (charcoal makers) were prevalent throughout the surrounding mountains. They would pile cut hardwood logs, particularly oak and chestnut, into structured mounds, cover them with wet leaves or ferns, and then top the mounds with a final layer of sod and twigs. The wood inside would burn slowly at a consistent temperature maintained by active venting and stirring. The resulting charcoal was harvested and literally fueled Connecticut’s iron industry. For whatever reason, the People’s Forest Charcoal Mound was left intact and remains as a unique survivor and industrial remnant of the Litchfield Hills iron industry.

The Gail Borden Condensed Milk Factory archaeological complex in Burr Pond State Park in Torrington recognizes the ruins of the first commercially successful condensed milk factory (1857-1874) in the United States. Gail Borden was interested in developing a method to develop non-perishable foods that could be transported over long distances without spoilage. He experimented with various processes to dehydrate and condense juices, meats, and ultimately, milk. The process Borden developed for condensing milk is considered a significant event in the dairy industry and made canned milk a part of every pantry. The factory site he chose in Torrington made use of an existing factory which burned down after Borden relocated his manufacturing operations. The remains of the tri-level stone factory foundation, wheel pit, and other associated features are still visible.

Located within Bluff Point State Park in Groton, the Midway Railroad Roundhouse Archaeological Complex was an important maintenance facility (1904-1939) of the consolidated New

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From the Executive Director

There’s lots new in Old Lyme. The community, its history, cultural institutions, and estuary have been a focal point for me these last few weeks. I want to share my impressions of the community’s early work to have a say in potential plans by the Federal Rail Administration to run an industrial-grade high-speed-rail corridor across the Old Lyme National Register District. Based on currently available mapping, that route would run through the grounds of Lyme Academy of Fine Art, among other local impacts.

There’s likely a temptation to dismiss the Federal Rail Administration’s evaluation of new high speed rail corridors as too costly and too long in the future for Connecticut communities to worry about now. However, staff and board at the Connecticut Trust believe advocacy at this earliest possible stage of federal planning and assessment is critical to protecting historic resources in communities along the proposed routes. And Old Lyme is leading the way.

In late January, I was down in Old Lyme to catch the last weekend of “The Artist in the Connecticut Landscape” exhibit at the Florence Griswold Museum. It was a stunning introduction to the width and breadth of artists’ efforts to capture Connecticut’s varied and evolving landscapes.

The Florence Griswold house was also a revelation, and my conversation with a docent gave my first visit there a larger perspective. Whether enjoying the house, galleries or views of the Lieutenant River, it is hard to imagine that the Griswold home and grounds once hung in the balance of sale to an unsympathetic private owner. Or that the assembly of buildings, art and setting we enjoy in 2016 was achieved only through a remarkable effort—dating to the 1930s—to protect and reassemble the immediate landscape that was central to the arts colony that thrived there in the early 1900s.

Beyond the boundaries of the Griswold Museum, Old Lyme has itself been patiently assembled and protected over the years. It is a remarkably unique place on the New England coastline, possessing an integrity of history, environment and cultural assets that are nationally and internationally recognized.

That integrity and significance is now in the crosshairs of one of three proposed alternatives for new high-speed-rail corridors across Connecticut, as the Federal Railway Administrations seeks to cut travel times between Boston and Washington. Their goal for Connecticut? Straighter, shorter, faster routes across our state.

For the coastal route alternative, that objective means putting high speed train service on an entirely new alignment in eastern Connecticut, leaving the curvy coastline for the straight shot of the Interstate 95 corridor between Old Saybrook and the Rhode Island border. A new rail bridge over the Connecticut River would make Old Lyme the gateway to a new I-95 rail corridor alignment.

My first and continuing impression? Old Lyme is absolutely the wrong place to make the gateway of a new high-speed rail corridor in eastern Connecticut. It is hard to imagine that planners and consultants overseeing this project did not recognize the density of historic, cultural and environmental resources in Old Lyme when they drew their first lines on the map for Alternative 1.

Working in partnership with a diverse array of local residents, organizations and municipal officials, the Connecticut Trust is committed to protect the varied resources of Old Lyme. As a statewide preservation advocacy organization, that commitment extends to other communities and historic resources along the alternative I-84 and I-91 corridors as well.

We’ve set up a web page to publicize and track this issue in detail (http://cttrust.org/cttrust/page/cec-high-speed-rail1) and hope you will make use of this resource as this federal project proceeds. We welcome your local analysis and input in order to be effective on this issue statewide. Please be in touch!

—Daniel Mackay
dmackay@cttrust.org
Sometimes needed government construction projects unavoidably destroy historic structures or archaeological sites. In those cases, preservationists try to find out as much as possible from those sites, so that future generations will have access to that information. One recent case involved a project by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (ConnDOT) to relocate Edmond Road in Newtown.

Before work could begin, federal and state laws required ConnDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), which is funding the project, to consider the project’s potential impact on historic properties. A preliminary archaeological survey was conducted within the limits of the project because the proposed new road alignment was in a relatively undisturbed area. Remains of a mill race, dam, foundations, and a well were identified within the new alignment.

Archival research revealed that the mill was operated by the Sanford family in the 1850s and 1860s. The first mention of the mill is a lease from Josiah Sanford to Charles Walker dated

This photographic map shows the Sanford Mill Site, which was documented before it was destroyed by a road-building project of the Connecticut Department of Transportation.
March 13, 1845, in which Walker agreed to pay a yearly rent of $40 for a “piece of land situated at said Newtown for the purpose of Erecting an Iron foundry …” This reference may indicate the origin of the name Foundry Pond. However, it is uncertain if the foundry was ever built.

Josiah Sanford died in July 1851, and the property passed to his sons Henry and Frederick. Probate documents mention the “present dam” along with “a factory and other buildings there on & to the water wheel shafting, gearing, steam engine bodies, and all other fixed machinery connected with said factory…”

It appears from other sources that Frederick and Henry were engaged in the manufacture of hatting felts by the early 1850s, joined for a time by their other brother Julius. Frederick later leased the factory to Hon & Mitchell, a Boston-based wool hat manufacturer, who operated the factory until it was destroyed by fire in 1867.

Hat making was a common way of earning a livelihood in early-19th-century Newtown. The Hattertown National Register district, located about seven miles south of the Sanford Mill Site, contains houses, barns and a blacksmith shop, all developed around the hatting trade. However, like most sites in the town, Hattertown dates from an earlier era, when hat making was primarily a cottage industry. The Sanford Mill Site dates to the latter part of the town’s hatting industry, which began declining in the 1840s and may be unique in representing a larger-scale enterprise.

Following the destruction of the factory, the mill pond was used for commercial ice harvesting into the early 20th century. A series of photographs dated 1904 show workers harvesting and storing ice on Foundry Pond. In the background is a large barn or “ice house” adjacent to the pond.

The Sanford Mill Site is located along Tom (Foundry Pond) Brook. The complex includes a stone dam, a mill race along the north bank of the brook, two foundations, and a well. The dam measures nineteen meters long by three meters wide. The mill race is a ditch that runs from the northeast end of the dam, southeast for approximately 85 meters to Structure 1’s foundation.

Structure 1, likely a mill, is an L-shaped masonry foundation capped with concrete measuring approximately ten by four meters. A test pit excavated within the foundation revealed remnants of a concrete shelf that lined a portion of its interior. The test pit also uncovered a concrete pipe above the concrete shelf, which likely served as drainage for a catch basin or wheelhouse. Structure 2 is located about fifteen meters south of Structure 1. Remnants of Structure 2 include two concrete footings and a stone wall measuring five meters long and fifty centimeters wide. North of Structure 2 is a slate-capped well with a concrete capstone.

Archaeological testing around the Sanford Mill Site largely revealed modern trash deposited by runoff. Two test pits excavated near the well yielded whiteware, cut nails, and eight porcelain buttons from the mid- to late-19th century that could be associated with the mill complex. However, much of the site had been disturbed and contains very limited archaeological integrity.

Because of its association with Newton’s hatmaking industry, the Sanford Mill Site is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Since road construction could not avoid the site, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and FHWA determined that the project would have an unavoidable adverse impact on an historic property. To mitigate this adverse impact, SHPO asked that the site be photo documented and the history of the mill and site information be made available to the public through a report and articles.

Mitigation for transportation projects can provide us with historical insights into places that might not otherwise be subject to academic investigation. Although the Sanford Mill site will be lost, this site documentation and associated research preserves its memory while allowing the Department of Transportation to improve our state’s roads for today’s travelers.

The full report, “Phase I Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey and Phase II Intensive Survey and Site Documentation, Proposed Relocation of Edmond Road and Improvements to Route 6, Newtown, Fairfield County Connecticut,” is available upon request to mandy.ranslow@ct.gov.
area, and because of its proximity to the expected location of the Trading Post. I was also prompted by Mary Brown, a member of the Mayflower Society, who suggested that this might be a good place to look. Earlier efforts in the 1960s and 1970s to find evidence of the Trading Post at Plymouth Meadow had proved futile.

Before standard shovel test pit excavations began, I invited Kevin McBride and his team of Pequot War investigators to use their metal-detecting skills at the site. Over a two-day period, a large number of metal finds were carefully mapped.

Most of these artifacts, including buttons, nails, a fish hook, lead shot and a muskrat trap, reflect 18th- through 20th-century agricultural, hunting and recreational use of this river bank location. However, three artifacts likely date to the 17th century. These include a steel strike-a-light, a brass triangular arrow point, and a small brass finger ring. I interpret these finds as very subtle evidence of a short-term Native American encampment, probably associated with the nearby trading post.

where these goods were likely attained. Unfortunately, the subsequent archaeological excavation was unable to identify additional associated materials.

A second field school was conducted for the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History at two locations within the Pequot War-era (1637) Windsor Palisade. The palisade enclosed a roughly 28-acre area along Palisado Avenue just north of the Farmington River. We used ground-penetrating radar (GPR) to determine if trench features associated with the construction of the palisade could be found. The results of this survey were ambiguous, and it was determined through excavation that one yard along the Farmington River had been significantly graded, probably destroying any buried remnants of the palisade features in this area.

While investigating the original lot belonging to Pequot War veteran Captain John Mason, we unexpectedly located a long-buried and forgotten cellar. Artifacts from the cellar indicated that it belonged to a house occupied from the mid-17th through mid-18th centuries. Matthew Grant’s 1654 plan of the “palisado plot” refers to this location as the “Marshel” lot, indicating Mason had sold the property by this time. Finds included a dense assemblage of domestic household debris, including straight pins, English and German stoneware, delftware, slip-decorated earthenware, clay pipe fragments, lead window came, glass shards, plaster, saltwater shellfish, abundant animal bone and a 1662 two-pence. While most of the finds post-dated John Mason’s ownership of the parcel, one small clay pipe bowl was probably discarded about 1640, and could well have once belonged to him.

The final site examined this summer was the Lt. John Hollister farm, located in South Glastonbury. Hollister’s farm was purchased by about 1651, with an existing house and barns, making it one of the first locations in Glastonbury to have been settled by the English. Hollister, a wealthy and influential man, leased the property to the Gilbert family until it passed to his son, also John, in 1665. John Hollister, Jr., occupied the site until his death in 1711 during which time he had eight children. Local town history suggests the site was abandoned shortly thereafter. The site is currently under a horse pasture owned by a descendent of the Hollister family.

We again utilized ground-penetrating radar to evaluate the site prior to excavation. In this case, our expectations were greatly exceeded. The alignment of three very distinctive buried cellars strongly suggests they were once part of a single very large house. Another cellar, well features, and a number of very large probable posts can be seen running across the site. The farm is known to have been fortified during the 1675 King Philips War, and some of these post features may represent portions of a palisade. Taken together, the radar mapped features indicate the presence of an extensive farm complex.

A small excavation was conducted during a single day for the Glastonbury Historical Society’s archaeology program. Despite the limited work there, the site produced a concrete sample of 17th-century artifacts, including green window glass fragments, globe and shaft bottle glass, a gunflint and flint flakes, lead glazed earthenware and early English stoneware. Most telling of the site’s age were a number of clay pipe stems that have very large bore diameters indicating manufacture before about 1650. Further work at this very significant site is being scheduled for the spring and summer of 2016.

The record of Connecticut’s early colonial life remains very poorly understood. The historical documents, consisting
Archaeology in Connecticut

primarily of land transactions, probate records, and legal papers, tell a very limited story about the day-to-day lives and struggles of the English families that first settled here. The archaeology of this period has been relatively well documented in other early colonial settlements like Virginia and Maryland, but the record for New England remains extremely sparse. Very basic questions remain regarding mundane issues like dress, diet, tablewares, and in particular architecture and overall farmyard organization. It is very likely that sites such as the Lt. John Hollister farm will greatly clarify our currently shrouded view of this critical period of American colonial history, and I am sure we are in for some interesting surprises.

The challenging search for evidence of Connecticut’s 17th-century past underscores a number of important preservation concerns. While residential and industrial sites from this period are expected to be much lower in number than those of the subsequent 18th and 19th centuries, the historic record indicates that hundreds of families occupied a number of core communities during this first century of settlement. Unlike their counterparts in Virginia and Maryland that suffered significant Indian attacks and disease-related mortality, the early Connecticut settlements grew rapidly. History therefore indicates that the towns of Windsor, Hartford, Wethersfield, Glastonbury, New Haven, Old Saybrook, and Fairfield still harbor a very rich, but hidden, record of 17th-century life in the state. Unlike the uncommon examples noted above, most archaeological sites of the period have been significantly impacted by later development in these core communities.

However, the buried cellars of hundreds of family households certainly still lie beneath our feet, awaiting discovery. These delicate time capsules of 17th-century material culture are under constant threat of construction activities, ranging from utility lines to backyard swimming pools. Municipalities in the state’s oldest communities should therefore make every effort to have archaeologically sensitive areas professionally surveyed prior to ground disturbing actions in these core settlement areas.

For more on the Office of State Archaeology, visit www.cac.uconn.edu/osa.html.

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The towns of Windsor, Hartford, Wethersfield, Glastonbury, New Haven, Old Saybrook, and Fairfield still harbor a very rich, but hidden, record of 17th-century life.

—Brian Jones, Connecticut State Archaeologist
Around the State

Briefly Noted

Derby. ►
The destruction of the town’s oldest house highlighted the need for preservation protections and incentives before historic properties are threatened. The Samuel Bowers-John Durand house (c.1686)—popularly known as Brownie Castle after a 19th-century owner—was razed by its owner in late January. Writing in the Valley Independent, Derby preservationist John Poole commented, “Unfortunately, this home had no legal protections as an historic resource. The City of Derby now has some work to do if it’s serious about conserving its remaining historic building stock, including implementing a demolition delay ordinance, as well as a municipal-wide historic preservation ordinance, similar to the one recently enacted by the City of Milford. And hopefully, private owners of historic properties will give consent to National or State register nominations for their buildings, which, in addition to affording better long-term protection against future demolition, also carries other benefits, such as eligibility for state or federal historic tax credits.”

Hartford. ►
In January the City of Hartford adopted new zoning regulations, the first major overhaul in nearly 50 years. In an email, zoning commission chair Sara Bronin (a Trustee of the Connecticut Trust) explained that the new regulations incorporate form-based zoning, which regulates the forms of buildings as well as uses. This kind of zoning is intended in part to ensure that new development in historic areas is compatible with existing fabric. In addition, the new regulations provide incentives for rehabilitation of historic properties through lower parking requirements and expanded options for uses in some areas, mostly industrial heritage areas such as Parkville, which recently was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Planning consultant Toni Gold wrote in the Hartford Courant, “Instead of incrementally shaping the city the wrong way, the new code enhances the historic city by regulating new building form and siting as well as use, preserving and enhancing neighborhood character and combating the highway commercial sprawl previously allowed on neighborhood main streets.” The towns of Hamden and Simsbury also have adopted form-based zoning.
New Canaan and Stamford.

The Connecticut Department of Transportation is wrapping up its second season of work on twelve Merritt Parkway bridges in these towns. In addition to necessary repairs and maintenance, the Department has been restoring decorative elements that have been lost over time. At the Rippowam River Bridge (pictured), an original state seal had weathered to the point of failure. After verifying the appearance of the lost ornament using archival photographs and drawings, a new seal was created and installed. Care was taken to replicate the color, texture and white quartzite aggregate of the original seal. Similar work was conducted to replicate ornamental cast-iron rosettes that had been lost from the railing of High Ridge underpass. ConnDOT has been working with the Merritt Parkway Conservancy, which has provided technical assistance in analyzing paint coatings to verify original colors and finishes. Future restoration work is planned for other bridges on the Merritt.

—Mark McMillan, ConnDOT

New Haven.

Yale University's associate athletics director, Steve Conn, said in December that the field at Yale Bowl (1913; NHL) will remain grass for the present, according to reports in the Yale Daily News and on WNPR radio. Conn didn't say whether the university had changed its mind or whether the reported plans to install artificial turf were mistaken.

New London.

In November, the City Council chose Water’s Edge Resort & Spa, of Westbrook, as the preferred developer for the Lighthouse Inn (1902; NR). Michael Dattilo, principal of Water’s Edge and of the Copper Beech Inn in Ivoryton, proposed renovating the inn with a restaurant and guest rooms and building up to 30 townhouses on the 4.2-acre property. The City is continuing negotiations with Mr. Dattilo, who asked for 15 years in tax abatements and waiver of a water bill. The City is requiring that renovations be completed within eighteen months of obtaining land-use approvals. The building, originally the summer home of industrialist Charles S. Guthrie, became an inn in 1927 and closed in 2008.

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Around the State

Rockville.

One of the earliest reinforced-concrete textile mills in New England, the former Roosevelt Mill (1906; NR) reopened in October as Loom City Lofts. In a process that took eight years, developers Joseph Vallone and Marc Levine cleaned up contamination and convert the building to 68 apartments plus commercial space. Federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits helped make the conversion possible.

“The community is thankful to see the splendor of this historic building come back to life,” state Rep. Claire Janowski (D-Vernon) said at the dedication. “It brings a beacon of life to the neighborhood and the town, and is greatly appreciated.”

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to encourage sensitive redevelopment of the Joseph R. Ensign house (1905; NR), the board of selectmen approved a tax abatement of $300,000 over seven years. Chestnut Hill Associates of Simsbury plans to convert the house to apartments using federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits. Connecticut law also allows towns to grant tax abatements for historic properties so that renovation does not immediately result in sharply increased property taxes. First Selectman Lisa Heavner told the Hartford Courant that even with the abatement tax receipts on the property will go up. Originally home to the president of the Ensign-Bickford Company, the structure has since been a church parish house and a bank. Plans call for removing an addition from the 1950s and constructing new buildings at the rear of the property, for a total of 55 units.

Sharon.
Restoration of the Soldiers’ Monument (1885; NR) was completed in December. The granite monument was damaged in September after a car ran into it, knocking several pieces loose. Monument Conservation Collaborative LLC of Norfolk did the work. According to a survey of Connecticut Civil War monuments, the Soldiers’ Monument’s “ingenious combination of classical exedra [enclosed bench], classical pedestal, and gun carriage [is] unique in Connecticut.” Town officials plan to revisit the site in the spring to see if better protection can be provided for the monument in its vulnerable location on a state road at the head of the town green.

135 River Rd, Preston, CT | $299,000
Historic James Cook Farmhouse offers nature and solitude on 4.99 acres. Originally built in 1740, this 5 BR / 3 Bath, center chimney Colonial retains original features including ceiling beams, wide plank wood floors, and plaster walls, with upgrades for energy efficiency and modern living. It is suitable for hobby farming and abuts 40 acres of state-owned nature preserve, with frontage on the Quinebaug River! Cozy & warm, with 3 working fireplaces and wood stoves for added ambiance. Home includes in-law suite/rental apartment with separate entrance. Ample storage space inside and outbuildings, include a 3 car garage, a run-in for horses, new chicken coop. Yard has amazing rock walls, a large stone patio & lovely mature perennials and fruit trees, as well as 2 seasonal streams. This unique estate offers history, nature and quiet country living at an attractive price.

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A new preservation program will protect Ragland Farm (NR), owned and operated by the Stiles family since 1690. The state Department of Agriculture set up the Community Farms Preservation Program (CFPP) in 2011 to help towns and cities protect smaller farms that may not meet the criteria for the state Farmland Preservation Program. Under CFPP, the state uses funds from the Community Investment Act to provide a percentage of the cost of purchasing development rights, thereby reducing pressures to develop farmland for other uses. Communities must pre-qualify by, among other things, inventorying farmland resources, setting priorities for preservation, and setting up a fund for farmland protection. The Stiles farm is the third farm to be protected under the CFPP. For more information, contact the Connecticut Department of Agriculture or visit www.ct.gov/doag.
Haven Line that was situated at the midpoint between Boston and New York. The consolidation of many small independent rail lines occurred under the leadership of J. P. Morgan at the end of the 19th century. The accomplishment of this process prompted the construction of the new centralized Midway freight yard in 1904. The site encompasses the remains of the roundhouse and the turntable that delivered the engines to the roundhouse service bays as well as the larger surrounding rail yard that was necessary to manage a comprehensive service facility for freight trains.

The **Nike Missile Site – HA-36** in Portland retains important archaeological features associated with the Operations and Launch components of this air defense base. It was part of a larger system of air defense consisting of 300 similar sites located throughout the country to protect civilians and industry, but only a few retain significant integrity and preserve the history of the Nike project. The most outstanding artifact on the Launch Site, and possibly most important remaining and intact structure of the entire HA-36 site, is the underground vault in which missiles were stored and elevated for deployment. Deactivated in 1964, the Portland Nike Site is an important reminder of Cold War military strategy and technology now, for the most part, obscured by Meshomasic State Forest.

These newly-designated State Archaeological Preserves, which recognize and protect archaeological sites associated with the state’s diverse industrial heritage, would not have been possible without the vision and dedication of the Friends of the State Archaeologist, and the technical expertise of Mark Banks, Sara Mascia, Faline Schneiderman, and Robert Stewart who conducted archival and field research and prepared State Archaeological Preserve nominations, and Dave Poirier, who was the administrative shepherd from grant concept to final designations. 🌟

*For more on the Friends of the State Archaeologist, visit [www.fosa-ct.org](http://www.fosa-ct.org).*

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**Vaghi Woodwork Company (c.1930)**
77 South Street, Bethel
Included in the Connecticut Trust’s Making Places database, the Vaghi Woodworking Company was established by Joseph Vaghi, an Italian immigrant, in 1909 in Danbury where, as the only furniture manufacturing shop in that city, he began producing cabinets and other custom furniture. By the early 1930s, Vaghi’s firm had grown to the point where it was necessary to erect the two-story plant in Bethel. The complex was erected ca. 1930 and consists of a two-story manufacturing block that is connected to a two-story storage building via a small, two-story ell. The manufacturing block is a two-story, 34´ x 116´ wood-frame structure with irregularly-spaced window openings and a low-pitch front-facing gable roof with cornice returns. A red brick firewall forms the north (rear) walls of all three blocks. The primary building is sheathed with clapboards, however, these have been stuccoed on the east (side) elevation and covered with vinyl siding on the south (front) elevation.
The main block is connected to a two-story, 24´ x 94´ wood-frame storage shed with a two-story, 11´ x 42´ wood-frame ell with a shed roof. The ell has clapboard siding, while the storage building is sheathed with vertical wood boards.

The adjoining property (also for sale) includes a 1772 square foot two-family house. Rehabilitation of this property may be eligible for Making Places grant and historic tax credits.

Contact:http://www.cityfeet.com/cont/ForSale/LN19605694/77-South-Street-Bethel-CT-06801
575 Hamburg Road (Rt. 156)
Lyme
This picturesque 49+ acre horse farm was a longtime boarding and training stable specializing in hunting and jumping. Located on Eight Mile River waterfront, the site contains a residence (1967), barns, sheds, and a gazebo. Some of the open fields have been used to grow corn and alfalfa. Power lines run through property. Owner hopes to find a buyer to who will continue to use the property as a working farm.

Contact: Sharon & Kevin Kennedy, Kennedy Real Estate Solutions at (860) 304-4433.

Pope Tube Co.
69-71 Bartholomew Ave., Hartford
Also included in the Connecticut Trust’s Making Places database, the Pope Tube Co. is listed on the National Register as a contributing resource in the Parkville Industrial Historic District Historic. Once a manufacturer of rags and paper stock, the mill is currently being used as a warehouse. Future potential use as eclectic architectural, engineering, IT collaborative open office space, design studios, artist studios or loft apartments. Plenty of parking. Consisting of three connected buildings built between 1900 and 1968. Total SF is 27,528 on 1.21 acres. Rehabilitation of this property may be eligible for Making Places grant and historic tax credits.

Contact: http://www.cityfeet.com/cont/ForSale/LN18976260/69-71-Bartholomew-Avenue-Hartford-CT-06106
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The Chidsey-Linsley house was built about 1790 across from the East Haven Green, where General Lafayette and his troops camped during the Revolution. The 1½-story, center-chimney Cape is notable for its unusual flaring roof, which swoops out to wide eaves front and back—a feature common in Dutch houses on nearby Long Island but extremely rare in Connecticut. The builders thrifty re-used parts from an older house, which still can be seen in the basement. They even reused an older foundation, which may account for the double front door and the side door—both features typically seen only on larger dwellings. Owned for many years by an architectural historian, the Chidsey-Linsley house retains its original layout and most of the original exterior clapboards. Interior floors, trim, and paneling remain in pristine condition. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the house is eligible for Connecticut’s Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit. Within walking distance are shops and restaurants, Long Island Sound, and scenic salt marshes. $199,500

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the village, “You’ve just shaken hands with one to them. I’m a descendant of Jimmy Chaugham.”

Though I assumed that descendants of the village’s inhabitants might still live in the area, I was stunned that one of them might appear at the site so early in our fieldwork. Identifying himself as Ray Ellis, my visitor told me that he was, in fact, a seventh generation descendant of the Narragansett Indian James Chaugham and the white woman Molly Barber who had, in the mid-18th century, married against her father’s wishes and then absconded to the northwestern hills of Connecticut. There, the couple established a homestead in the wilderness on the west-facing slope of Ragged Mountain in what is today Peoples State Forest. With the births of eight children, seven of whom survived to adulthood—and six of whom married and had children of their own—the isolated homestead became a thriving hamlet officially recognized as a distinct community by the Barkhamsted town clerk.

Most births in the town’s vital records were listed as having occurred, predictably, in “Barkhamsted.” However, in May 1858, the town clerk recorded the birth of a little girl as having occurred in the community expressly labeled “Barkhamsted Light House.” Further, as was common practice, the “color” or race of each newborn was recorded. With one exception, all of Barkhamsted’s newborns on the page dating to mid-1858 were listed as “white.” This great-granddaughter of a Narragansett Indian and a white woman was that exception. Her color was uniquely recorded as “Nearly White.” This “nearly white” little girl was to become Ray Ellis’s great-grandmother.

Mr. Ellis informed me that he had never visited the ruins of his ancestors’ community. I was curious about this—after all, he lived just a few minutes away. Avoiding eye contact, he explained that growing up it had been impressed upon him that it was shameful to be a descendant of the poor Indians living up on the hill, so he rarely spoke of it. Until he had heard about a group of university students and a professor paying attention to the place where his ancestors had lived, being a descendant wasn’t something to celebrate or even admit.

So, of course, I offered Mr. Ellis a tour of our archaeological digs and he jumped...
at the opportunity to walk through the heavily wooded terrace where his ancestors had fashioned a life. Ever the professor, I lectured about the irregular foundations that were all that remained of the village’s houses. I discussed the open-air kilns where residents had produced charcoal which they likely sold as fuel to the iron manufacturers of northwestern Connecticut. We explored the quarry from which Lighthouse inhabitants had extracted stones for their house foundations and examined a large grinding stone where villagers reduced to meal the corn grown in their gardens.

Finally, we visited the village cemetery. Continuing my professorial discourse, I expounded on the upright field stones marking the graves of some fifty members of the Lighthouse community. I noted the lack of any writing on the grave markers, their patterned positioning in the cemetery, and even the subtle marking of a trench in which a stockade fence had been erected around the graveyard in the 1930s by the Depression era “CCC boys” stationed across the river at Camp White.

That’s when I looked up to see Mr. Ellis. Tears were streaming down his face. How could I have been so clueless and even callous, not anticipating his emotional reaction at this, his first visit to the cemetery where the remains of his family had been laid to rest? Awkwardly, I apologized, but there was no need. Mr. Ellis looked at me and through his tears said, simply, “Thank you for bringing me home.”

Mr. Ellis was the first descendant of the Lighthouse community who I met, but he has not been the last. Lewis Mills, a well-known 20th-century Connecticut educator, historian, and author wrote a self-published epic poem focused on the Lighthouse community (The Legend of Barkhamsted Light House, 1952). Mills characterized the descendants of the residents of the Lighthouse in the mid-20th century as: “Generations speeding onward, in an ever widening circle.”

That circle has, indeed, continued to widen, culminating in a family reunion of more than seventy people in July 2015, organized by the indefatigable Coni Dubois. Coni has become the de facto family historian and genealogist. Currently living in Louisiana, she is a ninth-generation descendant whose dying father inspired her to trace her family’s roots. Reaching out to me twenty years ago in her search for her family’s story, Coni has become a friend and a colleague. There is a Native American tradition of the designated “rememberer,” the individual who has the great honor and the even greater responsibility to pass down the stories of his or her people. Coni has become the Lighthouse family rememberer and has freely shared the results of her research (https://conidubois.wordpress.com/about/).

Descendants from as far away as California attended the 2015 reunion in Barkhamsted. As part of the celebration, I was invited to give a tour of the village site. More than fifty family members were able to hike up the hill, many of them encountering for the first time the place where their ancestors lived, loved, worked, and died. Just as had been true with Mr. Ellis, the emotional highlight of the tour occurred when we entered into the cemetery where their ancestors are buried. Drew Shuptar Rayvis, an Algonkian, performed a sacred native ceremony celebrating the lives and history of the Lighthouse family.

To mark the reunion, the family was invited by town officials to march in Barkhamsted’s Independence Day parade. Expecting to stand with the other observers along the parade route, I was stunned when Coni insisted that I join the family in marching along with them. It was an amazingly generous gesture and an important reflection of how much the family appreciated our archaeological and historical research.

As a result of that research, the Lighthouse site is on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, it has been designated a Connecticut State Archaeological Preserve with the attendant publication of a booklet about the Lighthouse community, and informational signage has been installed at the site (all of this has been made possible by funding and labor contributed by the Barkhamsted Historical Society, the Farmington River Coordinating Committee, and Peoples State Forest park staff).

These honors have not been mere formalities; historic preservation has provided, for the people most personally connected to the Lighthouse village, a concrete validation and celebration of their history. Historic preservation has, as Mr. Ellis phrased it in 1991, provided descendants the opportunity to come home.

Historic preservation is about so much more than hardware and houses. It is about honoring people and honoring the stories of their families and cultures. The location where the people of the Lighthouse lived is a remembered place and a preserved place that, by its continued existence, celebrates the wonderful story of James and Molly and all of their “generations speeding onward.”

For more on the Lighthouse site, visit www.iaismuseum.org; click on “Research & Collections,” and then “Preserve Booklets.”
On a humid June afternoon in 1991, a red pick-up truck eased into the parking area nestled between East River Road and the Farmington River in Barkhamsted, Connecticut. My archaeological field crew had just stopped for lunch before returning to our excavation of the late 18th- and early- and mid-19th-century community called “The Lighthouse.” Inspired by my curiosity after encountering the foundations of the village’s houses during an archaeological survey in 1985, I initiated a research project there, focused on the recovery, preservation, and analysis of the things the settlement’s residents had lost, discarded, or simply abandoned (Connecticut Preservation News, September-October 1993).

An older, hulking gentleman exited the truck, bidding his black dog, Rags, to stay behind. The man approached me and, glaring, thrust out his right arm demanding, “Shake my hand.” Needless to say I did, whereupon he smiled broadly and, disengaging his hand from mine, pointed up the hill toward the location of the remains of...