

PRESERVATION CONNECTICUT NEWS

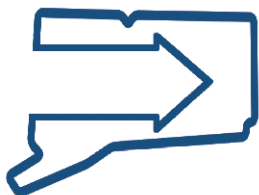
Connecticut's State Historic Preservation Office: 2025 in Review



In 2025, Preservation Connecticut's statutory partner, the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), continued to serve as a leader in historic preservation by promoting the stewardship of historic properties, empowering local advocates, and providing resources and technical guidance to constituents through its various state and federal programs. This work was accomplished while navigating new challenges, embracing innovation with the intent of streamlining processes, and developing a comprehensive plan for historic preservation in Connecticut for the next decade. Turn to page 10 to see how Connecticut SHPO invested in preservation in 2025.

Historic tax credits administered by the State Historic Preservation Office accounted for almost 20 percent of the total project financing for the rehabilitation of the Landers, Frary, and Clark complex in New Britain. This was the largest single source of financing for the project, which created 157 affordable housing units across four historic industrial buildings.

CT State Historic Preservation Office



From the field: the **Circuit Riders** report

Education Programming: Staff continue to expand Preservation Connecticut's education initiatives. Throughout October and November, Circuit Riders organized a well-attended Connecticut Archaeology Fair and presented on available funding for an annual conference for United Methodist Churches and for the Connecticut League of Museums. They concluded a four-part training series for the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities with an in-person panel in Middletown titled "How You Can Make Historic Buildings Work for Your Municipality." They finished a three-part panel series for Save Historic Middlebury and conducted Local Historic District Training sessions for the town of Old Saybrook. Staff members also attended an annual field service retreat in Grafton, Vermont, which brings together representatives from several New England preservation organizations, while others participated in an AIA continuing education workshop on Lead and Asbestos Window Restoration.

Demolition Threats: Preservation Connecticut's field team regularly responds to planned demolitions, unforeseen structural issues, and a variety of other threats to historic resources that are vital community assets. Over the past two months, staff have been actively working on seven such cases involving the potential destruction of structures, including commercial buildings, colonial homesteads, barns, and churches. Often collaborating with the State Historic Preservation Office, our staff leverages Preservation Connecticut's Technical Assistance Consultancy program to hire preservation architects, engineers, and other professionals to develop viable alternatives to demolition, and they work with building owners to identify historic tax credits, grants, and other resources to help preserve these buildings. The results of these interventions vary, but many lead to saving structures in situ, relocating them, or salvaging their historic materials. To help us stop a demolition, please visit <https://preservationct.org/stop-a-demolition>. 🌿

Circuit Riders by the Numbers: October-November 2025

Engagements: **66**

Site visits: **33**

Communities served: **38**



Circuit Riders met in Roxbury to discuss the preservation of playwright Arthur Miller's writing studio. Plans call for relocating the studio, currently on a trailer, to the Minor Memorial Library.

Grafton Inn Staff



Attendees from the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities participated in Preservation Connecticut panel on "How You Can Make Historic Buildings Work for Your Municipality."

Stacey Vairo



PCT's Stefon Danczuk and other field staff from the Northeast met for the annual field service retreat in Grafton, Vermont.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy new year!

For us at Preservation Connecticut, 2025 certainly was eventful: launching our refreshed strategic plan, successful advocacy in Hartford, and of course, the plethora of celebrations for our 50th anniversary were just the highlights. Staff (myself included!) had a great time sharing “our places” with you and hope you enjoyed revisiting notable moments at our favorite sites.

I particularly want to thank everyone who organized, supported, and attended our celebratory dinner at the Lounsbury mansion in Ridgefield on November 6. It was a joyous finale to our anniversary year. We were honored to have Sara Bronin, past board chair and former chair of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, speak. You can read excerpts from her talk on page 4. We shared a letter from Senator Chris Murphy acknowledging our five decades of preservation work in the state and were delighted that Senator Cathy Osten came to the event with a Citation from the State of Connecticut to honor us. A very proud moment for us indeed!

As one busy year wound down, another was gearing up. PCT is looking forward to the New Year and planning to commemo-

rate another anniversary: America’s 250th. You can also expect to peruse our forthcoming theater survey and follow our endeavors supporting the preservation trades in Connecticut.

Joining us for all that will be our new Edward F. Gerber fellow Amelia Mower, who starts at PCT this month. Amelia recently completed a Master’s degree in Historic Preservation Planning at Cornell University. Amelia is from Milford, where she serves as an alternate on the city historic preservation commission. If the name sounds familiar, it’s because Amelia was an intern at PCT in 2022 and 2023, when she drafted state matching grant applications, engaged with community stakeholders, and inventoried our preservation library. As the Gerber fellow, Amelia will work on the Washington Park project and other Circuit Rider tasks.

The Gerber fellowship is made possible by a generous donation from Trustee Ed Gerber, who enthusiastically invites you to join him in supporting PCT’s work to foster the next generation of preservation professionals. Contributions are encouraged and can be made at preservationct.org.

In February, PCT will head up to Hartford again for the annual legislative session. Key items will be to support funding for Connecticut’s State Historic Preservation Office, protect the Community Investment Act, and to advocate for increasing the cap on State historic rehabilitation tax credits—a necessary move to keep the credits effective as a catalyst for creating jobs and fostering continued use of historic buildings amid rising costs for materials and labor. We’re also keeping an eye on federal developments and preparing for the annual preservation lobby week in Washington, D.C., in early March.

Preservation Connecticut is also starting the new year with a new look: *Preservation Connecticut News* is going full-color. While the November-December issue used full color for our annual report, we’re now able to offer this improvement year-round, thanks to a new piece of equipment recently acquired by our printers, GHP Media of West Haven. We hope this will help us make the case for preservation even more effectively.

Stay tuned for more information on all these activities—and join us at our programs and events. I look forward to seeing you and having another productive year together.

—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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Upcoming Meetings

Connecticut Historic Preservation Council

February 4, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.
March 4, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.

To participate, contact Jonathan Kinney
(860) 500-2380; Jonathan.Kinney@ct.gov

State Historic Preservation Review Board

March 20, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.

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

Meetings are hybrid meetings, held in person at the State Historic Preservation Office, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, and virtually via Microsoft Teams.

For more information call (860) 500-2343 or visit portal.ct.gov/DECD/Services/Historic-Preservation/About-the-State-Historic-Preservation-Office



Sara Bronin with Trustee Garry Leonard at the 50th anniversary dinner.



Trustees Ed Gerber and MJ Agostini.



Bill Kraus, Patrick McMahon, and Paul Bailey.

50 YEARS OF STEWARDSHIP

Preservation Connecticut leads the way.

Sara Bronin, Preservation Connecticut's board chair from 2018 to 2020 and former chair of the federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, was the featured speaker at a dinner celebrating PCT's 50th anniversary in November. Here are excerpts from her remarks.

As the chair of the federal historic preservation agency, I had the opportunity to work with and hear from hundreds of preservation organizations and thousands of preservationists from every part of the country. And I learned more about what types of organizations are most effective. Organizations that draw people in, and that develop and advance their positions based on a wide diversity of perspectives. Organizations that adapt to change, that innovate. Organizations that take a stand about the things they believe in. Preservation Connecticut excels at all these things, and so much more.

Preservation Connecticut draws people in—it listens to people, from all walks of life, and tries to help them solve their preservation problems. The Circuit Rider program has a remarkable legacy in this regard, helping people reimagine and repurpose historic schoolhouses, religious buildings, and industrial heritage alike. Preservation Connecticut also draws

people in through its surfacing of often-untold stories through a wide variety of initiatives, including for example the Green Book and LGBTQ history projects. The grants that have, year after year, invested heavily in Black, Latino, and Asian churches, town greens, and community gathering places have had an undeniable impact. And the organization draws in young people through internships, fellowships, and the Mimi Findlay Award. There's more to do. But an inclusive organization is a powerful one.

Preservation Connecticut adapts and innovates in a way few preservation organizations do. We did some small stuff when I served as chair, like tightening up our logo and name. We also embarked on some bigger initiatives, like bringing in a sustainability dimension. Our 2020 "Historic and Green" conference was one of the first such events from any statewide preservation organization in the country. I learned from my time with this organization that the impacts of climate change on archaeological resources, on our buildings, on our landscapes was real—and in D.C. last year, we adopted the federal government's first policy on climate change and historic preservation.

Preservation Connecticut has also pioneered a rigorous approach to data gathering. No nonprofit preservation organization in the country has done more to catalogue, for the public, so

many different types of resources than this one. Barns, mills, Olmsted landscapes, 20th-century creative places, local historic districts, and so much more.

And Preservation Connecticut has taken a stand. It has been pivotal in strategic litigation to stop needless destruction. We need that kind of leadership at the national level, with recent threats to sacred landscapes and even the East Wing of the White House. Preservation Connecticut's advocacy at the state capitol, similarly, has been instrumental in ensuring our history remains top of mind for legislators. This advocacy admirably focuses as much, or more, on neighborhoods and communities than on individual buildings.

Having gotten a bird's-eye view of the preservation movement from Washington D.C., I appreciate more than ever the thoughtfulness, integrity, and effectiveness of Preservation Connecticut. I thank everyone who continues to support the organization.

Looking ahead, Preservation Connecticut in its next 50 years should be bold and ambitious. Take the moral high ground by being at the forefront of the pro-homes movement, proactively offering strategies for Connecticut families to find the affordable, accessible housing they need—and to find it in our historic buildings. Continue the hard work of coalition building, including with



Tod Bryant



Tod Bryant

Michelle Fabiani, Trustee Nick Fabiani, and Nancy Savin



Tod Bryant

Charles and Marcella Mascola and John Canning

allies focused on the environment. And do what it takes to forge a strong organization—drawing people in, adapting, and taking a stand. It's an honor to be here tonight, and I thank you for letting me be a part of this history. 🌸



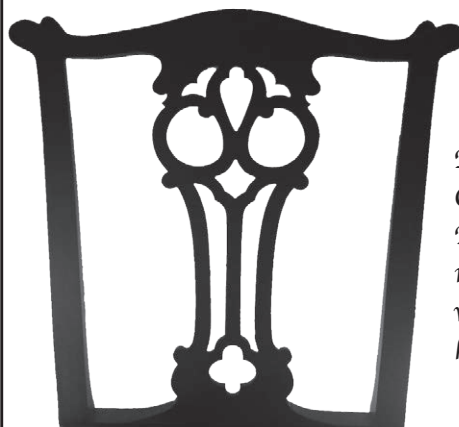
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—David K. Left, town historian, Canton

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Many faces of Connecticut history

Sites recently added to the National Register of Historic Places illustrate the rich variety of Connecticut's history. In these places we see embodied:

- the lives and livelihoods of 19th-century Cape Verdean immigrants;
- changing uses from livestock agriculture to fine arts;
- transition in architectural traditions at the turn of the 19th century;
- the work of professor who influenced the course of Modern architecture in the 20th century; and
- an updated understanding of the development of downtown Bridgeport.

Finally, we have documentation accompanying the move of a Federal-era house to ensure its preservation while making room for new development.

A federal program that is administered in Connecticut by the State Historic Preservation Office, the National Register functions primarily as an honorific designation and a planning tool that guides development projects. Sites listed receive an extra level of scrutiny for any work funded by federal or state dollars. In addition, they are eligible for preservation incentives such as tax credits or grants for rehabilitation work.

Antone DeSant houses, New London.

These two small buildings represent New London's Cape Verdean immigrant population between 1840 and 1954. They were built around 1840 for Antone DeSant, a native of Cape Verde who came to New London in 1831 and initially worked as a crew member on whaling ships.

DeSant lived from 1840 until his death in 1888 in the larger building, 751-53 Bank Street, where he operated a barber shop and then a grocery. His daughter, grandson, and great-granddaughter continued to live on the property, renting out the ground-level commercial spaces as well as an apartment in the smaller



The Antone DeSant houses in New London represent the city's Cape Verdean immigrants.

National Register of Historic Places, Laura Kline



The Beardsley-Hare house in Roxbury was a gathering place for 20th-century artists.

building next door at number 745.

The distinctive curve in the rear wall of 745 Bank follows the path of a watercourse that has since been filled in. Both buildings were later raised up on new first stories with storefronts.

Ezekial Beardsley/David Hare house & studio, Roxbury. This house was built about 1835 for Roxbury farmer Ezekial

Beardsley, likely by his nephew, Charles Thompson Beardsley. Its Greek Revival design resembles a number of other buildings in the town.

Beginning in 1941, the house was associated with several internationally known artists, part of the larger group of creatives who settled in rural Connecticut for its peaceful atmosphere and easy connections to New York. Among the house's occu-



The Isaac and Sarah Upham house in Thompson illustrates the transition from Colonial to Federal architectural styles.

National Register of Historic Places, Robert Gregson



The Vincent J. and Susannah K. Scully house was home to a nationally-significant architectural historian and critic.

pants were the sculptor, artist, and photographer David Hare, his wife, painter Jacqueline Lamba, and painter Arshile Gorky—all prominent Surrealists—as well as illustrator Robert Kuhn. In addition, the house became a gathering place for other well-known artists and intellectuals who lived in or visited the area, including Yves Tanguy and Kay Sage, André Breton, André Masson, Alexander Calder, and Jean-Paul Sartre.

Isaac and Sarah Upham house, Thompson. Built about 1800, this farmhouse exhibits changes in Connecticut architecture occurring about that time, when new Federal stylistic features were layered onto the old center-chimney plan from the colonial era. New features include the shallower pitch of the roof, lighter framing, sidelights flanking the front door, increased use of plaster rather than wood

paneling or sheathing, and Federal style woodwork in the parlor.

The layout is a variant of the center-chimney plan, but with the kitchen in the front room of a double-pile house, rather than behind the chimney. It serves as a reminder that the "typical" plan was only one variant available to builders.

Vincent J. and Susannah K. Scully house, Woodbridge.

As an architectural historian, author, teacher, critic, and theorist, Vincent Scully influenced the development of American architecture in the second half of the 20th century. His thinking evolved over the years, expanding from consideration of individual buildings to the place of architecture in the larger built and natural environment. Initially a promoter of Modernism, Scully came to question many of its tenets, particularly regarding urban planning, becoming a vocal supporter of New Urbanist design and the historic preservation movement (including service on the boards of the New Haven Preservation Trust and Preservation Connecticut).

Built in 1950, the house illustrates Modernist residential architecture in the postwar period. It is the only surviving, unaltered building that Scully himself designed, and its features, along with alterations he also designed, reflect themes that characterized his evolving thinking.

Bridgeport Downtown historic districts amendment.

Two National Register districts in downtown Bridgeport, both listed in 1987, were updated and combined into a single district with an expanded boundary and period of significance to incorporate new development that significantly altered the shape of Downtown between 1937 (the cutoff date for the earlier districts) and 1972.

After World War II, Bridgeport, like other Connecticut cities, was dramatically reshaped by highway projects and urban renewal programs. In Bridgeport these included the construction of the Connecticut Turnpike (I-95) and state routes 8 and 25 which changed transportation patterns, plus the clearing of areas deemed deteriorated and construction of

continued on page 18

Briefly noted

Bridgeport. ►

Restoration of the Freeman houses (1848; NR) began in earnest on November 19, when the Mary and Eliza Freeman Center for History and Community broke ground on the structural stabilization of the Eliza Freeman house. Built by two African American sisters originally from Derby, the houses are the last standing remnants of Little Liberia, a thriving antebellum-era African American community in Bridgeport's South End. They have been the subject of a long and difficult preservation effort that included designation by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in 2018. When renovated, the Eliza Freeman house will be a resilience center offering information on the history and culture of Little Liberia as well as climate adaptation and weather emergency communications. The current work will focus on structural stabilization and the construction of a new foundation. Funding includes a \$750,000 African American Civil Rights grant from the federal government.



Wikipedia, Kenneth C. Zirkel

New London. ►

Not two years after the collapse of the First Congregational Church, another city church building has been condemned because of urgent structural needs. The former Second Congregational (1868; NR) was declared "unsafe and unfit for human occupancy" in November, based on an evaluation completed in April that found serious issues with the building's tower and spire. In May, the city ordered the church's owner, Engaging Heaven Church, to add safety fencing to prevent injury should stones fall from the tower, but the work was never done. In addition to Engaging Heaven, which moved to the church after the collapse of First Congregational Church, two other congregations that leased space in the building are also left homeless.





◀ New London.

A new owner is pursuing plans to reopen the long-vacant Capitol Theater (1921; NR) as a music hall. Originally opened in 1921, the venue hosted vaudeville acts and then movies from silents to X-rated before closing in 1974. Since then, developers have proposed numerous new uses but none have proved viable. In November, the city planning and zoning commission approved Christopher Meyer's application for a special use permit to allow operation of an entertainment/music venue—the first formal concept plan submitted for the building, as Felix Reyes, City director of economic planning and development, told *The Day of New London*. Meyer, co-owner of a New Haven music club, plans to divide the interior into two performance spaces while restoring the exterior.

▼ Rocky Hill.

The Connecticut Department of Transportation is making improvements to the Rocky Hill-Glastonbury ferry, the longest-running, continuously operated ferry service in the U.S. It has been carrying people and vehicles across the Connecticut River since 1655. The ferry landings on both sides of the river are part of a National Register district, along with the tugboat *Cumberland* and the barge *Hollister III* (both 1955) as contributing resources. DOT is installing new sidewalks, ramps, and pedestrian connections for better and safer access, as well as benches and other amenities to make the ferry more inviting. Work began at end of November and is expected to continue through the spring.

Connecticut Department of Transportation



The Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is proud to share this year-end review of our work in 2025.

Jonathan Kinney, State Historic Preservation Officer

Embracing innovation

Data and web-based innovations are making more information available to the public and streamlining application and review processes.

- ConnCRIS, the Connecticut Cultural Resource Information System, now makes it possible to:
 - request evaluation of sites for State or National Register of Historic Places eligibility, resulting in faster response times; and
 - guide applicants through the environmental review submission process by asking a series of questions related to SHPO's review authority, project scope, and existing conditions.
- Electronic applications improved efficiency and ease of access to our Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit programs and Historic Restoration Fund Grants.
- SHPO has improved its internal tracking system with a new database, developed using guidance from the CTData Collaborative, which provides a better overall picture of SHPO investment in historic preservation across the state.

State/National Registers of Historic Places

Designation provides recognition for historic places and makes them eligible for preservation incentives.

- 10 properties were added to the State Register, recognizing history and architecture spanning over 250 years and areas as diverse as art, education, social history, and industry.
- 12 new listings on the National Register included an historic district



Governor Ned Lamont, Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz, Commissioner Ronald Welch, and new residents celebrated the ribbon cutting of Patriot's Landing, a supportive housing project on the Department of Veteran Affairs campus in Rocky Hill and reviewed by SHPO as part of environmental compliance. The property, listed on the State Register, retained its historic integrity while being rehabilitated for veterans and their families.

in Stafford Springs and an expanded historic district in downtown Bridgeport (see page 6).

Environmental Review

SHPO's ability to comment on publicly funded projects has had a profound effect on preservation in our state—not to stop projects, but to manage change and protect archaeological sites and historic community fabric.

- During 2025, staff reviewed approximately 2,200 projects. Of these, approximately 1,400 had no effect on historic resources. The remainder required efforts to avoid, minimize, or mitigate actions that would diminish historic integrity or character.
- Only 40 projects (less than 2 percent) resulted in such a substantial loss of historic fabric that mitigation was needed.
- One highly visible project was the U.S. Coast Guard Museum in New London, where SHPO worked with architects to avoid overpowering Union Station, designed by H. H. Richardson.
- Most environmental review projects are small in themselves, but collectively they have a significant impact, such as new construction projects

re-designed to avoid disturbing archaeological sites or the projects where SHPO convinced developers to retain and repair historic windows, rather than replace them.

Grants

The majority of SHPO's grant programs are funded by the Connecticut Community Investment Act (CIA). Under the CIA, a \$50 fee is charged on all land transactions within Connecticut. The city or town retains \$2.00, and the remainder is divided evenly across 4 sectors: Historic Preservation, Affordable Housing, Farmland, and Open Space.

Of the preservation deposit, our statutory nonprofit partner, Preservation Connecticut, receives \$475,000, and the remainder, \$2,235,000 in 2025, was sent to SHPO for staffing and these grant programs:

Survey and Planning Grants

- \$428,000 to 27 municipalities and nonprofit organizations for designation, survey, and predevelopment projects.
- \$50,000 each to local preservation partners, New London Landmarks and the New Haven Preservation Trust.
- \$150,000 to Preservation Connecticut for the Circuit Rider program.

Historic Restoration Fund Grants:

\$1 million per year for maintenance and repair of historic building fabric and character-defining features.

- In 2025 50 applicants requested a total of \$7,088,000.
- \$1 million was awarded to 8 organizations.
- Pre-applications for 2026 totaled \$5,208,671 from 36 organizations.

Historic rehabilitation tax credits

Federal and State commercial tax credits

- As of December 5, the SHPO issued \$37,857,530 in credits, representing 15 projects with total costs of \$135,483,350.
- The program helped to create 309 affordable housing units.
- 140 applications reviewed and approved.
- As of December 5, over \$21 million in tax credits were reserved for 14 projects.

Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit

- Owner-occupied homes listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places and consisting of 1-4 units are eligible for a 30 percent tax credit of up to \$30,000.
- In 2025, 126 tax credit vouchers totaling \$1,409,000 were issued to homeowners in 36 towns.

Education and outreach

Providing educational opportunities and meaningful engagement with our partners and constituents are critical to the success of the SHPO and for Connecticut's larger preservation network. Our 2025 work in this area included:

- 5 training programs, on Section 106, grant writing, ConnCRIS GIS System, and Secretary of the Interior Standards.
- 4 training sessions on the Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit.
- 20-25 Connecticut Freedom Trail events.
- 6 Local Historic District commission training sessions.
- 3 programs on sustainability



Through environmental review, SHPO worked with the architects of the Coast Guard Museum to ensure that the new building would not overpower historic Union Station, designed by H. H. Richardson.

Google Street View, 2023



Once slated for demolition, the Increase Clapp house (1808) is poised to become a gateway to South Windsor's historic district, owned by Clapp House Preservation, Inc. SHPO recently awarded a grant to hire an architect for a condition assessment of the house—the first step in planning its future preservation and reuse.

- Co-sponsored and presented the Connecticut Archaeology Fair.
- Sponsored Connecticut History Day special prize for outstanding

entry that incorporates an historic site and promotes an historic preservation ethic.

continued on next page

SHPO year-end review, cont'd from page 11

Statewide Plan 2025-2034

The National Park Service approved SHPO's Statewide Historic Preservation Plan, which provides guidance for effective decision making about historic preservation throughout the state. The Statewide Plan will be available on our website as soon as it is finalized and published.

Challenges

SHPOs across the country faced substantial challenges throughout 2025:

- Federal funding: delayed release of FY2025 Historic Preservation Fund awards created budget uncertainty and staffing risks, and threatened critical programs. Though funds were eventually released, advocacy has surged to support full and timely FY2026 funding.
- Preservationists have been working to understand the full implications of executive orders issued by the current administration. Several orders directly affect aspects of SHPO work.
- Environmental review: Congress and the administration continue their efforts to streamline the Section 106 consultation process.



Preservationists are monitoring this situation as more attention is focused on the balance between development and regulation/protection. It will be critical to emphasize the inherent flexibility and efficiency already built into the process.

Despite these challenges, Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office continued to work with its partners and constituents to identify, preserve, and protect the irreplaceable cultural resources located in every community in our State. We look forward to continuing this work, with you, in 2026! 🌿

As a result of advocacy in partnership with local citizens and Preservation Connecticut, SHPO entered into an agreement with representatives of Gales Ferry Intermodal, Inc in Ledyard to ensure the long-term preservation of Fort Decatur, a fort constructed during the War of 1812 and abandoned at the end of the war. The agreement will result in the donation of 3.44 acres containing the remains of Fort Decatur's earthworks and sentry post to the nonprofit Archaeological Conservancy for permanent preservation.

EDWARD F. GERBER'S LEGACY

"My entire life, I've been passionate about preserving historic buildings and places. I felt compelled to join Preservation Connecticut's Legacy Society, as well as contribute during my lifetime, because Preservation Connecticut is the only statewide preservation organization and it needs individuals like me to support it. The Legacy Society allows me to be flexible in my estate planning by donating outright today and from my estate further down the road."

What will your legacy be?

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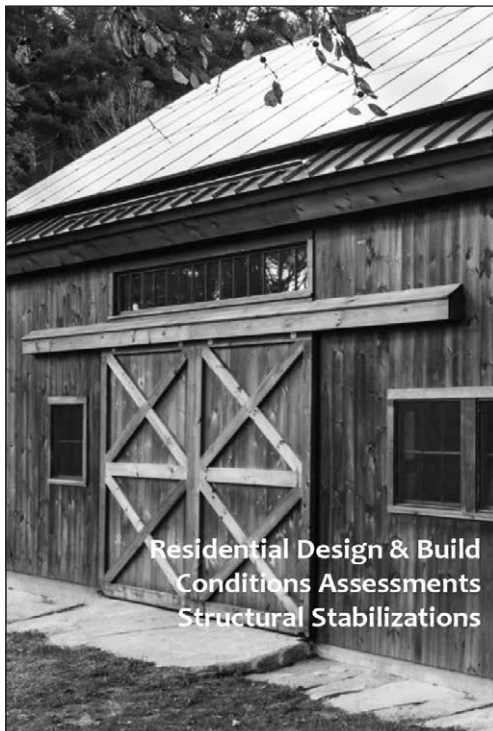
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HISTORIC PROPERTIES EXCHANGE

Threatened Buildings and Easement Properties Available — January/February 2026

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.

O'Rourke's Diner, 728 Main Street, Middletown (1947)

\$339,000

Opportunity to purchase iconic O'Rourke's Diner in Middletown. Built by the Mountain View Diner Company in 1946, the Art Deco detailed dining car was moved to its current location in 1947. O'Rourke's Diner operated at this location until closure in June 2023. Located in Middletown's Main Street National Register historic district, which makes it eligible for State or Federal historic rehabilitation tax credits. Building area 1,420 sq. ft.; 0.11 acres.

Contact: Beth DiLoreto, Berkshire Hathaway, 860-796-1578, bdiloreto@bhhsne.com



122-R Naubuc Avenue, Glastonbury (1863)

\$995,000

Industrial building available in Glastonbury. Built for Connecticut Arms and Manufacturing Co. which occupied the site until declaring bankruptcy in 1869. Later occupants include American Silver Co. and William Brothers Silver Co. (silver and flatware) until after World War II. Listed in Preservation Connecticut's Mills: Making Places of Connecticut industrial survey and located in Curtisville National Register historic district, which makes it eligible for historic rehabilitation tax credits. Building area is 59,767 sq. ft.; 1.4 acres.

Contact: Paul Scalzo Sr., Scalzo Commercial & New Development, 203-470-3972



859-867 East Main Street, Bridgeport (1911)

\$1,199,999

Redevelopment opportunity for mixed-use former American Bank and Trust Company building in Bridgeport's East Side. The Beaux-Arts-style building features elaborate stone ornamentation and is located one block from PCT's community preservation project around Washington Park. Building area 8,454 sq. ft.; 0.14 acres.

Contact: Ashley Chaia, Oxford Realty, 203-314-4219, ashley@oxfordrealtyco.com





American Hatters and Furriers Co. 70 Beaver Street, Danbury (c. 1872, 1880, 1906, 1910)

\$1,495,000

Historic Danbury mill available for purchase. Originally W.A. and A.M. White Company, Danbury's principal importer, processor and supplier of hatters fur. Acquired by American Hatters and Furriers Corporation in 1901 which occupied the site until 1960. United Fur Company was next occupant from 1964 to 1968. In 1977 a cabinet and furniture company acquired the site. This property is listed in Preservation Connecticut's Mills: Making Places of Connecticut industrial survey and identified as a potential candidate for listing on the State Register of Historic Places, which would make it eligible for State historic rehabilitation tax credits. Building area is 70,578 sq. ft.; 1.54 acres.

Contact: Ed Godin, Godin Property Brokers, 203-577-2277, egodinpb@gmail.com



Vincent and Susannah Scully House 68 Orchard Road, Woodbridge (1950)

\$550,000 Under Contract

Mid-Century Modern house of esteemed architect Vincent Scully is on the market. Designed by Scully for his family, the house is an example of Modernist trends in residential architecture featuring a simple rectangular form, strong horizontal lines, expansive windows, and open floorplan. Includes 3 bedrooms, 1 bath. Ladder accessed cupola added in 1953 as guest room and study. Property also includes garage/studio and car shelter. 1,872 sq. ft.; 3.22 acres. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Contact: Wojtek Borowski, Pearce Real Estate, 203-776-1899, wborowski@hpearce.com

Deadline for the next issue is February 20, 2026

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 Kristen Hopewood, at khopewood@preservationct.org, or call (203) 562-6312.



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National Register, cont'd from page 7

new, modern commercial and civic projects. Notable among the latter are the Bridgeport Transit center, the Connecticut Post parking garage, new Federal and State courthouses, and the Lafayette Plaza office building.

Pinto house move completed, New Haven. Buildings that have been moved typically no longer qualify for the National Register. However, the move of the Pinto house, just a few yards, to make room for a new apartment building, was carefully planned to retain the house's architectural character. After the move, the Park Service reviewed and approved the results, and the house retains its designation as a fine example of Federal-era design.



The Lafayette Plaza office building was built as part of downtown Bridgeport's urban renewal program.

C. Wigren



A carefully planned move allowed the Pinto house to make room for new development while maintaining its architectural character.

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Facebook: Connecticut Old Churches Houses Bridges Mills

C. Wigen, 2013



General Israel Putnam's farmhouse in Brooklyn is listed on the National Register. The left half of the building was added by later owners.



African American soldier Dick Freedom was enslaved at the Royce house, in Wallingford.

To this day, a cannonball remains embedded in the walls of the Keeler Tavern, an 18th-century building that was preserved first as the home of architect Cass Gilbert and, since 1966, as a museum.

Despite the lack of military action, Connecticut contributed troops to the struggle. Military leaders from the state included David Wooster, from Stratford, who led the militia at Ridgefield and was killed in the battle. David Humphreys, born in Derby (now Ansonia), was an aide-de-camp to George Washington and, after the war, American minister to Spain. Ethan Allen, born in Litchfield, led the capture of Fort Ticonderoga. General Israel Putnam's farm, in Brooklyn, survives and was listed in the National Register in 1979.

It was the common soldiers who bore the greatest physical hardships of the war. In addition to dangers of battle, they suffered inadequate food and clothing. Winters could be brutal. Putnam's troops spent the winter of 1778-1779 huddled in primitive cabins in Redding. The site, sometimes called "Connecticut's Valley Forge," was acquired by the State of Connecticut in 1887 and developed as a memorial, much as was being done with Civil War battlefields at the time. Carriage drives through the site led visitors past heaps of stones—remnants of the cabins' chimneys—a granite obelisk memorializes the soldiers and listed battles in which they served, while miniature stone-and-log gatehouses provide a martial setting. Today, the Putnam Memorial is Connecticut's oldest state park.

Even African Americans joined the fight for independence. Many served alongside

White soldiers in integrated companies, but there also were all-Black companies such as the one commanded by David Humphreys. Identifying extant sites associated with Black soldiers is difficult, but one member of Humphreys' company, Dick Freedom, was enslaved by the Royce family of

Wallingford. The Royce house survives on North Main Street, a museum of the Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust. A Witness Stone there commemorates Dick Freedom's life, and the Wallingford Historical Society owns his decorated powder horn. 🌿



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CONNECTICUT AT 250

Fighting for independence

Throughout 2026, Preservation Connecticut News will explore places around the state associated with the achievement of American independence.

The United States' road to independence was not easy one. England did not give up its colonies willingly. It took a war—a war between thirteen disparate colonies and the greatest military power of the age; a war that lasted eight years; a war whose outcome was far from certain. Connecticut itself saw few battles, and the ones that took place here were relatively minor compared to action in other states. British and Loyalist forces made raids on Danbury and coastal towns and burned Fairfield, Norwalk, and New London.

One of the most notorious episodes of the war was the battle of Groton Heights, in 1781, at which British forces killed more than 80 American defenders, most after they had surrendered—an event considered a massacre by the Americans. Fort Griswold, the site of the battle, has been preserved as a state park since 1953, along with the Groton Monument, built in 1826 as a memorial to those killed.

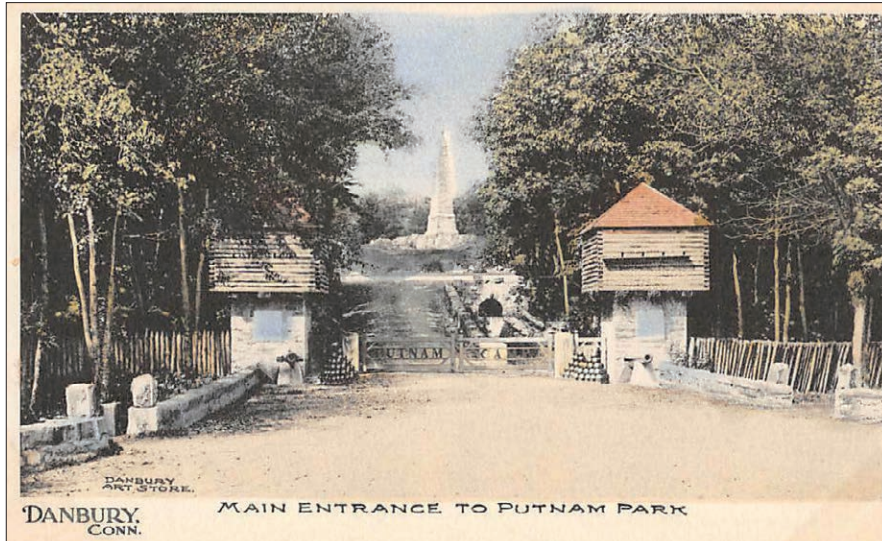
A smaller but evocative reminder of the war is found in Ridgefield, where Connecticut militia briefly skirmished with New York troops led by the royal governor, General William Tryon, in 1777.

continued on page 19

Fort Griswold and the Groton Monument, where British troops killed American defenders, many after they had surrendered.



Preservation Connecticut



Ebay

American troops spent the winter of 1778-1779 in Redding at what is now Putnam Memorial State Park, seen in a postcard postmarked 1907.