

## A New Vision for Livable Communities

by Richard Moe

President, National Trust for Historic Preservation

An anniversary is always a good cause for celebration — and this particular one should be celebrated by everyone who cares about saving Connecticut’s amazingly rich and diverse heritage. Today, preservation here — and everywhere else across America — stands on the shoulders of individuals like those who founded the Connecticut Trust 30 years ago. They left us a legacy that is enduring and powerful. But the people who work to preserve historic places and create livable communities today must deal with an array of challenges that are different from those our predecessors faced. This evening I want to offer some comments and opinions about those challenges.

First, I think it’s instructive to consider how far we’ve come in the three decades since the Connecticut Trust came into being.

Thirty years ago, preservationists spent most of their time and energy fighting to hold on to landmarks threatened with demolition. Today, old buildings are sometimes still razed, but they are no longer torn down as a matter of course. Among preservationists, developers and architects alike, rehabilitation and adaptive use are widely regarded as viable —

C. Wrigren



Jeffrey S. Czopor



Sprawl, which hurts the countryside and urban neighborhoods alike, is a defining issue for today’s preservationists, according to Richard Moe, president of the National Trust.

often preferable — alternatives to demolition.

Thirty years ago, preservationists were focused largely on saving individual build-

ings and clearly-identifiable historic districts. Now we’re much more broadly involved. We deal with issues such as community livability and sustainable development. We recognize the value of preserving historic places — heritage corridors, multiple-resource areas and the like — that are both diverse and diffuse.

Three decades ago, preservationists’ concerns tended to end at the boundaries of the “old part of town.” Nowadays we take a much more holistic approach, recognizing that what happens in the countryside and the suburbs has a direct bearing on the fate of older in-town areas.

Three decades ago, preservation was not widely recognized as a tool for community revitalization. Now, with decades of success through the Main Street program, the Historic Rehab Tax Credit,

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The Trust celebrated its 30th anniversary on April 5 at the Colt Armory in Hartford. Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, offered some thoughts on the future of the preservation movement (see page 1), while Connecticut Preservation Awards and the Janet Jainschigg Award showed us just how much good preservation work is taking place in Connecticut today (see pages 8-10). The celebration continued the next morning with a breakfast for Hartford community leaders, organized by Trustee Glenn Geathers. Again, Dick Moe offered words of encouragement and challenge.

We are grateful to everyone who helped make both events successful, particularly our host at Colt, Robert MacFarlane, CEO, and Rebekah McFarlane of Homes for America.

The Knox Foundation and United Technologies gave generous donations as did many Trust board members.

One piece of business at the annual meeting was the election of new Trustees to our Board — see their bios on page 3. And we recognized four retiring Trustees: David Barkin, vice-chair and chair of the

Property/Easements committee; Ron Cooper, active member of the Property/Easements committee; Ken Johnson, a member of the Legislative Committee and Gary Singer, a member of the Program and Projects Committee. We thank them for their faithful service and look forward to working with them in new ways in the future.

One of the Trust's three incorporators, John F. Reynolds III of Middletown, died in March at the age of 81. Owner of Stiles & Reynolds Brick Company in Berlin, John had a lifelong interest in history and preservation. He served on boards of Middlesex County Historical Society and the Rockfall Foundation and helped found the Greater Middletown Preservation Trust, as well as the Connecticut Trust. John didn't just sit on boards, as much work as that may be. He also saved five Colonial and Federal houses in Middletown in the 1970s and 1980s, moving them to the South Green and restoring them. John understood fully that historic preservation requires community commitment and hands on hard work. 🌿

— Helen Higgins

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

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## New Trustees

Five new Trustees were elected at the Trust's annual meeting on April 5.

**William W. Crosskey II** graduated from the Syracuse University School of Architecture with a double major in Architecture and Architectural History. Before establishing Crosskey Architects in 1984, he was involved in design and project administration on a variety of commercial and multi-family residential projects including new construction and renovation throughout New England. Bill has renovated numerous buildings that are listed on the National Register. He also has experience in the legal aspects of architecture and construction, having served as an arbitrator, mediator and expert witness on numerous occasions.

Historian **Bill Hosley** of Enfield is the former Director of the Antiquarian and Landmarks Society, where he cared for several of Connecticut's premier historic properties. As a curator at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Bill organized several major exhibitions, including "The Great River: Art and Society in the Connecticut Valley" (1985) and "Sam and Elizabeth: Legend and Legacy of Colt's Empire" (1996). Bill is a member of the ad hoc Committee for



Clockwise from top: William W. Crosskey II, Bill Hosley, John David Hunter, Theresa Kidd.

the Coltsville National Park and of the "Place" board of the *Hartford Courant* and has written five books and numerous articles about early New England. He is a

graduate of Middlebury College and the Winterthur Program in Early American Culture.

**John David Hunter**, an architect and interior designer who lives in Washington, studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Montreal and worked for Bloomington's before founding John David Hunter and Associates in the early 1980s. The firm's projects include a six-building residential compound in northwestern Connecticut for which John provided both architectural and interior designs. In 1985 he and his partner, Bob Winston, established the Tulip Tree Collection, a retail home furnishing store that provides all services to decorate a home or business. For the last few years John has been designing a furniture collection inspired by French Canadian antiques, and developing functional kitchen designs based on his own

philosophy of how kitchens should work.

**Theresa Kidd** of Haddam is Director of Individual Giving at the Goodspeed Musicals in East Haddam, where her duties include directing annual membership campaigns and organizing fundraising events. Before coming to Goodspeed, she held fundraising positions at the Citizens Committee for New York City and George Trescher Associates, both in New York. She holds a B.A. in English from Wheaton College.

**Ralph Knighton** is Senior Community Planning and Development Representative for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in Hartford, responsible for providing oversight and technical guidance on issues affecting housing, planning and urban development. He has also served as Executive Director of the North Hartford Development Corporation and as Project Manager for the City of Hartford. Ralph holds degrees from the University of Connecticut and the Educational Center for Human Development and has participated in further programs at the Pratt Institute of Technology and Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. 

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

*John F. Kennedy - October 26, 1963*

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# State and Federal Tax Credit Bills to Fill Financing Gap and Stimulate Historic Preservation

by Brad Schide, Connecticut Circuit Rider

There might be a will to rehabilitate a historic building, the necessary funding to complete such a renovation is usually not there. This lack of funding is appropriately called a “financing gap” (the difference between the cost of rehabilitation and the building’s after-rehab market value), and this gap has served to stymie historic preservation projects around the state and across the nation. To address the issue, the Connecticut and National Trusts for Historic Preservation are seeking to implement significant tax incentives through separate legislative initiatives to encourage the development of historic properties, at both the state and national levels.

Currently, one federal tax incentive program is available to income-producing properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Historic Preservation Tax Incentive, enacted in 1976, initially provided a 25 percent tax credit on qualified rehabilitations, reduced to 20 percent in 1986. The intent of this federal legislation was to provide a financial incentive that, when combined with private debt financing, could solve the gap problem and promote rehabilitation. Unfortunately, the equity funding available from the tax credit’s 20 percent calculation has become woefully inadequate to meet today’s rehabilitation costs, which have steadily risen since 1976. The program does meet a portion of the financing gap issue, which is important, but more gap financing is still needed. To address this inadequacy, the National Trust for Historic Preservation is promoting an increase in the federal tax credit limits from 20 percent to 40 percent.

At the state level, the Connecticut Trust has promoted legislation that would create a 25 percent state income tax credit for qualified rehabilitations. The Trust testified in favor of the bill, with recommended changes (SB 1089). The changes would make the credit available to all properties listed on the National or State Register (rather than only former indus-

trial buildings, as originally drafted) and allow the full 25 percent credit to be combined with the Federal Historic Tax Credit (versus only five percent, as originally drafted).

A key criterion of the program is that buildings being rehabilitated must contain residential units. Unlike the federal tax credit program, other costs such as architect fees, financing and interim holding costs are not a component of the credit percentage-only actual construction costs. The state measure would also permit historic properties converting to residential condominiums to be eligible for the tax credit, which is prohibited under the federal tax credit program. Other features of the proposed state program include:

- \$10 million in state credits to be available each year, starting in 2005;
- a cap of \$2 million in credits available for any one project;
- the program will be a joint effort between the Commission on Culture and Tourism and the Department of Revenue Services;

- at least 25 percent of the total allocation of credits in any one year has to benefit affordable residential housing, either rental or owner-occupied;
- at least 25 percent of the total allocation of credits in any one year must benefit residential units other than affordable, either rental or owner-occupied.

In conjunction with the legislation, the Trust is exploring the possibility of forming an equity fund that would purchase the tax credits and a loan fund to provide bridge financing for necessary costs during construction.

Federal budget deficits at their current levels may make the national tax credit measure difficult to pass Congress. The state bill passed the relevant committees, but as *CPN* goes to press its future this year is uncertain. The Trust will continue to support both bills and looks forward to strong incentives to encourage the preservation and reuse of historic buildings. 🌱

To follow SB 1089 and other state bills, visit [www.cga.ct.gov](http://www.cga.ct.gov).

## Lobbying for Preservation in Washington

by Anita Mielert

Representing preservation interests to our elected officials is a vital task for all of us who believe in the value of preservation for our quality of life. Many of us are accustomed to making an occasional visit to Hartford on behalf of budget requests or changes to our state laws. We should be encouraged to take the effort to the next level as well — to Capitol Hill, where the same issues carry an even greater influence on our lives.

Connecticut is fortunate to have two Senators and five Representatives who are pro-preservation. Senators Dodd and Lieberman have been very supportive of efforts to bring Coltsville into the National Park System. Rep. John Larson, in addition to his Coltsville work, supports restoring dollars to the Historic Preservation Fund. Rep. Nancy Johnson, ranking member on the House Ways and Means Committee, has co-sponsored the Community Restoration and Revitalization Act, which would greatly increase historic tax credits. But they all still need to be educated about the specifics of proposed legislation.

*continued on page 14*

# The Institute for American Indian Studies: Preserving the Archaeology, History and Culture of Connecticut's First Settlers

by Lucianne Lavin, Director of Research & Collections, Institute for American Indian Studies

Formerly known as the American Indian Archaeological Institute, the Institute for American Indian Studies (IAIS) is a small museum and research center nestled in the beautiful Litchfield Hills of Washington, Connecticut. IAIS is dedicated to preserving and promoting an appreciation of the archaeology, history and living traditions of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, especially in New England.

Visitors are invited to partake of a wide range of programming activities, from traditional indoor museum exhibits, a quality art gallery, films, craft workshops, dancing, drumming and storytelling events to outdoor archaeological and historical Native American displays.

From its beginnings, the Institute's main objective was archaeological research. During its formative years in the 1970s and 1980s, directors of research

manned large field crews to investigate and dig numerous prehistoric sites in the northwestern highlands of Litchfield County. One of its most famous discoveries was the Templeton site in Washington, a 10,190-year-old Paleo-Indian camp excavated by Dr. Roger Moeller — the oldest archaeological site in southern New England. The site's cultural remains lay three to five feet below the surface of a terrace overlooking the Shepaug River. They included rare fluted spear points and other stone tools used to collect and prepare foodstuffs, slice hides for clothing, and process bone, wood, and plant parts for the manufacture of other non-food items such as bone needles and punches, wooden spear shafts and tool handles, and mats for bedding, sitting, and covering shelters.

In the late 1980s the Institute began to focus on late prehistoric and early his-

toric Native American sites. Hoping to understand more clearly patterns of settlement and land use among the Weantinock and Pootatuck tribes whose homelands once encompassed much of present Litchfield County, Dr. Russell Handsman instituted an extensive survey of the Housatonic River drainage. Dr. Handsman's research indicates that the landscape contains a long and continuous archaeological record of Native American presence in northwestern Connecticut for thousands of years up to and including the historical period. His findings are in direct contrast to some historical sources, which claim that this region of the state was uninhabited prior to European settlement.

Dr. Handsman believes that this disparity arose because inland Native American settlements and land use patterns

*continued on page 14*



Schoolchildren at the Algonkian Village, the Institute for American Indian Studies.

Tod Bryant



The Rowayton House, Norwalk.

**NORWALK.** Persistence paid off in Rowayton, where the Rowayton Hotel, also known as the Winthrop House has been a local landmark since 1848. The Italianate structure, once a hotel catering to summer visitors from New York, is now down at the heels and faced demolition for new development after developer Andy Glazer bought it last year.

At first Glazer intended to tear down the old hotel and put up a new building with four condominium units, but town zoning officials warned him that that would be unpopular in the shoreline com-

munity. So Glazer proposed building a replica of the hotel. This was met with dismay by the historical society, which had just received a grant to prepare a National Register district nomination for Rowayton. The hotel would have been a contributing structure in the district.

Tod Bryant, President of the Norwalk Preservation Trust, kept working on Glazer. He brought in Connecticut Circuit Rider Brad Schide and Connecticut Trust Trustee David Barkin, and together they eventually convinced Glazer to reuse the hotel. Glazer and his architect, Bruce Beinfeld, came up with a third scheme that calls for retaining the hotel, restoring it nearly to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, and giving it a sympathetic addition. This plan is smaller than the earlier ones — only three units, rather than four — but it will be a better fit in the village, which was a busy summer resort in the 19th century. Bryant said, "It's something we can all be proud of. And it shows how developers and preservation advocates can work together and come up with something that's good for everybody."

**NORWALK.** The Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT) is going ahead with plans to rebuild the inter-

change of the Merritt with Route 7 and Main Avenue in Norwalk, despite objections by the Merritt Parkway Conservancy. In the works since the early 1990s, the project will add more ramps between the Parkway and the new "Super 7" built in the 1980s. In addition, the historic interchange with Main Avenue (the old Route 7) will be rebuilt, lengthening on- and off-ramps, and replacing the original Main Avenue bridges with near-replicas.

According to Laurie Heiss, the Conservancy's Executive Director, the size and scale of the new construction will overwhelm the Parkway, landscaping plans are inad-

equate, and replacing the historic bridges is unnecessary and doesn't adhere to DOT's own guidelines for work on the Parkway. In addition, several of the new ramps are unnecessary since DOT scrapped plans to continue Super 7 north of the Merritt. The Conservancy has offered alternate designs that it says would better preserve the Parkway's character, not to mention costing less and taking less time to construct.

The Conservancy also claims that DOT has not met requirements for public consultation on the project. The Department says that public hearings were held in 1998 and 1999, and plans were presented to DOT's Merritt Parkway Advisory Committee. It was not clear to what degree the plans had changed since these presentations, although the overall scheme has been unchanged since the early 1990s.

At the Advisory Committee meeting on March 3 — the first meeting since 2001 to discuss this project — Carl Bard, Deputy Commissioner of DOT, said that the project had met the requirements for hearings and public comment, a process that started more than ten years ago, before the Conservancy was formed. "We can't go back and start over for every new group." He did say, however, that there

**Upcoming Meetings of the Connecticut Historic Preservation Council:**

June 1, 2005 at 9:30 a.m.

July 6, 2005 at 9:30 a.m.



**State Historic Preservation Board**

June 9, 2005 at 9:30 a.m.



All meetings take place at the South Congregational Church, 277 Main Street, Hartford. For more information, call (860) 566-3005.

was room for further discussion on some details, such as lighting and landscaping.

At an information hearing held in Norwalk on April 5, town officials mostly spoke in favor of the plan, while the members of the public spoke mostly against it. "We're disappointed that the DOT and the governor were not interested in what the people had to say," said Heiss. "We're now reviewing our options as to what we can do next."

**WINDHAM.** Two historic diners moved to Windham in a single week in February. The first was the Windham Diner, which came home from Waterbury to Willimantic on February 17. Built in 1950 by Mountain View Diner of Signac, New Jersey, the diner was originally located in Willimantic. In 1971, the neighborhood was targeted for urban renewal, and the diner was moved to Waterbury, where it was known as the Valley Diner until closing in 1999. Michael Haddad, the new owner, whose relatives ran the diner before it moved to Waterbury, plans to restore the diner and reopen it as Mickey's Windham Diner at River Plaza on Bridge Street.

Built of stainless steel, with red porcelain enamel striping and a Formica ceiling, the Windham Diner epitomizes the streamlined style of the 1950s. Its original booths, counter and stools all survive.

A week later, the South Windham Diner made its way to North Windham. It too has led a peripatetic existence, starting in 1958 as the Boulevard Diner on Connecticut Boulevard in East Hartford. In the mid-1960s it was moved to South Windham, where it operated until closing in the early 1990s. It is said to be one of only two diners built by the Bramson Engineering Company of Oyster Bay, New York. Tony Lent and Bill Masopust moved it to their shopping plaza, North Windham Commons, on the Boston Post Road. They hope to have it open by the end of the summer.

Both diners were advertised for sale through the website of the American Diner Museum in Providence. The website includes pages on history and design of diners, as well as the sales listings. 🌿

*For more information on the American Diner Museum, call (401) 723-4342 or visit [www.dinermuseum.org](http://www.dinermuseum.org).*

### The Most Important Threatened Historic Places – Updates

**WILDE BUILDING, BLOOMFIELD (2000).** Cigna Corporation has announced that it will continue to use the Wilde Building for the foreseeable future. The corporation, which is redeveloping its 600-acre campus, announced plans in 2000 to demolish the headquarters for a golf club and hotel. The building, built for Cigna's predecessor, Connecticut General, and opened in 1957, is a notable corporate headquarters designed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, with courtyards and sculptures by Isamu Noguchi. Cigna's proposal to demolish it drew nationwide attention. Two Hartford architects, Tyler Smith and Jared Edwards, formed the Campaign to Save Connecticut General, and in addition to the Trust's listing, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named the building as one of its Eleven Most Threatened Historic Places in 2001. The National Trust has continued to work with Cigna to find a developer who could adapt the building for the new uses. The company did tear down the neighboring Emhart Building (1963), also by SOM, and work to convert the Wilde Building's grounds to a golf course continues, drastically changing the building's setting. 🌿



The Wilde Building was carefully designed to fit into its landscape (seen here with "Family," a sculpture group by Isamu Noguchi).

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# Connecticut Preservation Awards Presented

One of the highlights of the Trust's annual meeting was the presentation of Connecticut Preservation Awards. The awards reminded attendees of Connecticut's wide range of historic places and of the many ways one can make a difference, from single-homeowner rehabs to community activism to multimillion-dollar projects on public buildings. 🌿

## Park Terrace, Hartford: Award of Merit, The Cultural Landscape

This block of twelve buildings, dating from 1910 and facing Pope Park in the Frog Hollow National Register district, is a remarkable display of Hartford's distinctive Perfect Six building type. By 2000, three of the buildings were slated for demolition, while others were bank-owned, vacant or occupied by squatters. But the Mutual Housing Association of Greater Hartford had the vision of an entire restored neighborhood, not just one or two buildings. Working with Paul B. Bailey Architects, they rehabilitated eleven of the original twelve buildings and built one new infill structure. Park Terrace has become a symbol of hope for an entire neighborhood and spurred plans for other projects that are not just "one building at a time" but, as Hartford's Mayor Eddie Perez has said, "one block at a time."



Paul B. Bailey, Architect

## Trackside Teen Center, Wilton: Award of Merit, The Built Environment-Adaptive Use

By the 1990s, the old Davenport-Dana homestead, dating from the 1760s, was threatened with demolition. Instead, the town purchased the house and, working with dedicated volunteers, turned it into a technologically up-to-date teen center. Architect Rob Sanders' design was inspired by traditional New



Rob Sanders Architects



Worthington Meeting House Committee



Clockwise from top: Park Terrace, Hartford...Trackside Teen Center, Wilton...Worthington Meeting House, Berlin.

## Palace Theater, Waterbury: Award of Merit, The Built Environment

The three-year, \$30 million renovation, restoration and expansion of the Palace Theater has not only transformed the Beaux-Arts style theater; it is transforming downtown Waterbury. The interior restoration is magnificent,

opulent and evocative of the important role that the theater played in historic Waterbury in the early decades of the 20th century. This award recognizes not just the quality of the restoration and renovation, but also the vision of cultural renaissance and evenings on the town in downtown Waterbury.

England farmsteads that grew gradually into connected strings of barns and outbuildings. The result is a building that fits into Wilton's historic center and gives teens a place to hang out.

## Worthington Meeting House Committee, Berlin: Award of Merit, Community Service

The Worthington Meeting House, built in 1774 in what is now the Worthington Ridge National Register district, had been vacant and deteriorating since 1974. When concerned and vocal citizens opposed demolishing the building, the Town Council formed the Meeting House Committee, made up of those concerned community members. The Committee developed a plan for restoring and reusing the building and then persuaded the town to bond \$610,000 for exterior restoration — a project that came in \$90,000 under budget. Having saved the building and restored it, the Committee is now ready to raise the funds for making it an historical and cultural center for the town. Given their perseverance and energy, we expect they will succeed.



Lou Belloisy

Palace Theater, Waterbury.

**Charles Shanner, Bridgeport: Award of Merit, Community Service**

Is there a local preservation or community revitalization group in Bridgeport that Charles Shanner hasn't worked with? After restoring his own house, Charlie focused his talents and energy on helping local community preservation groups. Working with the newly formed Bridgeport Trust for Historic Preservation —

whose web site he built and hosted for free — Charlie was instrumental in preventing the City from razing nearly two dozen buildings, an entire National Register district. Nowadays, he is working to attract retailers and businesses to downtown

Bridgeport, again starting with his own firm, which he relocated to a restored building on State Street. Charlie talks the talk, but most importantly he walks the walk and works at the most grassroots level to make good things happen in Bridgeport — and they are indeed happening!



Tod Bryant



Clockwise from top: William H. Barns house, New London... Sterling Market Lofts, Bridgeport... Charles Shanner.

Bridgeport Downtown South National Register district. As artists have moved in, small businesses and new restaurants have followed, changing the streetscape of the downtown area. Now, on weekends and in the evenings the area is no longer deserted, but bustles with people, activity and good food.

**William H. Barns house, New London: Honorable Mention, The Built Environment.** Paul Kwasniewski sensitively and meticulously restored this magnificent but severely deteriorated house, built in 1850 in what is now the Post Hill National Register district. The restored and recreated architectural details alone make this building a masterpiece. Mr. Kwasniewski's vision for revitalizing this building will serve as a stimulus for further neighborhood preservation work.

**Historic District Brochures, West Hartford: Honorable Mention, The Cultural Landscape.** The West Hartford Historic District Commission has published three brochures depicting the historic assets of the town's local historic

**51 High Street, Bristol: Honorable Mention, The Built Environment.**

The City of Bristol rehabilitated this Italianate villa, located in the Federal Hill National Register district, for its Department of Youth Services. The exterior of the house was restored — along with a modern addition that could not be removed — while the interior was adapted for offices and meeting spaces. The City has made a significant and very visible commitment to preserving the historic

character of Federal Hill, providing an inspiration to others in that neighborhood.

**Sterling Market Lofts, Bridgeport: Honorable Mention, The Built Environment.**

Artspace Projects, Inc., of Minneapolis converted the former Read's department store to artists' live-work lofts, inspiring the preservation and restoration of other buildings in the

districts. Each brochure gives a brief history of one neighborhood, along with a list of its buildings, color photographs and historic views. Highlighting historic districts through well-designed and attractive brochures not only makes residents aware and proud of their historic resources, it appeals to visitors and gives West Hartford yet another draw for visitors and potential residents. 🌿

Donald Muller, American Clock & Watch Museum



Above: 51 High Street, Bristol. Right: Historic District brochure, West Hartford.



West Hartford Historic District Commission

## John W. Shannahan Receives Jainschigg Award

John W. Shannahan, former Director of the Connecticut Historical Commission (CHC) and State Historic Preservation Officer, received the Connecticut Trust's Janet G. Jainschigg Award on April 5 at the Trust's annual meeting, held at the Colt Armory in Hartford. The award honors individuals and organizations whose preservation efforts foster and demonstrate the standards of excellence and professionalism exemplified by Janet G. Jainschigg, the Trust's former chairman and benefactor.

Jack Shannahan joined the Connecticut Historical Commission in 1969 as Superintendent of Historical Properties. In just a few years, he oversaw the interpretation and restoration of Old New-Gate Prison and Copper Mine in East Granby and the purchase, move and restoration of the Amos Bull house in Hartford as the Commission's headquarters.

In 1974, Governor Thomas J. Meskill appointed Jack Director of the Commission and State Historic Preservation Officer, positions that he held for twenty-nine years. One of Jack's most important contributions was his support for the 1982 amendment to the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act that gave cultural resources the same legal protections as natural resources, making Connecticut the



John W. Shannahan

only state that allows citizens to sue to prevent the unreasonable demolition of structures listed on the National Register. Over the years, this law has effectively prevented the demolition of many historic buildings.

Another important project was the Merritt Parkway. Although Governor Ella Grasso stopped the Historical Commission's first effort to list the Parkway on the National Register in 1975, Jack finally overcame substantial political opposition and succeeded in 1991. He went on to work with the Department of Transportation to create an award-winning program of improvement and restoration for the Parkway.

As early as 1986, Jack advocated for Connecticut to join the Main Street program, the National Trust's downtown revitalization project. In 1994 he helped persuade Connecticut Light & Power/Northeast Utilities to found the Connecticut Main Street Center. After the Center became an independent organization in 2001, Jack was the first chair of its board of directors.

As Director of the Historical Commission, Jack built up a professional staff with both broad and deep expertise and made the Commission a state agency widely known for its responsiveness and ease of

access. The National Park Service repeatedly gave the Historical Commission top marks in its periodic reviews of State Historic Preservation Office operations. All of this was accomplished with a low-key approach that masked his tenacity and his passion for understanding and preserving Connecticut's history.

When Jack received a National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2003, Richard Moe took special note of Jack's innovative leadership and willingness to take risks to ensure the protection of Connecticut's valuable historic resources.

Leadership, risk taking, and deep commitment to history and preservation: these are the hallmarks that Janet Jainschigg, a great mentor to the Connecticut Trust and to historical and preservation organizations across the state, encouraged us to aspire to. They are also standards of excellence that Jack exemplifies. That is why the Connecticut Trust was honored to present him with the Janet G. Jainschigg Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation. 🌿

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**A New Vision, cont'd from page 1**

ISTEA and other programs, we have first-hand knowledge of the effectiveness of preservation in bringing new vitality to residential and commercial neighborhoods.

Finally, thirty years ago, preservation was still working largely in the shadows, its effects confined to a relative handful of communities. Today, there is hardly a community, large or small, where houses and storefronts haven't been "fixed up" with pride, where underused or obsolete buildings haven't been put to new and sometimes innovative uses, where historic resources haven't been inventoried and protected in some way, where historic sites aren't heavily marketed to attract tourists. The impact of preservation can be seen almost everywhere, and it has made a clear difference in both the appearance and the quality of life in countless communities.

But while we can — and should — take enormous pride in what we've accomplished, we must keep an all-important fact in mind: Our job is far from done.

So where do we go from here? The challenges ahead are many and varied, and they will doubtless include some that we can't foresee today. But whatever else happens, I believe that those of us who care about saving historic places must work especially hard to do *three* things in the coming years:

**First, we must broaden our programs and our membership to reflect more accurately the diversity of America.**

If we hope to gain and maintain credibility as a relevant force in contemporary life, we must expand our preservation vi-

*"Too many people still regard preservation as largely irrelevant to their daily lives. Our job is to change that attitude."*

— Richard Moe

sion to include the full range of cultures and historic resources that help define the American experience.

Today's Americans come from all corners of the globe, bringing traditions and means of artistic expression that enliven and enrich our communities in countless ways. A major factor in this country's greatness is its success in the experiment of making a nation of immigrants, building a society that attempts to make unity out of variety. Preservation offers us a means of celebrating that variety and of ensuring that we don't erase the marks left on our national landscape by the many peoples who have helped shape it. We must do all we can to help increase our understanding of our shared history. It's part of the glue that binds us together as a nation.

But merely broadening our programmatic vision won't have much meaning if we don't broaden our membership as well. We must find ways to involve all sectors of society in our work — because it isn't

"our" work at all. What preservation does — saving historic places and revitalizing communities — it does for everyone. America's history belongs to *all* Americans, not just those who call themselves preservationists, but all of us. We share a heritage that is all-embracing, and we must work to build a preservation movement that is all-embracing as well.

**Second, we must move preservation fully into the mainstream of American life by tackling issues that, in one way or another, affect the daily life of almost every person in this country. Among the most important of these issues are sprawl and the critical need for affordable housing.**

Preservation is in the business of saving irreplaceable places and the quality of life they support, and sprawl destroys both. As poorly planned, auto-oriented development spreads further and further out from urban centers, it drains the economic life out of older communities, leaving them blighted by disinvestment and deterioration. Livable neighborhoods are destroyed by the demand for ever-wider roads and ever-bigger parking lots. Historic landmarks are demolished and carted off to the landfill. Our sense of community, stability and continuity is gradually eroded. Everyplace winds up looking like Anyplace, and eventually they all look like Noplace.

That's what sprawl does, and that's why preservationists must continue to lead *continued next page*



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## A New Vision, cont'd from page 11

the fight against it. It's a fight against land-use, development and public-investment policies that are shortsighted, fiscally irresponsible and ultimately destructive. We must insist on policies and practices that maintain local community character and identity; that preserve farms, forests, scenic vistas and environmentally sensitive areas; that revitalize historic downtowns and residential neighborhoods; that encourage wise use of vacant or underused land in existing cities with new development that blends in with its surroundings; that create well-designed new communities in places that can be served efficiently; that promote a sense of community and protect the environment for future generations.

You'll note that this list includes several references to the design and development of new communities. In addition to protecting our legacy from the past, we must also ensure that our legacy to the future includes the best of contemporary architecture and technology. Encouraging good contemporary design is an essential element in the fight for livable communities, and I believe preservationists should play a significant role in it.

As if that weren't enough to keep you busy, preservationists in Connecticut also confront another serious issue that affects almost every family in the nation. The United States is currently experiencing an alarming — and largely silent — crisis in housing. Despite all-time high levels of homeownership, America is not meeting the housing needs of far too many of its citizens. Already, the people who provide essential services in many metropolitan areas — teachers, policemen, firemen, laundry and restaurant workers — can't afford to live in the communities where they work. The situation is only going to get worse. Of the 20 million new jobs that will be created in the U.S. over the next ten years, more than one-third will pay less than \$20,000 per year. At that salary level, people can afford only about \$500 in monthly rent. Where will they live?

I'm convinced that historic preservation is an effective tool for putting affordable housing within reach of all Americans. Most cities have lots of vacant or abandoned housing units, most of them in



N. E. Harkrader

Rehabilitation of historic urban buildings can help meet America's affordable housing needs, according to Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

older neighborhoods. These are assets going to waste. Renovating them would help address the housing crisis without sacrificing the historic character that makes older neighborhoods so appealing. Underused upper floors in older commercial buildings represent another missed opportunity. These spaces could be converted to housing that would take advantage of existing infrastructure and allow people to live close to where they work.

Many nonprofit organizations and for-profit developers are already doing innovative work in this area. Working with developers, housing advocates, lenders, economists and elected officials, preservationists must develop an agenda that will create housing opportunities for all Americans in historic communities. Among other things, this agenda should:

- Encourage states and localities to adopt "smart" building codes, provide financial incentives for rehab, and otherwise eliminate barriers to the creation of housing in historic buildings.
- Help developers make effective use of existing tax-credit programs to create affordable rental housing in historic neighborhoods. This is the thrust of a very important bill currently under consideration in Congress, the Community Restoration and Rehabilitation Act.
- Offer incentives for individual owners to rehabilitate their own historic residen-

tial properties. This is the subject of a tax-credit measure recently introduced in your state legislature, SB 1089 [see page 4]. I urge you to support it.

In the 1960s, the fight against urban renewal was a catalytic event in the growth of the preservation movement. For a whole generation of preservationists, it was the crucible in which their theories and convictions were tested and refined. I believe that issues such as sprawl and affordable housing are to us what urban renewal was to an earlier generation. I believe, too, that we can accomplish what our predecessors did: We can make a difference.

**The final challenge I want to mention may be the biggest of all. We must work harder to inculcate preservation as an ethic — a value — that is understood and embraced by all Americans.**

Today's environmental movement began with a small band of men and women who launched a compelling crusade to convince Americans to change the way we viewed and treated the natural environment. It worked. Today almost all of us accept responsibility for wise stewardship of the natural environment because we know it's in our best interest to do so. By contrast, too many people still regard historic preservation as largely irrelevant to their daily lives. Our job is to change that attitude.

At the National Preservation Conference in St. Louis several years ago, one of the keynote speakers was Bertha Gilkey, a local activist who has won a reputation for organizing low-income residents to demand — and get — improvements in their community. Having listened to several other speakers, she began her remarks with these words: “I just learned something surprising. I’m a preservationist, but I never knew it before.”

That sentiment holds true for millions of people who think the label “preservationist” doesn’t apply to them — people who worry about the rootlessness and erosion of community that threaten our society, who yearn for a connection with something real and meaningful, who want communities that are safe, attractive and truly livable. These people are preservationists. They just don’t realize it.

Our challenge is to help them understand that in saving and enhancing historic buildings and neighborhoods, in advocating land-use and development policies that knit communities together in-

stead of tearing them apart, preservation benefits *everyone* — not just members of historical societies and preservation organizations. Our goal should be nothing less than to make historic preservation a part of the mainstream American consciousness, to incorporate preservation values into the national ethic.

Your preservation efforts here in Connecticut, like efforts elsewhere across the country, are part of a national crusade to ensure that future generations will treasure our heritage just as they value clean air and water. It’s an enormous task, but I believe that it can be done. In fact, it *must* be done. Failing to do it would mean we’d have to accept the unacceptable: the disappearance of the irreplaceable.

I look forward to something very different.

I look forward to the day when all Americans will want to save the best of the past because they realize it enriches the texture, character and livability of our communities.

I look forward to the day when all Americans will work to preserve the marvelous diversity of our heritage because it represents the full depth and diversity of the American experience.

I look forward to the day when all Americans will treasure the tangible evidence of our shared history because they know it helps us figure out where we’re going by telling us how we arrived at where we are now.

I’m confident that that day will come. And I’m also confident that in working toward it, our efforts will be worthy of those — like the founders of the Connecticut Trust — whose vision helped bring us this far. 🌿

*This is a slightly shortened version of the speech that Richard Moe gave at the Connecticut Trust’s 30th anniversary celebration on April 5, 2005.*

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**American Indian Studies,**  
cont'd from page 5

were so different from those of contemporary Europeans and coastal Native American societies, that colonists misread the landscapes they encountered, believing them to be uninhabited. In northwestern Connecticut they did not find nucleated, year-round villages, enclosed lands, or extensive agricultural fields. Instead, evidence uncovered by the Institute suggests a different kind of pattern. Following a seasonal round of ripening fruits/plants/nuts, anadromous fish runs, and other animal life-cycles (such as seasonal migratory habits of waterfowl, winter yarding habits of deer, etc.), northwestern Connecticut Native Americans practiced a settlement system of semi-sedentary base camps, smaller seasonal camps, and even smaller temporary camps that contained all or portions of the group's population at various times of the year, depending on the tasks at hand.

During the 1990s, the Institute changed its focus from archaeology to education, with an emphasis on contemporary Native American arts, crafts, and other community activities. Information from many of the sites excavated by the Institute was never published. In 2004, the Institute again refocused on archaeology as a complement to its educational activities. Its vast archaeological collections serve as a tool for educating schoolchildren and the general public by providing new details to broaden the context of Connecticut history and enrich our understanding of the region's cultural heritage.

The Institute also includes several out-

**Lobbying for Preservation, cont'd from page 4**

For the past decade, the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP), the National Council of State Historic Preservation Officers, and Preservation Action have combined their lobbying efforts and goals. On Tuesday, March 1, more than 300 preservationists made a concerted effort to reach every member of Congress in some way. Four Connecticut citizens visited six of our seven members that day: John Simone, director of the Connecticut Main Street Center; Kathy Maher of Bridgeport's Barnum Museum; Alicia Lay Leuba from the National Trust; and myself. (Unfortunately, Rep. Christopher Shays' office was holding its annual staff retreat and we were unable to connect.)

Results from Lobby Day include Rep. Rob Simmons' joining the new Historic Preservation Caucus. Rep. Rosa DeLauro has signed a Dear Colleague letter in support of increased funding for the Historic Preservation Fund.

Obviously, the work continues past March 1: Save America's Treasures, the only federal "bricks and mortar" program, is threatened with a 50 percent cut. Appropriations for restoring historic barns have been approved for four years, yet no funds have actually been authorized. Heritage Corridors all over the country are in danger of being put "on hold." And the Historic Preservation Fund, the primary tool for funding federal programs and staff in every state, remains at a very low level.

All the Congressional staffers to whom we spoke on Lobby Day were extremely responsive. But competing interests and the shrinking dollar in Washington mean that we cannot take anything for granted.

*Anita Mielert is one of the National Trust's two Advisors from Connecticut. If you are willing to email, call or visit our members of Congress, please her at (860) 658-1190 or send email to wolfried@sbcglobal.net.*

door teaching exhibits. The most popular is our Algonkian Village, a replicated inland southern New England Indian settlement, whose form is based on the findings of the Institute's archaeology programs. The Village contains three pole-frame, bark-covered wigwams, a larger sachem's (chief's) house, a dugout canoe, a central firepit, drying racks for preserving food-stuffs for the winter months, a tanning rack for softening animal hides into cloth-

ing, and a garden in which maize, beans and squash are grown using indigenous planting methods. The museum's current interpretive program offers several perspectives on the Native past in Southern New England. 🌿

*The Institute for American Indian Studies is located at 38 Curtis Road in Washington. For more information, call (860) 868-0518 or visit [www.birdstone.org](http://www.birdstone.org).*

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National Register, cont'd from page 16

Two other urban sites have also been recently listed on the National Register. **Mory's** in New Haven is a private eating club associated with Yale University. In 1863 Frank and Jane Moriarty opened a tavern that quickly became popular with Yale students. Eventually the business passed to Louis Linder, who encouraged singing groups to meet there, among them the Whiffenpoofs, America's oldest all-male *a capella* collegiate singing group. When Mory's was threatened with demolition for new development in 1912, a group of alumni acquired the business and chartered it as a private club.

Affiliated with but not formally part of Yale, Mory's has earned a place in American culture. The club has been immortalized in *The Whiffenpoof Song* — "To the tables down at Mory's/ To the place where Louie dwells/ To the dear old Temple bar/ We love so well..." — and it figures in books and movies and in the memories of countless Yale graduates as a powerful symbol of collegiate camaraderie. The clubhouse, filled with more than 100 years' worth of memorabilia — photos of Whiffenpoofs and athletes, rowing oars and trophies, and tabletops covered with carved initials — bears this out.

Another aspect of the urban experience is seen at the **Central Vermont Railroad Pier** in New London. Projecting more than 1,000 feet into New London Harbor, the pier provided a crucial interchange between



Mary Dunne

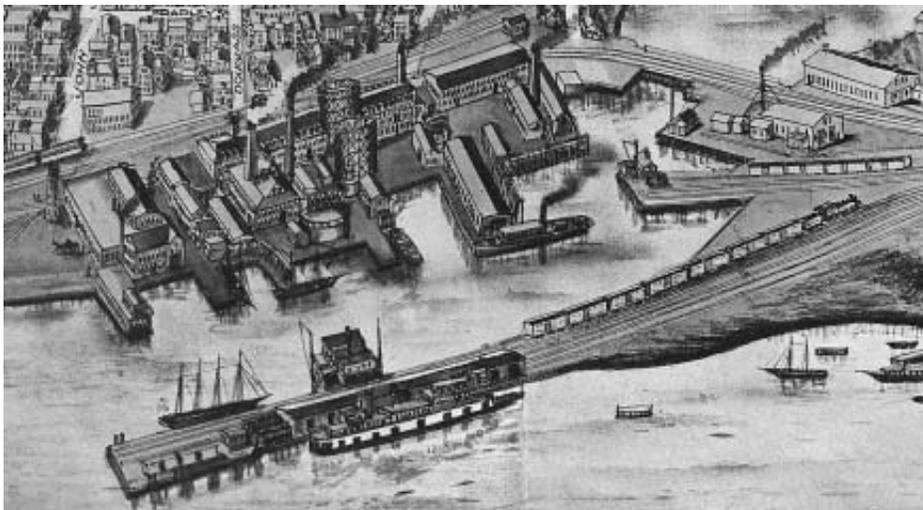
Filled with Yale memorabilia, Mory's, a private club in New Haven, is a symbol of collegiate camaraderie.

land and water-based modes of transportation. It was built in 1876 by the Central Vermont Railroad, part of a rail network that extended throughout New England and Canada, to handle coal shipped in to power the railroad's engines. In 1904 the railroad reconfigured the pier to accommodate general freight and express shipments. Products from the inland were transferred to the steamers for export through New York and imports were brought back for distribution. Service was suspended in 1946 and the pier was used for railroad-car storage and administrative offices until the State of Connecticut bought it in 2001.

The pier's construction was a significant engineering feat. Its granite retaining walls, resting on piles driven deep below the harbor bed, had to resist pressure of

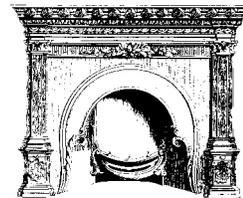
the soil filling that provides a platform, as well as erosion by the water and damage from collisions. The introduction of steam-powered equipment and transport in the 19th century made building such structures far easier. The Central Vermont pier was one of the largest built in Connecticut; today it is an increasingly rare survivor of the type. 🌿

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The Central Vermont Railroad Pier in New London, seen in the foreground of this 1911 view, provided a crucial interchange between land- and water-based transportation.

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## NEW LISTINGS ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER

# Phoenix Building Makes History – Again

**T**he **Phoenix Life Insurance Company Building** in Hartford was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on January 21, the first Connecticut site to make the Register less than fifty years after it was built. As a rule, buildings must be at least 50 years old or have achieved their significance more than 50 years ago, but exceptions can be made for sites of particular importance. The Phoenix Building, completed in 1964, was listed for its crucial role in urban renewal and for its outstanding architectural quality.

In the 1950s, the Phoenix Life Insurance Company, like many other corporations, was contemplating a move to the suburbs. At the same time, urban renewal was changing forever the shape of many American cities, using huge influxes of federal funding to clear deteriorated neighborhoods for new development. In Hartford, one of the principal targets was the area between downtown and the riverfront, where the City hoped to build a new commercial plaza with offices, shops, and a hotel. Demolition began in 1958, but a lack of tenants delayed construction. In 1960, Phoenix announced that it would build its new headquarters in the renewal zone rather than in the suburbs, a decision that made the rest of the project possible. The combined project, the Phoenix building along with Constitution Plaza to its north, became one of the nation's most heavily publicized and discussed urban renewal projects.

In addition to its place in the urban renewal movement, the Phoenix building is an architectural masterpiece. By the late 1950s the Modernist formula of steel-and-glass towers had become tired, and

architects were looking for new ideas. Max Abramovitz (1908-2004), partner in the New York firm of Harrison and Abramovitz that had overseen design of the United Nations headquarters, used the Phoenix commission as an opportunity to explore the geometric possibilities of steel framing and curtain wall construction. The company had asked for a daring building, and Abramovitz gave them one that had only two sides, a pointed oval shape called a “lenticular hyperboloid.” Likened from the first to a boat, the Phoenix building acts as a terminus for the agora-like Constitution Plaza, but unlike the inward-facing plaza, it points

toward the river and downtown Hartford, its podium offering the public a raised walkway with views of both city and river. Sleek and elegant, the glass walls reflect the city and the sky in unexpected, ever-changing ways.

The architectural achievement was not just aesthetic. The design proved economical, costing less than a conventional rectangle. The interior arrangement promotes democratic management, providing extensive views and covered corner locations for ordinary workers, not just higher-ups. The architects carefully designed every detail, from file cabinets to office equipment and furnishings.

The Phoenix building has continued to serve the company and the city well. An eye-catcher beside Interstate 91, visible to local and through traffic, the building is an emblem of 20th-century Hartford just as the Colt Armory's onion dome is of 19th-century Hartford.

*continued on page 15*



The Phoenix Life Insurance Company building, Hartford.