

PRESERVATION CONNECTICUT NEWS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESERVATION 2020

PRESERVING BLACK HISTORY

Recent events that highlight the Black Lives Matter movement have made the need to reform policing practices part of each day's news. Connected to this, of course, is the opportunity to address social structures that trap African Americans disproportionately in poverty, deny them equal access to health care and education, and prevent their full participation in American society and government. For preservationists this work begins by recognizing that the preservation movement has often mirrored American society in excluding, ignoring, or at best glossing over the history and contributions of African Americans in the United States.

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Historically, churches like Little Bethel African Methodist Episcopal church in Greenwich, built in 1921 and listed on the National Register, were social and political centers for African American life.

BETHEL A.M.E.
CHURCH
WORSHIP 11 AM
REV. TYNISHA DRENNON
PASTOR

Binge-researching

By Marena Wisniewski

The past few months have been difficult on everyone, and the effects of the global pandemic have reached far beyond the realms of health and public safety. Cultural institutions, including the State Historic Preservation Office, have been forced to close our doors to visitors. For those looking to learn more about Connecticut's cultural treasures, this presents a challenge. It also hampers those looking for guidance on how to care for their historic properties. While SHPO staff are available to answer questions, there is a wealth of resources available digitally that can help in this endeavor. Take a break from streaming (or staring into the void) to look at some of the resources from around the web.

This house, still standing at 112 Platt Street in Ansonia, is one of 5,000 Connecticut buildings documented in the 1930s through the WPA Architectural Survey and available on the Connecticut State Library website.



Designations

National Register of Historic Places

The National Park Service (NPS) maintains an interactive GIS that can be used to search for properties listed on the National Register by location.

The NPS website also has downloadable excel spreadsheets available for listed National Register Properties, removed Properties, National Historic Landmarks (NHL), federal Determinations of Eligibility, and federal listings: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/data-downloads.htm>

National Register files through 2012 have been digitized with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). There are some exceptions for address protected properties and oversized maps, but instructions on how to search these files are here: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm>

The NPGallery also contains digital copies of all National Register listings in Connecticut up to 2013, and can be accessed at <https://npgallery.nps.gov/nrhp>

State Register of Historic Places

An excel spreadsheet for all designated properties has been prepared

for Fairfield, New Haven, Middlesex, and New London counties. It includes State Register, National Register, National Historic Landmarks, and local historic district listings: https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Historic-Preservation/01_Programs_Services/Historic-Designations/State-Registry-of-Historic-Places

The 1966 survey, which was placed on the State Register in 1975, has been digitized and is available through the Archives and Special Collections at the University of Connecticut (UConn): <https://archives.lib.uconn.edu/islandora/object/20002%3A860409191>

Local historic Districts and Properties

Preservation Connecticut hosts location information for local historic districts and local historic properties by town through 2010: <http://www.lhdct.org/maps/overview>

Surveys and context reports

Looking to see what resources are in your town, or looking for places to take a road trip? UConn holds all surveys completed in all 169 towns, some of which are digitized.

The bibliography can be found at <https://archives.lib.uconn.edu/islandora/object/20002%3A860267972>

The digitized surveys can be found here: <https://archives.lib.uconn.edu/islandora/object/20002%3A19840028AHS>

Regional historic context reports, which provide background historical information for Connecticut by geographical region, are available through SHPO: https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Historic-Preservation/03_Technical_Assistance_Research/Research/Regional-Survey-Contexts

The National Park Service also keeps a robust collection of context statements and finding aids for property types across the country, including Connecticut; these are available through the National Archives. This link provides direct access to the Connecticut Collection: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/121044840>

Cultural resource publications and information

As well as being the keeper of designation documents, NPS also holds a digital archive of publications covering a wide variety of topics, including periodicals, archaeology, historic structures, and museums: <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1345/cr-publications.htm>

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year, *Preservation News* presents our Opportunities issue in July rather than September. This annual feature is derived from a staple tool of many preservation organizations, the “Most Endangered” list, which serves as a way of calling attention to and urging action for threatened historic assets in our communities. With the Opportunities issue, we address the threats to include other developments and techniques that can promote preservation, and we find that this broader approach has gotten results. Although the change of date is a result of the coronavirus lockdown, which forced several changes in our schedule, it provided a framework to address another development in a timely way.

Right now, we as preservationists—and as a nation—are critically poised to take action to support and improve the lives of our fellow Black Americans. We should take advantage of the shift in understanding of the urgency needed to stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter in our daily work and lives. As we mourn the death of George Floyd and so many

others, we also mourn the fact that we have let too much time pass. Our current chair, Caroline Sloat remarked, “Although there are many reasons for deep sadness, there is also hope that the work to bring about deep change is just beginning.”

But what can we do?

As an immediate step to increasing engagement with African American communities and homeowners, Preservation Connecticut is working with faith leaders and other partners to broaden our program, “Saving Faith: Preserving Historic Black Churches in the 21st Century.” Join us for our weekly “Talking About Preservation” virtual chat on July 8 where we will feature this topic. Discussion will be on the importance of the church to the black community and the resources that are currently available through Preservation Connecticut and our partners—and to hear thoughts from the community on priorities and needs. There is opportunity to expand the program through enhanced partnerships, engagement, technical assistance, funding, story-telling, and broader community reinvestment.

Parallel to this, Preservation Connecticut’s trustee and immediate past chair, Sara Bronin, is coordinating an independent working group of land-use attorneys, planners, state representatives, municipal leaders and commissioners, architects, preservationists and more. The group convenes as DesegregateCT, through weekly virtual meetings. DesegregateCT is a collective of individuals and organizations which advocate for the reform of statewide zoning laws to enable a more just and equitable Connecticut. Learn more and join the conversation at desegregatect.org.

Of course, this is just a start. See our cover story for more ideas about spreading knowledge of Connecticut’s African American history and ways of preserving its sites. We are grateful to the Black historians and preservationists who made time for a thoughtful discussion of the issue with our staff. In the meantime, we’re continuing to offer “Talking about Preservation,” weekly virtual chats on preservation. Check our website and social media for topics through July. And, we’re looking forward to our delayed 2020 Connecticut Preservation Awards presentation on September 9. What exactly that will look like isn’t yet certain, but we can’t wait to celebrate some great preservation achievements. 🌱

—Jane Montanaro

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

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Connecticut
still revolutionary

Upcoming Meetings

Connecticut Historic Preservation Council

August 5, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.
Virtual Meeting

September 2, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.
Virtual Meeting

To participate contact Liz Shapiro
(860) 500-2360; Elizabeth.Shapiro@ct.gov

State Historic Preservation Board

September 18, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.
Virtual Meeting

To participate contact Jenny Scofield
(860) 500-2343; Jenny.Scofield@ct.gov

For more information call (860) 500-2343

Preserving Black History cont'd from page 1

Preservation basically works in two parallel, linked tracks: identification and recognition of places with historic significance and efforts to encourage their stewardship and continued use.

In Connecticut, numerous sites related to African American history have already been recognized by preservationists. For example, Prudence Crandall's groundbreaking school for Black girls in Canterbury is a National Historic Landmark and a state museum. The National Register of Historic Places lists sites such as the home of actress and activist Marietta Canty in Hartford, the Little Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Greenwich, and the Hempstead historic district in New London, where free Blacks lived in the antebellum era.

The Connecticut Freedom Trail, maintained by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), identifies more than 130 sites across the state. Currently the SHPO is carrying out a survey of places connected with Martin Luther King, Jr. and other Black college students who worked on Connecticut tobacco farms in the 1940s. For Dr. King, it was in Connecticut that he first exercised his vocation as a preacher and first experienced the relative freedoms of life away from the segregated South. This is a start.

Stewardship and reuse have been accomplished through community advocacy for places such as the home of the Rev. Amos G. Beman in New Haven. As the Hempstead historic district suggests, preservation is broader than association with well-known historical figures. Programs such as historic rehabilitation tax credits

New London Landmarks is rehabbing the home of Linwood Bland Jr., president of the New London branch of the NAACP from 1962 to 1968. Beeze, shown here, is one of the neighbors taking part.

have been used to fund housing rehabilitation in urban neighborhoods with predominantly African American or Latino populations. Preservation grants have helped fund condition assessments and restoration and maintenance of historic Black churches.

One site, the Mary and Eliza Freeman houses, in Bridgeport, can be viewed as a microcosm of preservation efforts for African American historic sites. These houses, the last survivors of a once-thriving antebellum African American community, are listed on the National Register, have received grants and technical assistance from state and private preservation groups. The Freeman Houses garnered nationwide attention in 2018 when they were included in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Eleven Most Threatened Places.

Nonetheless, the practice of preservation in Connecticut has, until now, been overwhelmingly white and middle-class. For instance, a search of the National Register online database for sites in Connecticut with Black History as an area of signifi-

cance turns up only twenty results, out of 1,682 listings statewide. While certainly an undercount, this does reflect the basic point. It is an illustration that whiteness characterizes the places that are recognized and also the professionals who carry out the work.

How can the movement extend its reach? To explore that question, I spoke recently with two Preservation Connecticut trustees—Jonathan Wharton of New Haven, a professor of political science at Southern Connecticut State University; and Olivia White of Essex, the former executive director of The Amistad Center for Art & Culture at the Wadsworth Atheneum—plus Dr. Benjamin Foster, Jr., a Bloomfield-based educator and consultant. Former Preservation Connecticut



Resources

African American Connecticut Explored, by Elizabeth J. Normen, et al., (Wesleyan University Press, 2013). A collaboration of *Connecticut Explored* magazine with the Amistad Center for Art & Culture, with support from the State Historic Preservation Office and the Connecticut Freedom Trail, contains more than 50 essays on subjects ranging from the state's colonization in the 1630s to the 20th century.

The Amistad Center for Arts & Culture. Formerly known as the Amistad Foundation, a center dedicated to "preserving and interpreting African American culture and history and correcting the misrepresentation and under-representation of this important aspect of our country's evolution." www.amistadcenter.org.

Connecticut Freedom Trail. Website that "documents and designates sites that embody the struggle toward freedom and human dignity, celebrate the accomplishments of the state's African American community and promote heritage tourism." www.ctfreedomtrail.org.

trustee Adrienne Houel of Bridgeport offered some thoughts separately.

Conversations like these will guide Preservation Connecticut as it plans its own work (see page 3 for some specifics). They also offer broader insights into ways in which preservationists can better recognize the African American experience in Connecticut, and better extend their reach to African Americans.

Education, recognition and celebration

Education was a main point of the conversations. “The African American experience has been both painful and joyous... and Connecticut has played a vital role in that history,” Benjamin Foster observed. He and the others cited historic figures ranging from Lemuel Hayes who fought in the Revolutionary War, taught school, and became a Presbyterian minister; to Horace Silver, a Norwalk-born jazz pianist; to Edward Bouchet of New Haven, the first African American to earn a Ph.D., in 1874.

It is hard to remember some of these achievements because, as several speakers pointed out, many sites related to them are no longer standing, while for others the connection to African American history

is undocumented. Despite surveys and studies dating as far back as the 1970s, there is much, much more to be discovered, and the results need to be more broadly disseminated.

As an educator, Dr. Foster said he hoped education could serve three goals: for Black students, to build self-esteem; for non-Blacks, to build knowledge and appreciation of African American history; and for all students, “to make a difference in how they look at one another.” Making Black history visible in our communities can help us all to a richer understanding of our shared history.

Preservation for social and economic equality

A second theme of the conversation was the role historic preservation might play in making life better for African Americans. For Dr. Foster, an inescapable underlying condition is “the tremendous wealth gap” existing in Connecticut, which in turn causes gaps in educational achievement, healthcare, and housing.

While this is not a preservation issue per se, the social and economic benefits of preservation programs are tangible—through jobs created, neighborhoods

revitalized, housing conditions improved. With intentional focus, these benefits could be increased. This will be amplified with expanded efforts to recruit and train African Americans for preservation jobs—as architects and engineers, as consultants, as administrators, or in high-skilled restoration building trades.

Starting points: churches and urban neighborhoods

How can preservation better reflect African American life in Connecticut? What should be preserved and how? Apart from calling out significant individuals like Haynes, Silver, and Bouchet, the speakers focused on two types of places: churches and urban neighborhoods.

Churches have long played a crucial role in African American life. Churches were the places where Black Americans, shut out of so many civic institutions, had a voice. Churches were where they networked, where they organized, and where they launched the Civil Rights movement. And yet, Black churches, like other forms of religious expression in American life, have shrunk dramatically in the past fifty years,

continued on next page

Upper Albany Main Street

Upper Albany Main Street, Inc., a program that weds economic development to historic preservation, is promoting street and façade improvements in a National Register district with significant African American and West Indian heritage.



Preserving Black History, cont'd from page 5

leaving dwindling congregations to struggle to maintain and operate oversized, aging buildings.

"So many of my students, Black and white, aren't aware of the significance of the Black church, socially and politically," said Jonathan Wharton. "There's got to be a way of reconnecting that again."

Existing technical assistance and grant programs could significantly help historic Black congregations care for their buildings. However, as Preservation Connecticut has found, church leaders are frequently not aware of the resources available or they might require assistance to negotiate the application and administration process. Providing intensive assistance, as Circuit Riders have learned through doing so for some applicants, both helps direct grant funds to where they're needed, but also builds capacity for these significant neighborhood institutions.

Another area for focus is historically African American neighborhoods, where Black-owned businesses served Black customers in settings near Black churches and residential areas. Places such as Dixwell Avenue in New Haven and Upper Albany Avenue in Hartford survive but have lost much of their vitality amid middle-class flight and disinvestment.

There are ways to revitalize areas such as these. As trustees and activists, Dr. Foster, Dr. Wharton, and Ms. White proposed focusing on a limited number of places at a time while employing an array of programs

One of the most unforgettable stories in Connecticut Black history is that of the captive Mende Africans who regained their freedom after seizing control of the slave ship *La Amistad* in 1839. While awaiting their return home, the Africans lived in this building on the Farmington property of abolitionist Austin Williams. It was later converted to a carriage house.



and bringing in partners such as the local preservation organizations and Connecticut and local Main Street organizations, which follow an economic and historic preservation program developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Olivia White observed, "It's multifaceted. There's housing and the wealth gap, but there's also education and celebration of African American achievement. There may be a church that needs restoration or rehabilitation. There may be housing programs that we can engage in. We can bring all our resources and skills together to make an impact in a defined area instead of something here and something there." Other ideas included marker programs to identify historic owners or occupants and experimenting with policy tools such as variances or incentives or tax abatements.

In the end, the challenge is to make a conscious effort to reach out to African American institutions, organizations, and communities to find ways to harness existing programs to their goals.

The opportunity

George Floyd's death has unleashed a flood of demonstrations and calls to improve the status of African Americans in American society.

"The message is, 'This is the moment,'" Olivia White said. "Whatever you do, look at preservation work through the lens of how can we lift up the African American community, African American history, African American experiences in this country and achieve justice and equity? Everybody should just be looking through that lens in whatever they do, preservation included." 🌱

—Christopher Wigren



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Elizabeth Mills Brown Awards for 2020

Connecticut has a remarkable built heritage that stretches back nearly 400 years and encompasses places from the Colonial to the Modern eras and everything in between. This body of work gives the state a deep connection to its past, a distinctive identity in the present, and a richly layered foundation on which to build for its future. Jointly presented by AIA Connecticut and the Preservation Connecticut, the Elizabeth Mills Brown award recognizes projects that are noteworthy both as respectful preservation of

historic places and as excellent architectural designs. The award is named for the architectural historian and preservationist Elizabeth Mills Brown, who as writer and activist awakened Connecticut residents to the state's architectural riches and the need to protect them.

The Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia generously recruited this year's jury. Its members are:

Ian Smith, R.A., AIA, NCARB,
LEED-AP; principal, Ian Smith Design
Group LLC

Paul Steinke, executive director,
Preservation Alliance of Greater
Philadelphia

Janice Woodcock, AIA, LEED-AP;
principal, Woodcock Design, Inc.

Registration begins July 1, and submissions are due August 19. The awards will be presented in December. 🌿

For more information visit aiact.org.

The Hillhouse-Sallembien house, in Montville, received an award in 2019.

Rob Sanders Architects



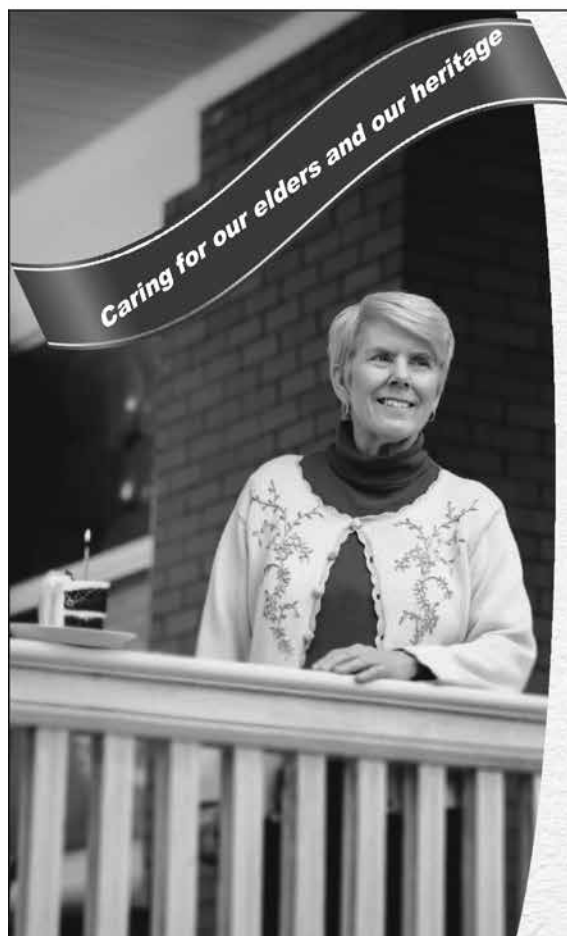
Photographing Barns

It's begun!

Preservation Connecticut is continuing its commitment to Connecticut's barns by welcoming serious amateur and student photographers ages 8 years old and up to submit works featuring the interior or exterior of Connecticut barns in the following categories: color, black & white, detail, and smart phone images. Submissions will be accepted until August 24. There is no limit on entries, although a donation of \$25 per entry is required. Even if you don't submit any photos, you still can vote for your favorite for the Viewers' Choice award in each category.

In October, Preservation Connecticut will display the selected works at the Art League of New Britain's beautiful gallery, appropriately in a circa 1870 barn. From there, the exhibition will travel to other locations around the state.

Get all the details and submit photos at www.gogophotocontest.com/preservationconnecticut. And, if you're looking for inspiration or background information about the barns you photograph, be sure to visit Historic Barns of Connecticut at www.connecticutbarns.org. 🌿



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Creative Places website highlights Connecticut arts and letters

Did you know that Deane Keller, a real monuments man, lived in Hamden? That Ruth Vassos, the first female sci-fi author, bought a house in Norwalk in 1935, with her husband, John, a prolific artist and designer? Or that the influential Surrealist painter Arshile Gorky lived in Roxbury and Sherman?

With its proximity to the cultural hub of New York City and its quieter suburban and rural landscapes, Connecticut was fertile ground for artists and writers in the period of Modernist movements between 1913 and 1979. Many of these cultural figures are well known through biographical and critical studies. Now, Preservation Connecticut's Creative Places survey shows how place played a significant role in their creative work, and how in turn the artists and writers influenced communities in Connecticut.

Started in 2013, the Creative Places survey documented places across the state that are significant in the creation of 20th-century visual art and literature. The survey collected data on more than 450 artists and writers of that period with strong connections to Connecticut. It identified more than 350 places where they lived, worked, displayed their creations, and exchanged ideas; completed 150 inventory forms; and successfully nominated 17 sites to the State Register of Historic Places (more than 160 were already listed on the State or National Register, many for

other reasons). And, the survey produced a background study that located these people and their works in the broader context of 20th-century American art and literature.

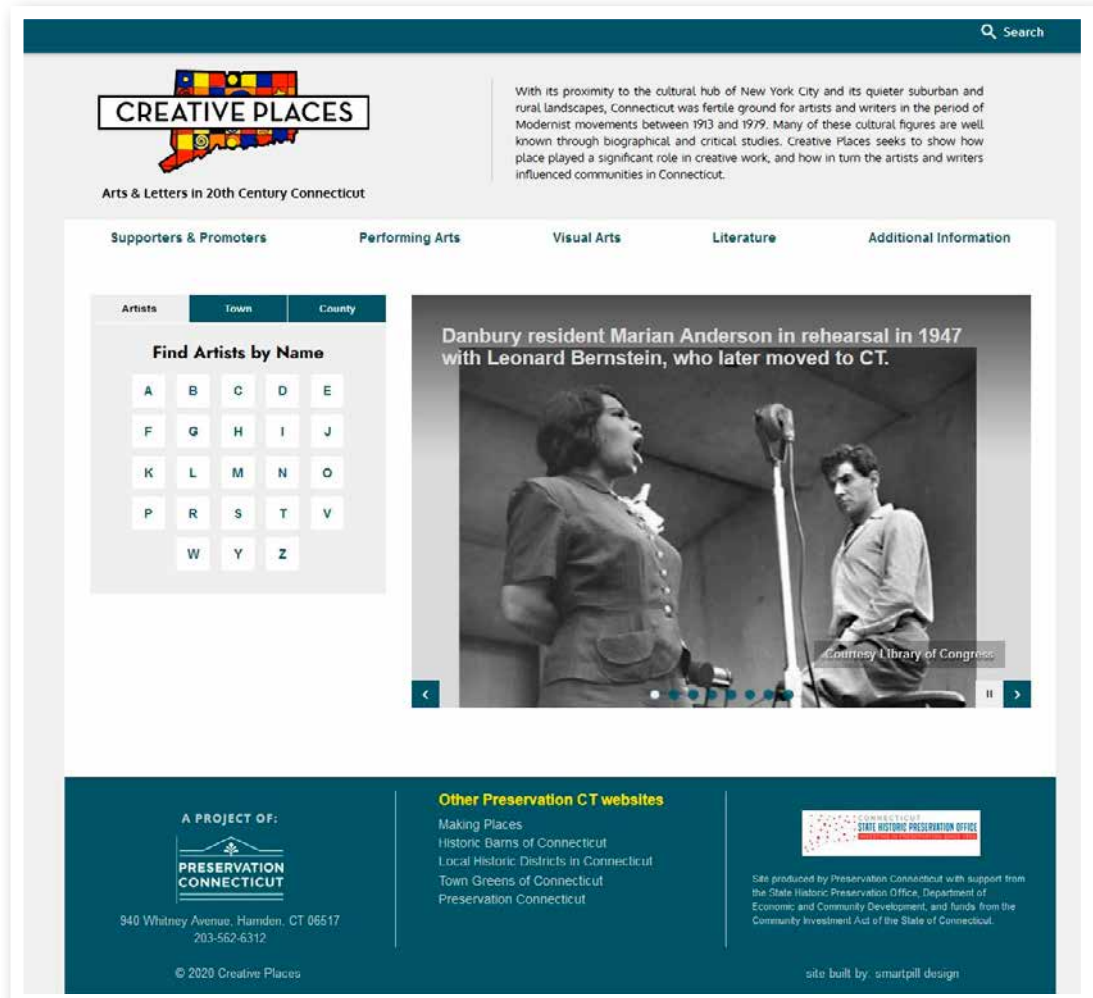
Now the public can learn about Connecticut's artists and writers (plus musicians, teachers, and patrons) and their associated places on a new website, connecticutcreativeplaces.org, which launched June 1.

The website contains all the survey information and allows visitors to search the survey by place or by person. A background section offers historical context, bibliography, and a guide to museums and archives with collections related to the artists and writers. Related National and State Register nominations are still being posted.

For preservationists, Creative Places offers opportunities to create local programming around sites and people, to sponsor nominations to the National or

State Register, and to seek out additional sites beyond those included in the survey.

Creative Places joins Town Greens of Connecticut, Historic Barns of Connecticut, Local Historic Districts in Connecticut, and Making Places of Connecticut, as well as PCT's main website, PreservationCT.org, to help the state's citizens understand and appreciate its rich history and to provide information and resources for preserving its historic places. Like the other subject websites, Creative Places is a project of Preservation Connecticut, funded by a grant from the State Historic Preservation Office of the Department of Economic and Community Development through the Community Investment Act. 🌱



Briefly noted

Berlin. ►

In response to community support, the developer of the area around the Kensington railroad station agreed to incorporate an historic commercial building into redevelopment plans. The building, located at 861 Farmington Avenue, is a typical small-town commercial structure erected in 1930 by the Aivano family. It originally housed an insurance office and the Star Restaurant, for many years a popular community gathering place. The building was acquired for the project only to assist in cleaning up site contamination, and the developers intended to raze it. However, the Berlin Historical Society and historic district commission targeted it as a must-save and recruited citizens to write letters and testify in support. This convinced the town planning and zoning commission to recommend that the building be preserved, and Newport agreed, acknowledging that the brick structure could form an attractive gateway to the station area. In one letter, Lorraine Stub, vice chair of the Berlin Historical Society, wrote, “The design of that brick building specifically mirrors and compliments the original Kensington Fire Station. Both were built with Berlin brick—an iconic building material produced here when Berlin was the center of the brick industry...It is against all enlightened downtown planning to demolish buildings with historic character.”

East Haven. ►

The former East Haven high school was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in April. Opened in 1936, the school was built as part of a broad movement which saw towns across the nation construct high schools to provide practical skills and job preparedness for students. As a result, the East Haven school was planned to provide needed facilities for three paths of study—the preparatory curriculum for students heading to college or technical school, the commercial curriculum for students who wanted to go into business, and the civic curriculum for students with no defined career path. The school received funding from the Public Works Administration, a Depression-era federal economic stimulus program. It was enlarged in 1964 and 1973 to meet growing enrollment, and closed in 1997. The building has been renovated by Winn Development and is slated to open this summer as The Tyler, a 70-unit affordable housing facility for seniors. The gymnasium and swimming pool, located in the 1973 section, will continue to be operated as a town facility.

Lorraine Stub



Mary Nastasi



Ed Messenger, Costar Group



◀ Hartford.

The Neiditz Building was listed on the National Register in May. When completed in 1950, it was touted as the first “new, modern downtown office building” in 20 years—since the onset of the Great Depression. The flat roof, ribbon windows, and lack of ornament proclaimed the structure’s modernity, as did mass-produced materials and up-to-date technologies that included aluminum framed storefronts and windows, asphalt and rubber floor tiles (in colors scientifically determined to be visually calming), and an up-to-date heating and air-conditioning system with individual controls and ultra-violet lamps to kill bacteria. National Register designation made possible the use of federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits for the recent renovation by New York City developer Girona Ventures. Now, commercial tenants occupy the ground floor, with apartments above.

Calkins Family Association, 2000



◀ Norwich.

The Calkins Family Association (CFA) has purchased the Pease-Caulkins house. The land on which it sits was home to Hugh Calkins (or Caulkins) in the late 17th century and remained in the family into the 19th century. It’s not certain when the present house was constructed, but it probably dates to the early 18th century. The property had been on the market for several years, and in 2019 the owner filed to demolish the house, in hopes that a clear lot would be more attractive to buyers. The Norwich Historical Society and Preservation Connecticut stepped in to try to prevent demolition, including listing the property in PCT’s Historic Properties Exchange. The publicity attracted the attention of the CFA, a national genealogical society. The group is currently raising funds to restore the house, which is a contributing structure in the Bean Hill National Register district, as a research and education center and museum.

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connecticuthistory.org, from The Connecticut Historical Society

Ridgefield. ►

The Ridgefield Historical Society has received a \$50,000 grant to study one of Connecticut's few Revolutionary War battlefields. The grant, from the National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program, will help develop a deeper understanding of the Battle of Ridgefield in 1777 and its place in the history of the American Revolution. The discovery last year of skeletons linked to the battle in the cellar of a house being renovated provided the impetus for the historical society to apply for the grant. According to a press release from the society, questions that historians hope to answer include: Were the skeletons those of Patriots or Loyalists or British troops? How did the non-combatant residents of Ridgefield interact with the soldiers? What specifically did the British and Loyalist soldiers learn from the Ridgefield encounters? Who buried casualties from the battle? Where are the other soldiers that died in the battle buried? The two-year project will include historical research as well as public meetings to explore ways of protecting battlefield sites. To follow the project, visit ridgefieldhistoricalsociety.org.



FIGHT AT RIDGEFIELD.

Lucas A. Karmazinas, ConnecticutMills.org



Loopnet



◀ Stratford.

Facing broad public sentiment, a developer dropped plans to demolish the home of an important but little known 19th-century author and feminist. In the years around 1860 Lillie Devereux Blake (1833-1913), lived in a Gothic Revival house (c.1855) on Main Street in what is now the Stratford National Register district. Her novel *Southwold*, published in 1859, is set in the town. Later, she became a leading figure in the women's suffrage movement. The Kaali-Nagy Company of New Canaan had proposed razing the house for a six-unit apartment building to accompany a new 97-unit building to be built at the rear of the property. An online petition garnered more than 1,000 signatures, and on June 24 the town zoning commission approved revised plans with the requirement that the house be preserved and incorporated into the development. According to the Patch, managing partner Damian Kaali-Nagy told the commission, "We understand and have great admiration for period and architectural identity... We will preserve at least the primary and architecturally significant portion of the existing building." Blake's childhood home in New Haven was demolished by Yale University in 1999, after a protracted preservation battle.



◀ Shelton.

Fire destroyed the former Star Pin factory on Canal Street on July 13. According to ConnecticutMills.org, the factory, begun in 1875, replaced an earlier complex which the company had outgrown, and Star Pin continued to occupy it until 1977, producing pins, hair pins, and garment hook and eyes. As late as 1973 it still used water from the adjacent Ousatonic Canal to generate electricity for lighting. Although vacant, the mill's prospects were looking up: in the past year the Department of Economic and Community Development had approved a grant to remediate hazardous materials on site, and the city of Shelton was preparing to sell the property to Primrose Properties for conversion to apartments. Demolition began within a day, to prevent contaminants' seeping into the Housatonic River and because the remaining walls were in danger of collapse. The cause of the fire has not been determined.



HISTORIC PROPERTIES EXCHANGE

Threatened Buildings and Easement Properties Available — July/August 2020

Preservation easements protect the historic character of old buildings, structures and landscapes and require approval of proposed changes. When one of the many properties throughout the state on which Preservation Connecticut holds

easements is on the market, we may list it here. To learn how to safeguard your property for future generations through an easement, explore Stewardship on our website, preservationct.org/steward, or contact Christopher Wigren, Deputy Director.



A.M. Young Barn and Shed (c.1912)

21 Anchorage Road, Branford

The 1300 sq. ft. barn and nearby shed were built as part of a large gentleman's farm created by Alden M. Young in the Pine Orchard section of Branford. Young (1835-1911) was a hugely successful businessman who early saw the potential of electricity, starting his enterprises with the founding of the Connecticut Electric Company in Waterbury in the late 19th century. He then applied electricity to street cars, later founding the Branford Electric Railway Association, the tracks of which are now used by the Shoreline Trolley Museum, and he held interests in multiple utilities. The buildings, in good condition, are available singly or together at no cost, though an interested party must pay for deconstruction and relocation. Time is of the essence.

Contact: Branford Land Trust, info@branfordlandtrust.org or (203) 483-LAND.



Preservation Easement Properties Available

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, changes to the exterior and hardscape must be approved by Preservation Connecticut.

Hoyt-Burwell Morse House (c.1735 with 20th century modifications)

8 Ferris Hill Road, New Canaan, \$850,000

One of the oldest and finest antique homes in New Canaan, with 3 bedrooms; 3 baths; 1,900 sq. ft. on 2.14 acres.

Contact: Tom Nissley, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England Properties, 203- 322-1400, tnissley@bhhsne.com



Marlborough House (1929)

**226 Grove Street, Bristol
Price reduced to \$589,900**

Designed by Richard Henry Dana, this Georgian Revival house had 9 bedrooms, 9 baths, 8,749 sq. ft. on 2.00 acres.

Contact: Chloe White, White Door Group, Keller Williams Agency, 860-302-7717, chloe.whitedoor@gmail.com

Aspinock House (c.1900)

208 School Street, Putnam

The Town of Putnam has begun construction of a new Municipal Complex to be located in Owen Tarr Park. Originally a dwelling home to the Aspinock Historical Society since 1992, Aspinock House is located at the planned entrance to the new facility. The Town is coordinating with the State Historic Preservation Office regarding proposed demolition of this structure, and having the structure listed on Preservation Connecticut's Historic Property Exchange is part of SHPO's requested mitigation efforts. This vernacular house, with fish-tail and diamond shingles in the front-facing gable, has 9 rooms across 1600 sq. ft. and an unfinished attic. The structure has hardwood floors and plaster and lathe walls throughout 1st and 2nd floors. The building itself is free, but costs associated with deconstruction and relocation will be borne by the interested party.

Contact: Elaine Sistare, Town Planner, 860-963-6800 x 113, elaine.sistare@putnamct.us



25 North Beacon Street, Hartford (1900)

\$299,000

West end Colonial Revival house designed by Albert W. Scoville, architect. Scoville and his brother William designed and built fifty homes largely on Lorraine and North Beacon Streets. The house retains original architectural details, including built-ins, mantels, tile hearths, hardware and leaded glass, as well as original functional features such as the servant annunciator and light fixtures. 4248 sq ft on just under a quarter acre with free standing garage. Sold as is. As a contributing resource in the West End North National Register Historic District, the Hartford Preservation Ordinance requires that work visible from the street and requiring a building permit be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Council. Rehabilitation work may be eligible for the state's Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credits.

Contact: Rebecca Koladis, Berkshire Hathaway Home Services, 860-670-0647, r.koladis@att.net



Deadline for the next issue is August 15, 2020

Historic Properties Exchange is published to advertise endangered properties in Connecticut by Preservation Connecticut, a statewide nonprofit organization located at 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, Connecticut 06517. Real estate advertised in this publication is subject to the Federal Housing Act of 1968.

Neither advertisers nor Preservation Connecticut are responsible or liable for any misinformation, misprints, or typographical errors contained in Historic Properties Exchange. To list a property or learn about properties listed, contact Renée Tribert, Preservation Services, at rtribert@preservationct.org, or call (203) 562-6312.

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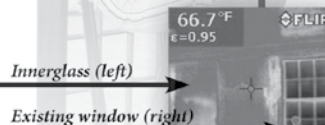


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"I give, devise, and bequeath to the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Tax ID Number 06-0979808, a not-for-profit Connecticut corporation doing business as Preservation Connecticut, the sum of _____ dollars (OR, _____ percent of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate), for its general purposes to be used and/or disposed of as the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation may in its sole discretion deem appropriate."

If you let us know that you have mentioned Preservation Connecticut in your estate plans, we would honor your commitment to preservation with membership in our Legacy Society. For more information, please visit www.cttrust.org/bequests or call Jordan Sorensen at (203) 562-6312.



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Of particular note are the Technical Preservation Services' Preservation Briefs, a collection of 50 easy-to-read documents that discuss a wide range of preservation issues, from rehabbing windows to maintaining historic cemeteries: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm>

Images

All of this a little too text-heavy? The Connecticut State Library hosts the WPA Architectural Survey, from the 1930s,

which not only contains descriptions of 5,000 Connecticut buildings, but also drawings and photographs. See if you can find any of your favorite local landmarks in the collection: <http://cslib.cdmhost.com/digital/collection/p4005coll7>

We hope these resources help with cabin fever and inspire some social distance-friendly trips. 🌱

For up to date information on SHPO's programs, visit ct.gov/historicpreservation

In 2020, two years ahead of the anniversary, Olmsted's contributions to American life and society seem particularly timely, in light of both the global coronavirus pandemic and the nationwide upheavals following the killing of George Floyd.

Olmsted believed that access to natural scenery was important for mental and physical well-being. In 1865, he wrote: "It is a scientific fact that the occasional contemplation of natural scenes of an impressive character, particularly if this contemplation occurs in connection with relief from ordinary cares, change of air and change of habits, is favorable to ...health and vigor." As Americans have practiced physical distancing and quarantine to avoid the coronavirus, public parks and wild areas have provided much-needed relief.

Olmsted also believed that public parks could play an important role in strengthening American democracy. For him, a park was a place where "vast numbers of people brought close together, rich and poor, young and old, Jew and Gentile," and where they were infused "with a common purpose, not at all intellectual, competitive with none, disposing to jealousy and spiritual or intellectual pride toward none, each individual adding by his mere presence to the pleasure of all others, all helping to the greater happiness of each."

Across the country, groups are working on plans to celebrate Olmsted's

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200th birthday in 2022. The National Organization of Olmsted Parks (NAOP) is taking a leading role in Olmsted 200, in partnership with a variety of other groups that includes the American Society of Landscape Architects, The Garden Club of America, the Olmsted National Historic Site (Olmsted's house and office in Brookline, Massachusetts, a National Park Service site), the City Parks Alliance, National Recreation and Park Association, and The Cultural Landscape Foundation. Focus on public education, advocacy, and outreach. The program's goals:

- Renewed appreciation of Frederick Law Olmsted and the firm's contributions to American life, culture and landscape—with an emphasis on both the physical manifestations and planning principles behind them.
- Enhanced appreciation by the American people of the value to their lives of parks, open space, and civic space

- Stimulation of a national conversation, via local and national events and public policy initiatives, about the need for universal access to parks, recreation, and open space—and their ongoing stewardship—in all American communities, especially those currently underserved.

In Connecticut, the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is exploring a survey of Olmsted firm landscapes in Connecticut.

The Connecticut chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (CT ASLA) is exploring partnerships with other organizations for several possible projects, including documentation of Olmsted landscapes through the Library of Congress Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) program; updating the Connecticut Olmsted Legacy Trail website to include projects and supporting information; taking part in a symposium, in cooperation with the landscape architecture

program at the University of Connecticut; and participating in projects from the national ASLA.

Preservation Connecticut is working with both SHPO and CT ASLA on programming. In addition, PCT is looking at ideas such as features in *Preservation Connecticut News*, landscape versions of its House Talk programs, advocacy and technical services for stewards of historic landscapes in Connecticut.

Finally, the bicentennial also offers local opportunities for historical societies and preservation organizations, garden clubs, and community groups for programs such as talks and tours, landscape surveys, and efforts to restore or rehabilitate historic public landscapes such as parks, town greens, cemeteries, or the grounds of public buildings.

While the upcoming bicentennial is an important occasion for recognizing and celebrating Frederick Law Olmsted's contributions and achievements, the anniversary also offers an opportunity to build appreciation for historic landscapes in general. In a sense, they all are Olmsted's legacy. 🌿

Resources

For more information on Frederick Law Olmsted and his legacy, visit these sites.

The Cultural Landscape Foundation:
tclf.org

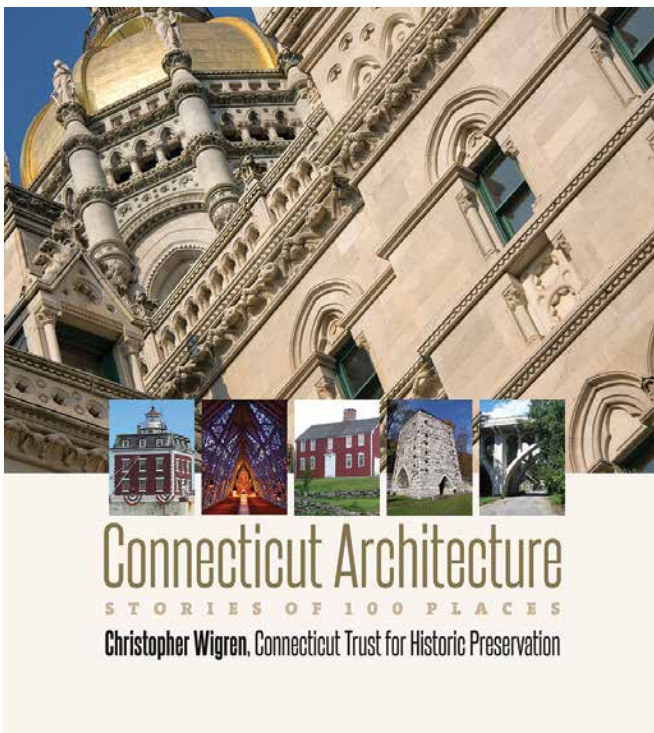
Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, including Olmsted archives:
www.nps.gov/frla/index.htm

National Association of Olmsted Parks:
www.olmsted.org

Olmsted Legacy Trail:
olmstedlegacytrail.comw

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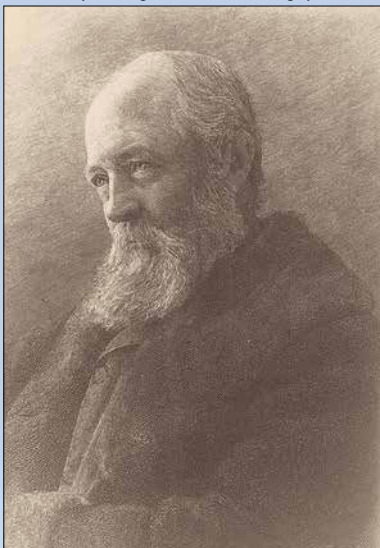
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OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESERVATION 2020

Frederick Law Olmsted bicentennial, 2022

Frederick Law Olmsted, the founding father of American landscape architecture, was born in Hartford on April 26, 1822. After a checkered early adulthood that included studying at Yale and stints as a farmer, seaman, journalist and publisher, and land manager, he joined architect Calvert Vaux to create the winning design for New York's Central Park in 1858. That led to a 30-year nationwide career in which his firm carried out some 500 commissions and established landscape architecture as a profession in the United States. At his death, in 1903, Olmsted was buried in the family vault in Hartford's North Cemetery.

The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine, 1893; from the
Library of Congress Prints and Photographs division



Frederick Law Olmsted

According to the National Association of Olmsted Parks' website, "Olmsted believed that it was the purpose of his art to affect the emotions. This was especially evident in his park design, where he created passages of scenery in which the visitor would become immersed, experiencing the restorative action of the landscape by what Olmsted termed an 'unconscious' process."

Olmsted himself said that his approach was influenced by the Connecticut landscape as he experienced it from a young age, notably on scenery-visiting trips with his father and travels to visit relatives in Cheshire. In turn, Olmsted and his firm—which continued under his sons and successors until 1979—worked on dozens, if not hundreds of landscapes throughout the state, creating parks, campuses, estates, cemeteries, and others.

continued on page 18

C. Wigen