

Hartford

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Preservation Alliance

Fall 2009



2009 Hartford Preservation Alliance Awards

This year's 2009 Hartford Preservation Alliance Awards took place on May 20th at the Design Center - 1429 Park Street, in Hartford's historic Parkville neighborhood. Eleven awards were presented for outstanding historic preservation, adaptive re-use, in-fill, and community education projects.

Photo courtesy of CT Dept. of Transportation.

Riverfront Recapture and the Connecticut Department of Transportation

For: The celebration of the 100th anniversary of the construction of the Bulkeley Bridge

2008 marked the 100th anniversary of the construction of the Bulkeley Bridge, which, with its magnificent granite arches, is one of the nation's great bridges. Its dedication in 1908 was marked by a three-day celebration of parades, speeches, and fireworks, reportedly attended by 250,000 people. Today, 140,000 drivers cross this bridge every day, unaware of the remarkable structure beneath them. Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1993, the bridge was named for Morgan G. Bulkeley, a former Governor, U.S. Senator, Hartford Mayor, President of Aetna Life Insurance, and President of baseball's National League. He also headed the Commission that supervised the construction of the bridge.

Over the past 27 years, Riverfront Recapture and the Connecticut Department of Transportation have worked together in a unique public-private partnership to restore public access to the riverfront. This riverfront revival, which has generated a renewed appreciation of the beauty of the Bulkeley Bridge, set the stage for a month-long celebration of the centennial last fall. Celebration activities included a rededication ceremony, publication of a book about the bridge's history, distribution of a souvenir poster, and production of six four-foot by eight-foot display panels that provided a visual history of the bridge. The commemorative book – entitled *Spanning a Century – The Bulkeley Bridge 1908-2008* – was written and published by the Department of Transportation and contains dozens of historic photographs.

The highlight of the celebration was the lighting of the bridge facades last October, replicating with modern technology the lights that outlined the bridge's arches at the opening ceremony in 1908.

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Photography

Tomas J. Nenortas Collection
Laura Stone

Mission Statement

*The mission of the
Hartford Preservation Alliance
is to preserve and revitalize
Hartford's unique architectural heritage
and neighborhood character.*



From The Office

Laura Knott-Twine, Executive Director



Besides the daily activities of: assisting home and building owners; creating curriculum for preservation workshops; raising awareness of the benefits of Historic Preservation; working with developers by encouraging adaptive reuse of historic buildings, research and organizing materials, a good deal of my time was spent working with others to ensure that the Community Investment Act (CIA) stayed in place. The state CIA funds support the Offices of the CT Commission on Culture & Tourism, the CT Trust for Historic Preservation and numerous historic preservation groups and projects. HPA has received Basic Operating Support for 3 years and HPA's office has been a flurry of activity since the spring.

Each year we have been privileged to have interns and volunteers help us with survey work, overseen by Tomas Nenortas, Director of Programs. This year's helpers were Leah Kleinman, a recent graduate of Syracuse University who now holds a BA in architecture; Stan Guzek a volunteer from the community and three interns from the University of Hartford's Information Technology Community Support Project (ITCSP.) The students were: Christina Duphrezin, Rajin Roophnath and Kaseem Foster all of Hartford. ITCSP is a National Science Foundation funded program which provides after-school and summer opportunities for Hartford youths in grades 7-12 to learn diverse skills in the field of information technology. During the Summer Institute training sessions in July, these young people focused on career planning, professional development and a wide variety of hands-on computer projects. Their experiences included: Internet research, HPA resource library research, documenting building construction on city-wide maps, Survey field work, database entry and participation in Hartford events such as building openings, guided tours of Hartford and site visits to local historic buildings. Other volunteers this year have been adult volunteers from the area: Ann McAloon, Shirley Quintero, Henry Arneith and Lucas Karmazinas. They participated in various activities such as the Preservation Awards Ceremony Committee, research projects, general office support and writing applications for placing buildings on the National Register of Historic Places.



*HPA's Summer Interns for 2009!
Rajin Roophnath, Christina Duphrezin,
Leah Kleinman and Kaseem Foster.*

-Continued next page

Is your home on the National Register of Historic Places? Then you are eligible to purchase and display a stylish National Register plaque featuring the landmark Charter Oak. Individually listed buildings are also eligible for a similar plaque. If you are unsure of your home's status please contact HPA for additional information. Send your name and address with a check or money order for \$35.00 payable to Treasurer, State of Connecticut to:

**Stacey Vairo
State and National Register Coordinator
Historic Preservation and Museum Division
Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism
One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor
Hartford, CT 06103**





From The Office

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Our Senior Program Assistant, Mary Falvey has conducted extensive research on architects, buildings and neighborhoods of Hartford ensuring that HPA's database of information and resources continue to grow. She acts as HPA's webmaster and keeps our web site current. She offered a well received walking tour of Barry Square and found organizing the event very satisfying.

The Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism asked us to develop "Being Modern in Hartford," a walking tour this past May in celebration of National Preservation Month. Mary researched and developed both a ½ hour lunchtime tour of Constitution Plaza (given 4 times) and an expanded Saturday tour encompassing the Plaza and Main Street architecture. Her in-depth research included an examination of the conditions leading up to the Plaza's construction, a detailed explanation of why the plaza design was utilized, a comprehensive description of the individual buildings and their architectural styles and a critique of the successes and shortcomings of Hartford's 1960s "Urban Renewal" experience. Over 70 visitors enjoyed participating in this educational and interesting journey looking at our most recent architecture. It was such a success we offered it again this fall.

Tomas Nenortas, Director of Programs, has for the past three years, overseen the update to the State of Connecticut's 1997 Historic Buildings Index. This revised database provides information on properties listed on Local, State, and National Registers of Historic Places. It also identifies sites that may be eligible for historic designation which will be particularly useful since it now covers the City of Hartford's complete parcel inventory. Tomas has also been involved in the update to Hartford's Anti-Blight Ordinance. Working with a coalition of organizations along with David Panagore, Director of Development Services and now the Chief Operating Officer,

*Above:
Fountain – Constitution Plaza
designed by Masao Kinoshita,
1962*

*Right:
The Phoenix Building
One American Row
"The Boat Building"
designed by Max Abramovitz,
1963*

*Below: Mary Falvey conducts
"Being Modern in Hartford",
a walking tour of Constitution
Plaza*



the law clearly identifies blighting conditions and provides tools to enforce the \$100 per day/per violation fines. Vacant and unsecured buildings are threatened with "demolition-by-neglect" when owners abandon properties. The revised ordinance will add greater protections to the capital city's historic assets. In our Spring 2010 Newsletter, Tomas will offer a full accounting of the activities and findings of the Survey and about the process of counting over 22,000 buildings and parcels in our capital city.

Supporting HPA

The Hartford Preservation Alliance has been financed in part by the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, the City of Hartford, Aetna Foundation, The Hartford and the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, in cooperation with the Connecticut Humanities Council and New Alliance Bank Foundation. Many others, including businesses and our members, have contributed to the operation of our organization, and we wish to thank them for their continued support.



Connecticut Commission
on Culture & Tourism



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News from the Board

Richard Ott, President

President Richard Ott has recently appointed Kevin Donovan as Chair of the Fund Development Committee and Valerio Giadone as Chair of the Governance Committee. The Directors would also like to thank Lee and Ann Kuckro for hosting the September Board Retreat at their home. The retreat was facilitated by John Motley of Hartford.

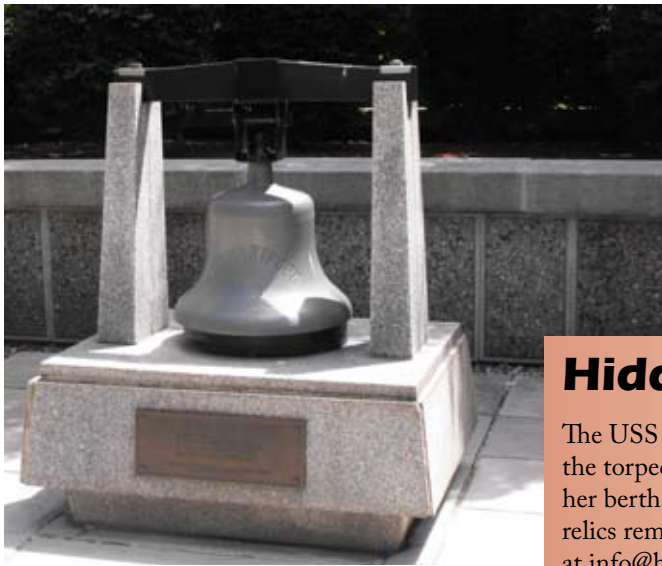
The Board of Directors invites interested people to become more involved with HPA through committee work and assisting in projects at our office on Arbor Street. If you are available, please send an email to Laura Knott-Twine at lktwine@hartfordpreservation.org.



T.J. Nenortas Collection

Lost Hartford

This mysterious photo of a majestic Row House in Hartford, in an unknown location, has baffled architectural historians for decades ever since it reappeared in 1975. It was originally published in 1886 in *L'Architecture Americaine*, a French photographic anthology of recent buildings constructed in the United States. If you have any clues as to its location please contact HPA!



Hidden Hartford

The USS Hartford was the flagship of Admiral David G. Farragut's ("damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead") fleet during the Civil War. The ship sank at her berth in the Norfolk Navy Yard on November 20, 1956 but several of her relics remain. Do you know where her bell is displayed? Email us your answer at info@hartfordpreservation.org. The first person who submits the correct response will receive a pair of complimentary 2010 Walking Tour tickets.

Membership Dues:

- | | |
|--|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | \$ 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$ 25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household | \$ 40 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation Friend | \$ 100 |
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Mail to: Hartford Preservation Alliance,
56 Arbor Street, Suite 406, Hartford, CT 06106
All contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Threatened!

The Hartford Preservation Alliance has been informed of a demolition threat to the Swift Factory at 10 & 60 Love Lane in the Northeast neighborhood. The owners had asked for a reduction in the 90-day waiting period but HPA was successful in having this request denied. The owners may pursue applying for a Demolition Permit on November 23rd, 2009 should any development proposal fail to materialize.

History of the site: In 1888 Matthew Swift started manufacturing gold leaf at Love Lane. The complex expanded quickly starting in 1890, then in 1929, and the last expansion took place in 1940. An additional Swift home was constructed circa 1914.

Claim to Fame: M. Swift & Sons, Inc. placed the gold leaf on the State Capitol Dome and by 1988, its 100th anniversary, was the only survivor out of more than 100 gold-beating shops that were once in existence across America.

Current Situation: Swift family members, who still own the site, are looking to sell to a developer or they may demolish.

HPA has been working with the City of Hartford, Common Ground - developers of 410 Asylum Street, the Northeast NRZ, Habitat for Humanity, Mutual Housing, Corporation for Independent Living and the University of Hartford, in a possible adaptive reuse project of the site. The former Swift Factory complex was surveyed in 1997 by the State of Connecticut and was listed as National Register eligible which would allow for use of Federal and State Rehabilitation tax credits if placed on the National Register of Historic Places. HPA surveyed the site on September 12, 2007 on behalf of the State of Connecticut and concurred with the 1997 designation.

The Swift Factory is a contributing historic resource and its adaptive reuse will have a positive and stabilizing effect in the Northeast neighborhood. The preservation and revitalization of Hartford's unique architectural heritage and neighborhood character are proven economic development tools and rehabilitation of the Swift Factory complex would be a contributing factor.

Then



T.J. Nenortas Collection

This 64 Deerfield Avenue house in Upper Albany, decorated for the Fourth of July, was once the home of Joseph & Alice Merritt who lived there from 1903-1926. Joseph started the Joseph Merritt Company, a mechanical consulting and engineering blue prints business. Over 100 years later the company, still in Hartford, has grown state-wide and is nationally known for its graphic imaging and printing.

& Now



Laura Stone

Now the home of the Martin R. Hogan family, the house has survived relatively intact. Deerfield Avenue has experienced successful revitalization with sympathetic rehabilitation efforts and appropriate in-fill housing over the past few years. Even the local landmark Deer Statue has been re-installed at the entrance to the street.



The Swift Factory as seen from Love Lane.

Laura Stone



Demolition-by-Neglect : The Oldest House in the West End Elisha Wadsworth House, 1234 Prospect Avenue, 1828

Tragedy has struck the oldest house in the West End. The 1828 Elisha Wadsworth House was severely damaged by water when pipes burst and flooded the historic interior destroying woodwork that dated from the original construction. Now gutted, the bank owned house is quickly deteriorating. This demolition-by-neglect has caused irreversible harm.

Several fine houses in the West End recount the early history of the neighborhood. In 1828, when Elisha Wadsworth built his house at the junction of Prospect and Albany Avenues, one could stand at the top of Prospect Hill and see open land, dotted by farmhouses, stretching east all the way to the small settled area of central Hartford at the Connecticut River. His family operated an inn at the house until the late 1800's, and it became a favorite stopping place both for travelers on the Albany Turnpike (Albany Avenue) and for Hartford townspeople taking drives in the country. The sweeping views of the Connecticut valley farmland and the distant spires of the capital city were quite the attraction. The house was considered part of West Hartford for a time, until the two municipalities resolved a long-standing border dispute by setting Prospect Avenue as the town line in the 1870's.

An excellent late example of the Federal style, the Wadsworth House has the classic

five-bay façade that had dominated American house building from the mid-18th-Century. The sophistication and wealth of the Wadsworth family is indicated by the skillful detailing, and by the generous four-chimney plan that provided each of the four main rooms with its own fireplace. Above the entrances at the front and side of the house are delicate, semi-elliptical leaded glass fanlights and sidelights, each with a gilded bald eagle symbolizing the new American republic. The house originally faced Albany Avenue; in 1918, it was turned 90 degrees to face Prospect Avenue, and the front portico, trellis, and side canopy were added.

The former Wadsworth Tavern is a contributing resource in the Prospect Avenue National Register Historic District. As one of only two remaining antebellum houses in the West End, the preservation of this local landmark will retain a link to Hartford's past and the future revitalization of the capital city's unique architectural heritage and neighborhood character. Hartford, founded in 1636, has no remaining 17th structures and only four from the 18th-Century. The city is losing its Colonial and pre-Civil War built environment at an alarming rate. Please visit www.HartfordPreservation.org for a complete listing of Hartford's early buildings.

Local Landmark Lost!

Hartford lost another local landmark with the demolition of 118 Franklin Avenue in Barry Square within the South Green Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ). The three-story brick commercial block, built in 1906, was a significant property within the Shultas-Annawan State Historic District. It was singled out in Structures and Styles: Guided Tours of Hartford Architecture by Gregory E. Andrews and David F. Ransom:

"A long commercial block such as this one, built with a row of stores on the first floor and apartments above, is relatively rare in the South End. Elsewhere along Franklin Avenue most present day commercial space was originally residential. Inspired by the Renaissance Revival, this handsome building presents a rhythmic series of arched openings to the stores at the first floor and of windows in the upper floors. The molded cornice above the store fronts and the modillioned cornice at the roof line remain in remarkably good condition."

HPA was working up until the very day of demolition with Common Ground and the South Green NRZ on an adaptive re-use project but an uncooperative, out-of-state landlord, who allowed the building to fall into disrepair, ultimately sealed its fate when they proceeded with demolition.

2009 Hartford Preservation Alliance Awards

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The Seymour Family

For: The rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the former Stackpole, Moore & Tryon building

The landmark four-story building, at 105 Asylum Street, on the corner of Asylum and Trumbull Streets in the heart of downtown has been individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1978. It is an outstanding example of how buildings can be adapted to suit modern uses without losing their architectural integrity. Timothy Allyn, a prominent landowner and former mayor of Hartford, built the original structure in the mid-1850s. The Seymour family, the seventh generation of Allyn descendants to own the building, have been faithful stewards of this iconic building and have now completed an important restoration of the facade while adapting the interior for new tenants.

The building is well-known for its distinctive two-story cast-iron front, which was added in 1896. At the time, the building was occupied by the Willis & Wilson clothing store, which in 1909 became Stackpole, Moore & Tryon. Architect Isaac Allen, also the architect of the Sage Allen Building on Main Street, designed the cast-iron front, with intricate classical details, such as fluted Ionic columns. The use of cast iron permitted the installation of broad display windows that let sunlight flood into the first and second floor retail space.

Stackpole, Moore & Tryon ended its 80-year occupancy of the building in 1989. The \$4.6 million renovation added new elevators, heating and cooling systems, and staircases, and created emergency exits that replaced the old fire escape, which had been visible from the street. Special elements of the building's history, such as the word "Hatters" painted on the exterior to advertise a fourth floor tenant from many years ago, were preserved. The key to the renovation proved to be finding Sovereign Bank as a tenant. The bank, which leases three of the building's four floors, was itself responsible for most of the interior renovation and made a major financial investment of its own in the conversion of the interior to banking uses.

University of Hartford & Smith Edwards Architects

For: The rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the former Thomas Cadillac

At the corner of Albany Avenue and 35 Westbourne Parkway at the building that once housed a 55,000 square foot automobile dealership. The building is well known for his commercial and industrial buildings, including numerous buildings, one of which was the mile-long Ford River Rouge Plant in Dearborn. Sixty years ago, the building was a Cadillac showroom.

The building was originally occupied by Taber Cadillac, then Daniel Taber Cadillac, which closed and vacated. The University of Hartford bought the building in 2007 to meet the Hartt School's need for additional classroom and rehearsal space. Since 2007, the project, in collaboration with Howard Performance Architecture of New York City, has been an amazing to realize that this building, which once was a Cadillac showroom, now contains performance venues, rehearsal and recital rooms, dance studios, and a café named the Stage Door Café. By bringing the University of Hartford back to the building, the rehabilitation also invites a greater degree of involvement of the University of Hartford community.



building

The junction of the Blue Hills and Upper Albany neighborhoods is a site that was built in 1929 for General Motors to the design of Albert Kahn, one of the most famous automobile manufacturing plants in Michigan, the most famous of his buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places. The building was used as a Cadillac from 1959 to 1977, and finally Thomas Cadillac until it was converted in 2000 as the future home for a performing arts center to accommodate the University of Hartford. Smith Edwards Architects of Hartford was the lead architect for the renovation. The building is a vast space, all located on a single floor. It is a performance space in the front and a repair and assembly facility in the back now. The building provides space for a numerous supporting activities, and even a branch bank. The building is a bridge between the Blue Hills and Upper Albany neighborhoods, the city with those parts of the city.



Photos courtesy of the University of Hartford.



Immanuel Congregational Church For: A historic window replacement

The beautiful, light-filled sanctuary of Immanuel Congregational Church at 10 Woodland Street has graced the corner of Farmington Avenue and Woodland Street in Asylum Hill for 110 years. Designed by Ernest Flagg and dedicated in 1899, it has among its numerous notable features three enormous arched windows composed of double-sanded glass highlighted with etched ruby flash borders. The smallest of these – the 22-foot by 23-foot window over the church's front entryway across Farmington Avenue from the Mark Twain House – was the most deteriorated and therefore the first candidate for the congregation's plan to restore or replace the three windows.

Restoration of the window was a daunting task. Stained Glass Resources of Hampden, Massachusetts, which oversaw the project with the assistance of the Bostwick Company of Hartford, was able to save the copper-clad wood that made up the large members of the window frame, but the smaller 100% copper window divisions had to be replaced. In order to provide the strength of material that was needed and to mimic the original copper as closely as possible, bronze frames were used as replacement. Meanwhile, the window's original red glass proved impossible to remove from the frames without significant breakage, despite valiant efforts by the restoration team. French industrial ruby flash glass, appropriate for replacement, was eventually found at a company in Houston.

The result of this project has been the restoration of the brilliant deep red coloring and intricate design of this spectacular church window. The congregation expects that the process will, in due course, be a model for the restoration of the two remaining windows.

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Upper Albany

by Katherine Harris



Northwest District School, circa 1978. Now mostly demolished.

T. J. Nenortas Collection

Albany Avenue is the commercial center of Upper Albany. Native Americans had traveled the unpaved footpath and in 1678 colonial authorities laid out the route as the Talcott Mountain Turnpike. They named it Albany Road because it was the stagecoach road to Albany, New York, the British colonial administrative center for territories in New York and Connecticut. Upper Albany remained largely rural occupied by family farms or large estates owned by members of Hartford's prominent families prior to the 1880s. Installation of trolley lines that extended Albany Avenue by the turn of the century marked a transformation in the area. The City of Hartford opened streets between Homestead and Albany. James Goodwin Batterson, quarry owner and president of Travelers Insurance Company owned significant amounts of acreage along Albany Avenue. In Hartford the 1871 construction of the Connecticut and Western Railroad south of Homestead Avenue attracted industry to the area. A remnant of the architectural style from this period is the Northwest District School at 1240 Albany Avenue which opened in 1885. It is the oldest school building in Hartford while the old Weaver High School now Martin Luther King Elementary school is an example of the 1922 Collegiate Gothic style.

Successive communities of Yankee, Irish, Jewish, Russian, Italian, African American, Caribbean and Puerto Rican Americans have made Upper Albany their home. Following World War II, the Jewish community began moving to Hartford's western areas. Each group has left an imprint on the neighborhood whether it was in the Colonial Revival or Italianate architectural styles of residences, the imposing Horace Bushnell Congregational Church (1913) now

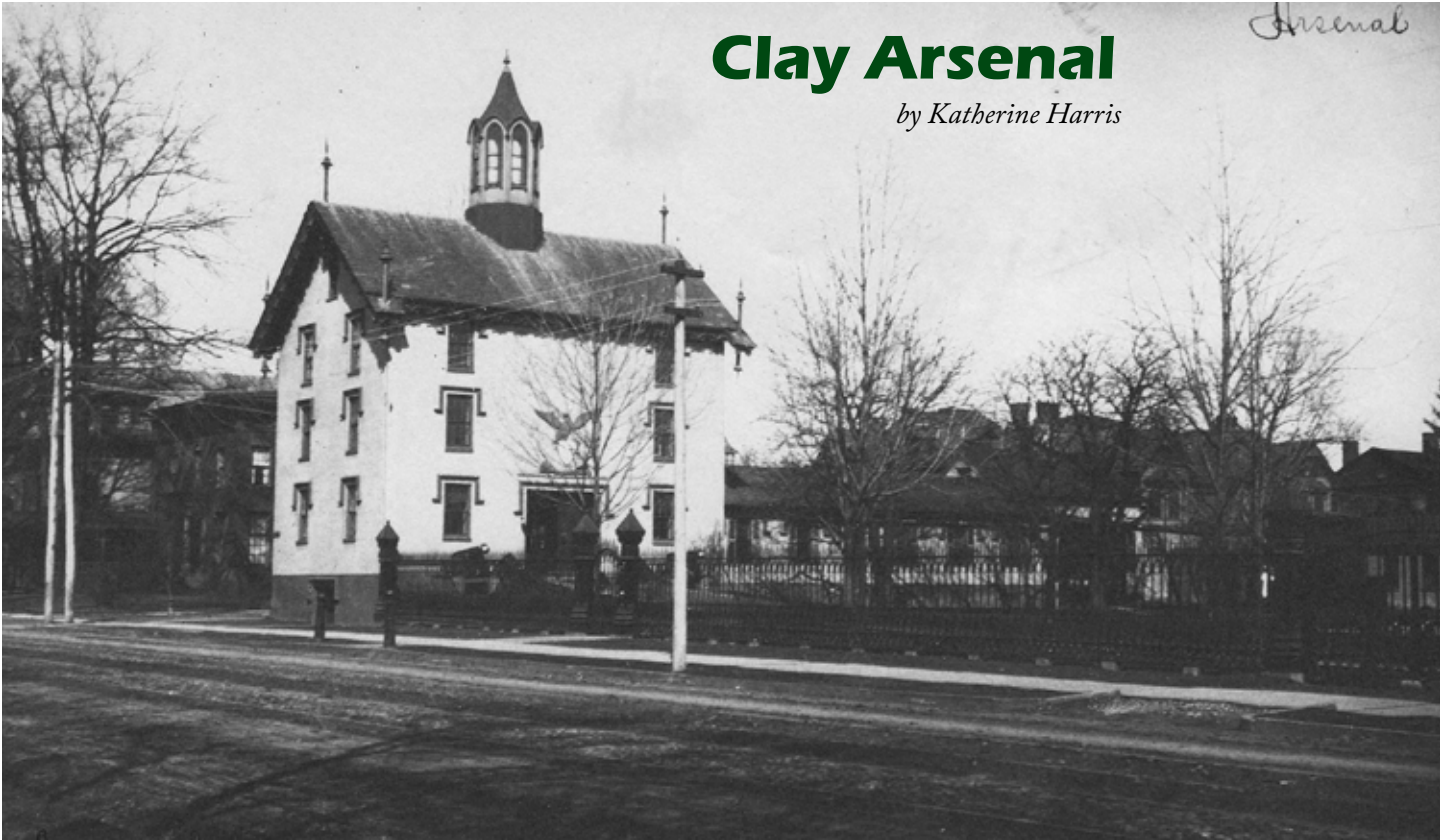
Liberty Christian Center, contemporary shops displaying Caribbean and Puerto Rican cuisine or the Star of David that adorns some of Upper Albany's sacred places. Constructed as Emanuel (1926-1927), Agudas Achim (1928) on Greenfield Street and Beth Hamedrash Hagogodol (1921) on Garden Street, these Synagogues have served also as Christian houses of worship – Seventh Day Adventist, First Baptist (now First Cathedral in Bloomfield) and The Refuge Church of Christ on Garden Street - for mostly African American parishioners. The modern office space constructed by Jamaican entrepreneur, the Colin Bennett Building joins these vintage edifices and others that stand in contrast to a degree of neighborhood neglect that occurred during civil disturbances in 1968 after Dr. King's assassination. A new performance arts corridor, the Artists Collective and community action are bringing new vitality to The Upper Albany area that developed in the 19th century as one of Hartford's exemplar streetcar suburbs.

Katherine J. Harris, Ph.D. wrote these articles as a volunteer for the Hartford Preservation Alliance and as a board member for the John E. Rogers African American Cultural Center. She is employed by the Department of History (US, African American and African Diaspora courses) and is also an Adjunct Lecturer for Central Connecticut State University.

Arsenal

Clay Arsenal

by Katherine Harris



State Arsenal, circa 1900. Demolished 1909. Photos on this page from the T.J. Nenortas Collection.

The Clay Arsenal neighborhood is north of Downtown Hartford with its major transit arteries located on Main Street and Albany Avenue. The west section of the neighborhood is called Clay Hill. The section east of Main Street has been called the Arsenal district since Connecticut constructed the State Arsenal in 1812. The Arsenal stood at the corner of contemporary Main (264 Windsor Avenue) and Pavilion Streets.

One of Hartford's oldest neighborhoods, Clay Arsenal developed mainly after the mid-19th through the 20th centuries. In 1807, the City of Hartford established the North Burying Ground. Hartford's Catholic parishioners used the back part of the cemetery until 1860. The North Burying Ground is the final resting place of some of Connecticut's African American Civil War veterans.

Clay-Arsenal was a part of the 19th century transportation expansion. In 1844, the Hartford and Springfield Railroad built a rail line that is the eastern boundary of the neighborhood. The railroad authorities also built a tunnel to carry the tracks under the intersection of Main Street and Albany Avenue. The construction of Hartford County Jail at 42 Seyms Street (the Seyms Street Jail) in 1873, using a High Victorian Gothic style was an example of a non-residential development.

Successive waves of Connecticut Yankee, Irish, Jewish, African American and Puerto Rican communities have resided in the neighborhood. In 1860, the house at 47 Fairmount Street served as the parsonage for the African American Talcott Street Congregational Church. The Widows' Homes located at 1846 and 1860 Main Street are two existing structures tied to the Church's historic past.

During the 1880s and 1890s Irish and Jewish immigrants from Germany and Eastern Europe relocated from the East Side, now Constitution Plaza to Clay Arsenal. The newly arrived Clay Arsenal neighbors established butcheries, groceries, and jewelry and tailor shops.

The Arsenal was demolished in 1909 and with its demolition the last edifice remaining from Clay Arsenal's rural days was gone. The city demolished the Seyms Street Jail in 1978. Victorian homes with ornate detail, two story Greek Revival style houses, apartment blocks and workplaces constructed particularly during the Civil War through the late 19th and early 20th centuries survive. Unfortunately, many of those structures have not been maintained although they retain vestiges of their architectural majesty.



Seyms Street jail, circa 1900. Demolished 1978.

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Christian Activities Council:

For: The rehabilitation of 19 and 29 Edgewood Street

The rehabilitations of 19 and 29 Edgewood Street are the newest addresses of the Christian Activities Council's "Upper Albany Revitalization Initiative," which seeks to work with neighborhood residents to revitalize a 15-block area in Upper Albany. These three-story, red brick apartments, built in 1909, were designed by prolific Hartford architect William Scoville. They had long been vacant and were in severe disrepair, seriously adding to the blight on Edgewood Street between Homestead and Albany Avenues. Both were at great risk of demolition, and both required emergency stabilization, including new roofs, back walls, and temporary shoring, before full construction could begin. Indeed, the roof at 19 Edgewood Street had collapsed, and its interior was so damaged that almost all the flooring and joists had to be replaced.



Notwithstanding the severity of the deterioration, both buildings have now been beautifully restored to historic standards throughout. Funding came from many sources, including the state, the city, and the historic tax credit program. Each building has been redesigned as two side-by-side townhouses, with each townhouse having a large unit on the upper two floors for the owner and a smaller rental unit on the first floor. Thus, each of these six-family buildings will now house four families. Buyers are required to go through an eight-hour ownership training program.

The successful rehabilitation of these two buildings is an example of how even the most deteriorated of historic properties can be saved.



These apartment buildings have been rehabilitated as duplexes. Left: 19 Edgewood Street. Right: 29 Edgewood Street.

Visit our Internet Site!

HPA's web site attracts a lot of interest! We want to remind you that you can log on to our web site any time and check out the many resources offered. Past newsletters, publications, stories on buildings saved and lost, current preservation activities and more can be found on the site. Please visit us at www.hartfordpreservation.org.



A.R. Godbout & Company:

For: The restoration of 137 Seymour Street

The single-family house at 137 Seymour Street near Hartford Hospital was vacant when it was purchased in 2007 by developer Arthur Godbout. Built in 1909 as the home of Otto Grubitz, a skilled worker at the Colt Firearms factory, this 2½-story wood frame structure is in the American Foursquare style. The style is characterized by a square footprint, a hipped roof with an overhang, and a wide front porch, and 137 Seymour is a good example of that style.

When bought by Mr. Godbout, the building needed extensive work. Wood shingles were split, curling, and loose. The deck and trimboard had decayed. The mortar in the stone foundation and retaining walls was deteriorating. The boiler had outlived its life expectancy and the electrical system was far out of date. The new owner removed the exterior shingling on the building and restored the original clapboard siding that was underneath the shingles. All operating systems were replaced or repaired. The original interior wood trim was preserved as much as possible. Landscaping improvements included the construction of a new wrought-iron fence, plantings, and signage.

This picturesque former home now serves as the headquarters of the Legal Department of the Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

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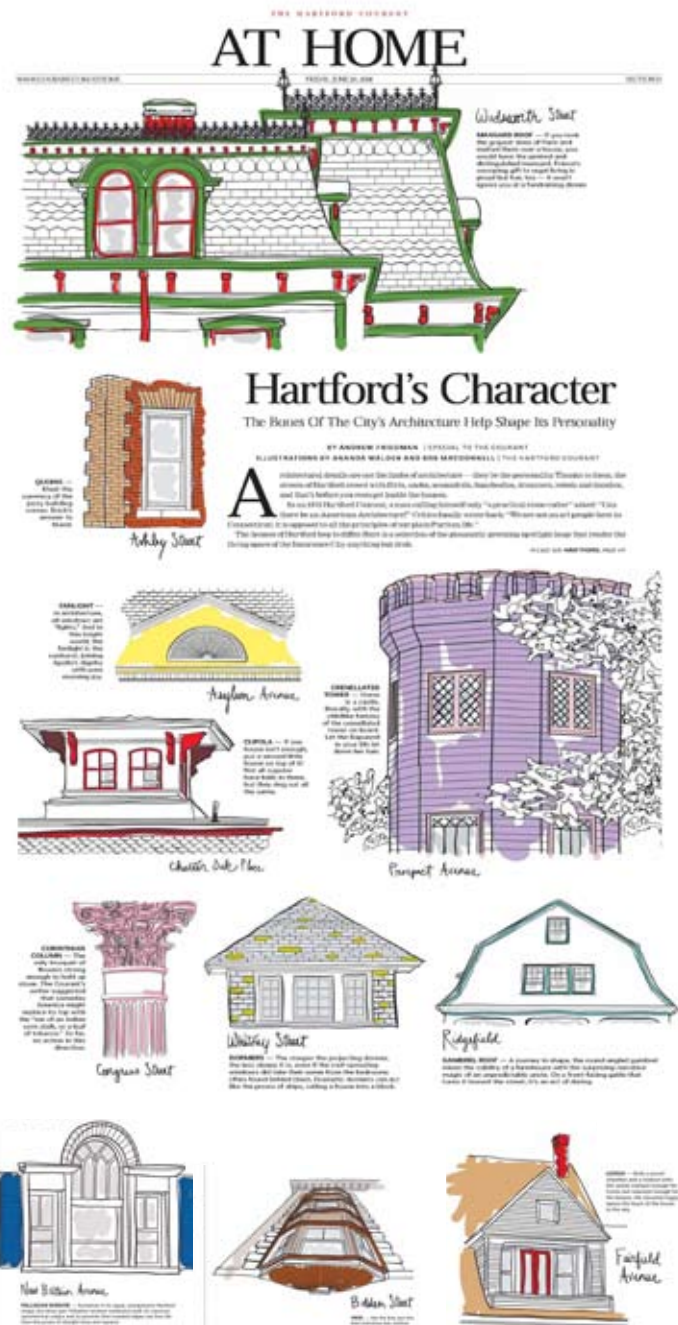
Andrew Friedman, Ananda Walden, Bob MacDonnell, and Nancy Schoeffler:

For: The illustrated Hartford Courant article on Hartford architectural styles

In 2008, Nancy Schoeffler, Editor of the Home section of the *Hartford Courant*, organized an article on Hartford architectural styles for the Home section. She contacted Hartford resident Andrew Friedman, a freelance writer who has written about architecture, landscape, and the built environment for the *Courant*, as well as for the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Newsday*, and other publications. He is also a teaching fellow at Yale on architecture and American culture. Andrew developed the idea and spent three days driving the city to identify specific buildings that exemplified each of the architectural features he chose. The *Courant* brought in photographer Bob MacDonnell to take pictures and graphic designer Ananda Walden to create colorful sketches of each architectural element from the photographs.

The resulting article, which occupies the entire front page of the June 20, 2008, Home section of the *Courant*, is a whimsical tour of 11 architectural elements found often in Hartford buildings – from a Mansard roof on Wadsworth Street, which Andrew called “France’s swooping gift to regal living,” to a Corinthian column on Congress Street, described as “the only bouquet of flowers strong enough to hold up stone.” Entitled “Hartford’s Character: The Bones of the City’s Architecture Help Shape Its Personality,” the article uses a combination of humor and cartoon-like drawings to grab readers of all ages and all interests and to show us the diverse heritage and personalities of our city’s buildings.

The article concludes: “Here is a selection of the pleasantly preening spotlight hogs that render the living space of the Insurance City anything but drab.”



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The Parisky Group: Flora & Sandy Parisky and Jean King

For: The support of non-profit & preservation work throughout Hartford

The Parisky Group provides a broad range of services to address social, community development and public policy issues. Founded in 1983, The Parisky Group assists business, government and nonprofit clients in tackling challenging problems and projects. Their approach is to find short and long-term solutions to complex issues.

Over its 26 year's history the Parisky Group has successfully helped in many preservation efforts in the city of Hartford including: the Improvement Plan for Hartford's Ancient Burying Ground, restoration of Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch, restoration of Hartford's Christ Church Cathedral, replanting and landscape improvement plan for Bushnell Park, conservation of Horace Wells Monument in Bushnell Park, survey for the Greater Hartford Arts Council documenting 35 public sculptures in the city of Hartford and the restoration of the Corning Fountain in Bushnell Park.

In 2004, The Parisky Group was hired by the Hartford Preservation Alliance to guide Membership, Fundraising and Board Development campaigns to strengthen the board of directors. They have worked closely with the Hartford Preservation Alliance and its staff to ensure the successful development of long term plans and the transition from an all volunteer organization to a viable and active institution.



Above: Flora & Sandy Parisky with Laura Knott-Twine. Below: Jean King



2009 Hartford Preservation Alliance Awards

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Immanuel Hudson House, Inc. -

For: The architecturally sensitive construction of in-fill housing at 363 Hudson Street

Immanuel House is a nine-story modern apartment building for seniors located at 15 Woodland Street in Asylum Hill. Several years ago, the owner obtained federal funding to build a senior housing development behind the existing building in the area between the Immanuel House and the North Branch of the Park River. The buildings would have been linked in

a multiple-building campus. Because of the danger of flooding, however, it could not get city approval. But, with funding in place, it was able to obtain a large vacant lot on Hudson Street that was owned by the City. The developer met with the South Downtown Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Committee (known as "SoDo") and, with its advice, designed the building to pick up some of the characteristics of the row houses in Boston's Back Bay and on Buckingham Street and Capitol Avenue in Hartford.

The result was a four-story 40-unit red brick apartment building that is a good fit for the SoDo neighborhood. It is named "The Seasons of Hartford," with each of the four floors suggesting one of the four seasons. The building hugs the sidewalk line in a manner similar to the pre-1900 building immediately to its south and has articulated walls that give texture to the street side of the building. The front entrance at the northern end is semi-circular and follows the brick design of the rest of the building. It is compatible with the size, massing, and materials of the nearby building, and it picks up the themes of other historic buildings in the neighborhood. In addition, the design process through which the owner voluntarily went is a model of consultation and cooperation with neighborhood residents that resulted in a design with which the neighborhood is quite satisfied.



Laura Stone

Trinity College & Smith Edwards Architects For: The restoration of the Trinity Long Walk

In 1872, Trinity College moved to its present Summit Street site, when its former location at the crest of Bushnell Park was sold to the State for the new State Capitol. In 1873, the notable English architect, William Burges, designed the new campus in the High Victorian Collegiate Gothic style. The original Long Walk was part of the first set of buildings constructed in 1878 as the west side of what was intended to become a quadrangle. Eventually achieving a length of 925 feet along the Summit Street ridge, Long Walk is the preeminent feature of Trinity's campus.

The Long Walk was listed on the State Register of Historic Places in 1997. By 2006, however, serious deterioration of the roof and masonry had been detected and an ambitious restoration plan was developed for Trinity by Smith Edwards Architects and implemented. The effect is stunning. Long Walk's masonry walls have been strengthened and re-pointed, its slate roof and ridge tiles replaced, new copper flashing installed, and its old windows restored or replaced with new cast iron ones modeled on the originals. The interiors have been completely redesigned, with all new systems and state-of-the-art educational technology. A key feature of this work was reestablishing the suite layout of Burges' original design for Jarvis Hall, but without the valet quarters that were once included for Trinity's wealthier students. The suites have common living rooms surrounded by bedrooms and details such as fireplaces and window seats. An original 1845 cornerstone from the first campus was discovered during the restoration and is now on display. The original landscape, altered over time, has also been enhanced and upgraded.

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Photo courtesy of Trinity College.

**Northside Institutions
Neighborhood Alliance -
For: Revitalization of the Asylum
Hill neighborhood**

The Northside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance, better known as "NINA," was created in 2001 by a group of major Asylum Hill institutions, including The Hartford, Aetna, St. Francis Hospital, and Webster Bank, to promote the revitalization of Asylum Hill by stimulating community involvement and investment. A significant part of that work has been the rehabilitation of deteriorated buildings and their resale for home ownership. In past years, NINA has received Preservation Awards for the relocation of 47 Sigourney Street and the rehabilitation of five buildings on Ashley and Garden Streets.

NINA is currently involved in rehabilitation projects on Ashley, Sargeant, and Atwood Street. Its most recently completed rehabilitations are both on Sargeant Street. 246 Sargeant Street, built in 1897, is a very special building. Known by area residents as the "Castle," its Queen Anne turret and gables are an Asylum Hill landmark. The first floor is faced with 8-inch-thick granite blocks. The upper floors feature three different types of



*Above: 227 Sargeant Street.
Right Inset: 227 Sargeant
Street prior to rehabilitation.
Lower left:
246 Sargeant Street.*



Laura Stone

shingles. The building, which was recently sold, has been converted into a two-family structure, with a rental unit on the first floor and a 2,100 square foot owner unit on the second and third floors. 227 Sargeant Street, built in 1899, which also recently sold, combines Queen Anne styling with a Dutch gambrel roof. Its first owner, Thomas Honiss, owned the former Honiss Oyster House, once Hartford's legendary seafood restaurant.

Rehabilitation activity, however, represents only part of NINA's activities. NINA was awarded for its overall role in the revitalization of the Asylum Hill neighborhood. On Ashley Street, for example, NINA has provided new vintage streetlights, sidewalks, and historic date markers. It is collaborating with Rebuilding Together and AARP to provide free safety and home repair services to Asylum Hill homeowners. It is involved in gardening, landscaping, and painting projects. It has provided bicycles, security cameras, and cell phones to the Hartford Police Department for use in Asylum Hill. NINA has thus become a force for the energizing and revitalization of an entire neighborhood.



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Laura Stone

461 Farmington Avenue – Charles W. Newton House Update

Here is an accounting of the history of the house featured in our Fall 2008 Newsletter:

Charles W. Newton was born in Hartford on October 22, 1860. Upon his graduation in 1878 from Hartford Public High School, he joined his father's business, George H. Newton Coal Company. It was

noted in his obituary in *The Hartford Courant* that during The Blizzard of 1888, Charles "was one of a few men who delivered coal by means of a two-horse sled, keeping downtown Hartford residents from freezing."

Like quite a few young men of his generation and class, he joined the Connecticut National Guard serving in the Hartford City Guard unit (Company F, First Regiment). He rose through the ranks to the rank of Captain in 1897. While on a private visit to Havana, Cuba in 1898 with General Arthur L. Goodrich (then secretary of *The Courant*), he was a witness to the explosion of the battleship *Maine*. When the Spanish American War was declared in August of that year, his company immediately went into service, eventually bivouacking at Camp Alger in Virginia (but not seeing duty in the war zone). Soon

after the war's end Capt. Newton retired from active duty but became an ardent supporter of Spanish War Veterans. His service to this cause is memorialized by a plaque at his gravesite in Cedar Hill Cemetery given by the United Spanish War Veterans.

Capt. Newton purchased the land on Farmington Avenue on July 22, 1907 from the heirs of Galusha Owen. In 1941, Charles Newton sold a portion of his property to the Sun Oil Company which built a Sunoco Service Station on the site (455 Farmington Avenue). That same year, he sold the house to Frank & Helaine Gorski. They renovated the building and operated Helaine's Hat Shop from the first floor and lived on the upper floors. They, in turn, sold the property in 1950 to Bion and Alma Smith, who renovated the building for their business, The Hartford Academy of Hairdressers.

A June 11, 1950 *Hartford Courant* article makes mention of this "12 room mansion" as being Farmington Avenue's 'White House.'"The parlor had a fireplace and crystal chandelier and there were walnut beams in the living room.

Sources:

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Hairdressing Academy In New Location, *The Hartford Courant*, June 11, 1950