

NEWS & VIEWS

Fall 2010

New Life for Winchester Repeating Arms Factory

Following a unanimous vote from the New Haven Board of Aldermen on September 7th, the Winchester Repeating Arms complex moved one step closer to an adaptive use that will retain the historic brick buildings. Up until this time, the property, known as Tract A, had not been included in the Science Park Planned Development District but was instead zoned for light manufacturing. While consistent with the history of the complex, such use failed to meet the needs and demands of today's economy.

NHPT President Pedro Soto provided testimony in support of the Winchester project. He pointed out that "the Trust has had a longstanding interest and appreciation of the historical and architectural significance of the Winchester Repeating Arms Company." He emphasized "the high quality of the factory buildings themselves, several of which were designed by Leoni W. Robinson, one of New Haven's prominent architects of that period."

In light of the historical and architectural significance of the factory and the

adjacent residential neighborhood, the Trust undertook a historic resources inventory of the area and subsequently nominated the Winchester Repeating Arms Company Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places, "a designation that was bestowed on January 28, 1988." President Soto concluded his testimony by describing the project as a triple win: "It is a win for the environment, as this contaminated area will be cleaned up and the built-energy of these buildings will be saved, preventing the need to expend energy on new construction. It is a win for history, as this important story of New Haven's past will live on in these structures. And it is a win for the city, as it represents a major economic investment that will bring new life to a long-dormant and neglected part of the city."

First opened on Union Street in Wooster Square, the Winchester Repeating Arms Company moved to Bridgeport in 1866, only to return to New Haven in 1870. At that time the company's operations were concentrated in the northwest portion of Science Park. But as it grew, it expanded to the west and south, reaching the Tract A site in 1901. Functionally this portion of the site was primarily responsible for administration and gunstock manufacturing. The complex was built in five stages: 1901; 1904; 1907; 1915; and 1916. In the earlier years, there was limited development, but following the onset of World War I, the tract was aggressively built. During World War II, over 30,000 people a day worked in the area now known as Science Park. Few of the original factory buildings remain, making the rescue and productive re-use of this portion of the complex even more important.

In 1988 Tract A was listed as contributing to the Winchester Repeating Arms Company Historic District. This is the first step toward becoming eligible for federal historic tax credits, which make rehabilitations such as this mixed-use proposal economically feasible. Winchester Arms NH LLC, the development team for the project, intends to leverage state and



Artist's rendering of completed project

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The Trust sponsored six walking tours of historic places throughout the city as a part of the 2010 International Festival of Arts & Ideas. Attendance at these very popular annual architectural tours continues to rise, with each averaging sixty participants this year. Here, Trust advisor Christopher Wigren views the distinctive early 20th-century architecture of the Lincoln and Bradley Streets area, New Haven's "hidden" neighborhood.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The New Haven Preservation Trust will celebrate its 50th Anniversary next year! Over the course of 2011, we have planned an exciting array of events for our half-century celebration. To kick things off, we will inaugurate a monthly tour series of New Haven's architectural gems. These free tours will explore the many hidden, and not so hidden, treasures of the city.

In May, in conjunction with our 50th Annual Meeting at the New Haven Museum, we will present an exhibit of 50 years of preservation in New Haven.

During the course of the year, an exciting and informative speaker series has been scheduled. Lectures by several well-known architects and architectural historians will take place at the New Haven Lawn Club.

Also at the Lawn Club and finishing the celebration with style will be a gala dinner and reception, honoring 50 years of New Haven and 50 years of preservation successes.

For those who wish to travel further, we will host two field trips—the first an exclusive visit to one of Newport's Federal Revival mansions still in private ownership and the second to Philip Johnson's famous Glass House in New Canaan.

Finally, to help New Haven property owners display pride in their buildings, the Trust will launch its first-ever historic marker program. Distinct from our landmark and preservation award markers, these plaques will be available for purchase by any property owner in the city who wishes to display the construction date of their structure. The Trust will verify the construction date of your house or building and order a customized plaque. We may even be able to add the first deeded owner.

Details will be available in the coming months!

As you can see, we hope to have something for everyone in 2011. Please join us in celebrating New Haven's distinguished past, as we look forward to our next 50 years. As always, we thank you for your membership and support.

Sincerely,
Pedro Soto

Hands-on Preservation Workshops

This fall the Trust continues its partnership with Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven (NHS) to offer a four-part series of hands-on preservation workshops, supported in part by the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation (CTHP).

NHS was awarded a 2010 Historic Preservation Technical Assistance Grant (HPTAG) from the CTHP which allows it to continue to provide workshops like one on window repair that was offered last April. The current series began on September 25th with a repeat offering of the window workshop, which was oversubscribed in the spring. The Trust partners with NHS by promoting the workshops among its members and friends, and by providing technical assistance to the presenters.

A second workshop on October 23rd

addressed the best practices for winterizing historic houses. Participants learned how to weather strip, insulate and evaluate the energy efficiency of their building envelope without compromising the historic character of their homes.

Hands-on workshops such as these not only help to promote the preservation of New Haven's extensive historic housing stock, but also inform homeowners about the value of conserving original building materials. The workshops provide residents with the skills to preserve these structural elements and features themselves. Two more workshops will be offered in the spring of 2011. Suggestions for topics are welcomed.

For more information, please contact Sara Jamison at 203 562-0598, ext. 24 or visit the NHS website at www.nhsfnh.org. *



Winchester current condition

Winchester Repeating Arms Factory, cont'd.

federal tax credits to execute a successful adaptive use of the factory. Over 90% of the historic structures will be retained and rehabilitated, with limited demolition. In total, the team intends to invest over \$150 million in the 700,000 square-foot complex.

Carter Winstanley, Principal with Winstanley Enterprises, said, "We enjoy working on projects with this kind of historic appeal, bringing an abandoned building with a rich past back to life. Modern features and life safety systems will be carefully integrated with the rehabilitation."

When completed, the development will include approximately 285,000 square feet of commercial space and 250 loft apartments. The primary office tenant will be Higher One Holdings, Inc., a financial services and technology products



company founded by Yale undergraduates ten years ago and now employing over 300 people. Higher One completed a \$124 million initial public offering in June, 2010. One of the long-term economic benefits of this development is the ability to retain in the city a New Haven start-up that has attained business maturity. If the project milestones are met, the first phase of construction will begin in the winter of 2011 and the balance of the site will be developed over the next four to seven years.

In the early part of the 20th century, the Winchester Repeating Arms Company was one of the most innovative forces in American manufacturing history. With this 21st-century development, the team hopes to turn the lights back on in these beautiful historic buildings while at the same time bringing them in line with the economy of the 21st century. *

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DOCOMOMO US Tour Day

"A Very Concrete Tour of New Haven" led by New Haven Preservation Trust advisor Christopher Wigren, was one of more than twenty tours of modern architecture offered across the country under the auspices of DOCOMOMO US (DOcumentation and CONservation of buildings, sites and neighborhoods of the MODern MOVEment) on October 9, 2010, the organization's fourth annual Tour Day. The Trust's participation in Tour Day was publicized nationally, along with tours in seventeen other cities. Chris's tour included several Modernist buildings in downtown New Haven, and focused on how the use of concrete as a building material reshaped architecture in the 20th century.

DOCOMOMO, which was founded in 1988, is dedicated to promoting the study, interpretation and protection of the architecture, landscape and urban design of the Modern Movement. It is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit group of modern architecture enthusiasts, historians, architects, designers and preservationists.

Tour Day 2010 brought together over 600 participants and covered topics such as sacred spaces, mid-century roadside modernism, skyscrapers, post-war housing and the social and technical implications of preserving modern architecture. For more information, visit the DOCOMOMO website at www.docomomo-us.org. *

LINTELS & SILLS



Grove Street Cemetery Chapel

The Standing Committee of the Proprietors of the Grove Street Cemetery is planning to refurbish the original cemetery chapel to create a meeting house and visitor's center. Located near the cemetery's reknown Egyptian Revival entranceway on Grove Street, little is known of the chapel's c.1871 Victorian design, though the red-brick Gothic Revival structure is thought to have originally been topped with a tower/spire. Unfortunately, historical descriptive documentation is not available, and the building's architect and builder have not as yet been identified. The renovated chapel will be used both for interment services during inclement weather as well as to house the cemetery's business office. Fundraising for the project has commenced with strong letters of support from the New Haven Preservation Trust and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. ★

Yale Daily News Building

Located at 202 York Street, this classic Collegiate Gothic building was designed in 1932 by the Hartford firm of Adams and Prentice as headquarters for the *Yale Daily News*. Henry R. Luce, founder



of *Time* magazine, funded the construction of this elaborate stone structure. Recently the historic building underwent a substantial rehabilitation that included cleaning and restoring the masonry exterior, preserving the original light fixtures and signage, and reinforcing the slate-covered roof. In addition interior spaces were thoughtfully reconfigured: previously underused space was reclaimed for

the newspaper's editors and reporters, the first floor was made wheelchair accessible and character-defining decorative features were preserved. The life of this diminutive but important Yale landmark has been successfully extended as a result of this high-quality renovation. ★



City Point Landmarks

Following the concerted efforts of neighbors, the preservation community and the New Haven Urban Design League (the latter having filed a petition to intervene through the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act), residents of the City Point Historic District were able to breathe a sigh of relief. Earlier this year, the Pequonnock Yacht Club and the Sage American Grill and Oyster Bar reached a compromise that protected two important buildings in their neighborhood and promised renewed commercial activity. Both 98 South Water Street and an adjacent oyster barn, the sole remaining buildings associated with City Point's once flourishing oyster industry, will be spared demolition and adapted for contemporary use. Pequonnock Yacht Club is moving to the site from Bridgeport and will supervise restoration of the buildings. The Club has purchased the circa 1974 building designed by noted Los Angeles architect William Pereira that currently houses the Sage American Grill. The owners of the Grill have leased back the ground floor for their operations, while the Club will be located in the harbor front building's second floor. ★



New Haven Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument

Following extensive renovation, the New Haven Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument at the peak of East Rock Park has been reopened, thereby enabling the public once again to ascend a narrow spiral staircase for one of the most spectacular panoramic views of the city. The five-year project, which included the careful conservation of the monument's square pedestal base, vertical granite shaft and crowning Angel of Peace bronze sculpture, was spearheaded by the New Haven Parks and Recreation Department and cost approximately \$1 million in state, city, and private funds. Though first envisioned in 1878, the monument was not actually dedicated until June 17, 1887. Designed by architects John M. Moffitt and Alexander Doyle of New York City, the 110-foot structure was built by the New Haven firm of Smith & Sperry. Originally conceived as a Civil War Memorial, the monument has come to memorialize every conflict in which Americans have given their lives for their country. Attached to the pedestal are four bronze bas-relief sculptures that depict scenes from the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican War and the Civil War respectively. *



Armstrong Rubber Company (Pirelli) Building

Preservationists rejoiced when the well-known Modernist icon, the Armstrong Rubber Company (Pirelli) Building at 500 Sargent Drive, was partially saved by Ikea at the time the large home furnishings store opened their doors in 2004. Designed in 1968 by Marcel Breuer with assistance from New York architect Robert F. Gatje, the molded concrete-paneled structure was built with a story of open space to separate the original company's administrative and research functions. But there is now concern that the distinctive building's long-standing vacancy will lead to demolition by neglect, though store officials contend otherwise. Yet the reality is that preservation thrives on occupancy, and to date there are no new tenants in sight. *

The New Haven Preservation Trust
looks forward to
celebrating
its 50th Anniversary in 2011.

www.nhpt.org

Annual Meeting Breaks All Records

What do these three things have in common: the “Blue Whale” in Los Angeles, \$54,845 and curried chicken with apricots?

If you attended the Trust’s 49th Annual Meeting in May 2010, you could connect the dots and answer that the Blue Whale is part of a popular cluster of buildings designed by Cesar Pelli, \$54,845 represents the Trust’s 2009 net profit and curried chicken was one of the luscious dishes donated by Chestnut Fine Foods for the reception following the program.

The Trust’s Annual Meetings have enjoyed a steady upward progression in style, edibles and attendance in the last decade. The 2010 Annual Meeting is widely viewed as the most successful ever. Held at the Thomas E. Golden, Jr. Center at Saint Thomas More, 268 Park Street, the event featured a presentation by Cesar Pelli, FAIA, a lively silent auction and a delicious buffet. About 120 people attended, a new high for the Trust.

Cesar Pelli, Senior Principal of the firm of Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects, spoke about his recent work. The Trust was honored that Mr. Pelli agreed to speak at this event as his first public appearance after hip surgery.

In 1977, Mr. Pelli became Dean of the Yale School of Architecture and also founded Cesar Pelli & Associates. Since the firm’s establishment, Mr. Pelli has originated and directed the design of each of its projects. In 2005, the firm was renamed Pelli Clarke



Thomas E. Golden, Jr. Center

Pelli Architects. His presentation illustrated the wide range of solutions and materials in his designs.

The location selected for the meeting, the Thomas E. Golden, Jr. Center, is an expansive new addition to Saint Thomas More Chapel. With its beautiful natural materials and flexible space, the Center lent itself to the flow of the Annual Meeting with a lecture hall, a gracious lounge and ample room in a glassed-in gallery for the silent auction. Tours of the restored chapel and its unique fittings and light fixtures were offered during the event.

The meeting began with an update from President Pedro Soto, the Treasurer’s Report and the election of officers and directors. Treasurer Susan Godshall noted the positive swing in net revenue from a deficit in 2008 to a net income of \$54,845 for 2009 and explained the circumstances behind this good outcome. Leon Bailey was elected Assistant Treasurer and four new Board members were elected by the membership: Michael Coe, Andrew Drabkin, Sara Jamison and Linda Silva.

President Soto said, “Everything came together into the most elegant event possible.”

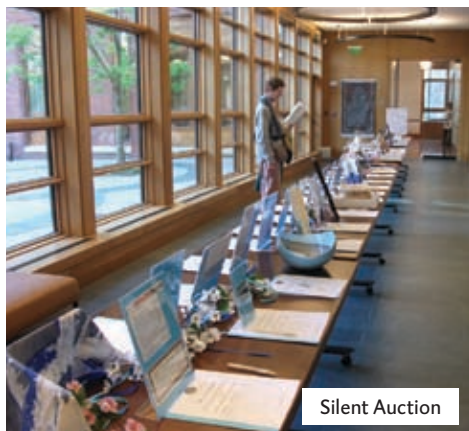
The Trust thanks the following sponsors: Bank of America, NewAlliance Foundation, Chestnut Fine Foods, Neenah Paper, the Pyne-Davidson Company, Rev. Robert L. Beloin, Chaplain and the Thomas E. Golden, Jr. Center at Saint Thomas More. ★

THE NEW MORY’S

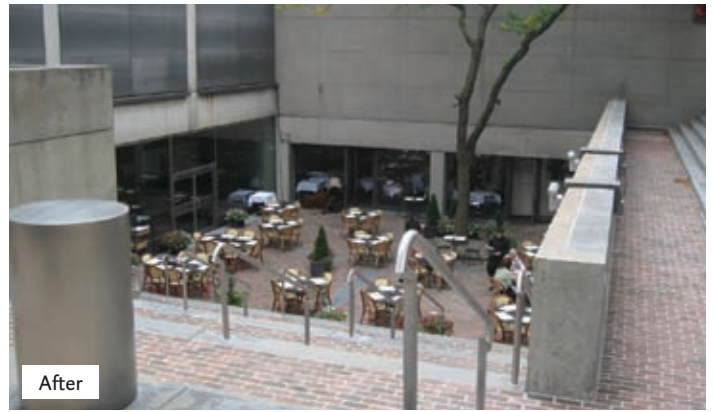
On September 14th, the Board of Governors officially celebrated the re-opening of Mory’s, Yale’s legendary drinking and eating club located at 306 York Street. Highlighting the reception, that included tours of the newly renovated historic site, were entertaining performances by Whim ‘n Rhythm, Yale’s female a capella ensemble, and welcoming remarks by New Haven Mayor John DeStefano, Jr. and Bruce Alexander, Vice President of New Haven and State Affairs for Yale University. Founded in 1849, Mory’s was forced to close its doors in December 2008 due to financial difficulties. Through the generosity of thousands of members and friends, this New Haven institution, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, underwent a substantial rehabilitation that included the addition of a new formal bar, a lounge and an outdoor dining area.



Key to the plan was retaining the essential character, original furnishings and feel of the old Mory’s while increasing the appeal to Yale undergraduates and restoring many popular traditions. By all accounts, this objective has been magnificently achieved. ★



Silent Auction



British Art Center Returns Chapel Street Courtyard to Kahn's Vision

The Yale Center for British Art, which opened in 1977, was the final design of architect Louis Kahn. Funded entirely by philanthropist and anglophile Paul Mellon (Yale College Class of 1929), it was immediately hailed as one of Kahn's greatest masterpieces. New York Times critic John Russell described the structure as one of "outstanding quality."

The Center is located on the corner of Chapel and High Streets, across the street from Kahn's first commission, the Yale University Art Gallery which opened in 1953. While the Art Gallery has recently undergone a very public renovation and is presently expanding and adapting adjacent buildings for exhibition space, the British Art Center, working closely with the London-based firm of Peter Inskip + Peter Jenkins Architects, has been developing a comprehensive conservation plan for the building that will be published by Yale University Press next year.

To maintain the commercial life of Chapel Street, Kahn incorporated space for shops along the east and north facades. A prominent feature of the site is the Lower Court, surrounded on two sides by a restaurant at the west end of the Center, near the former Baptist church that currently houses the Yale Repertory Theater. Complementing the Center's two interior courtyards,

it is accessed by a monumental set of bluestone and brick stairs leading down from Chapel Street, and has served as an outdoor gathering space that visually unites the commercial and educational functions of the facility.

Over the years a number of changes were made to adapt the Lower Court for outdoor dining, including the addition of a wooden pergola, latticework, numerous planters, a canopy and a storage shed. All of these additions have now been removed. As the first project implementing the Center's conservation plan, staff and consultants have spent the past several years planning for the restoration of the space with the intention of returning it to what Kahn intended. The work has been overseen by George Knight of Knight Architecture LLC, in tandem with Yale Office of Facilities. The New Haven Preservation Trust commends Yale University for restoring the original lower courtyard of this 20th-century landmark.

Center director Amy Meyers stated: "My colleagues and I are grateful to the dedicated project team for their extraordinary efforts to return the third courtyard of our building to the monumental space that Kahn envisioned and to our wonderful neighbors at Scoozzi, as well as their clients, for their patience with the process." *

Join the New Haven Preservation Trust Please consider becoming a member of the New Haven Preservation Trust today. Membership support is key part of our operating budget. We need you to support preservation in New Haven!

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The New Haven Preservation Trust's Mission is to honor and preserve New Haven's architectural heritage—historic buildings and neighborhoods—through advocacy, education and collaboration.

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BELOW Five Mile Point Lighthouse, Lighthouse Point Park.
Photograph by Jean Pogwizd

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Winchester Repeating Arms Factory

DOCOMOMO US Tour

Lintels and Sills

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