

NEW
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STATE

THE PRESERVATIONISTS



THE PRESERVATIONISTS

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Pony Preservation

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Lustron Corporation President Carl Strandlund “wraps up” one of the first complete Lustron houses to be shipped to a building site, c1949.

Investing in the Future

Since the late nineteenth century our state parks and historic sites have been some of New York's most valuable assets. Over the past several months I have been on a fact-finding mission, visiting parks and sites and meeting staff in every region of the state. It has been great fun as well as an incredibly productive learning experience.

Throughout my visits I was struck by the diversity of the system, the impressive range of its recreational facilities and educational programs, and our staff's outstanding commitment to public service. I also became acutely aware of the system's long deferred maintenance and the need to take care of these deteriorated conditions before they get worse.

Safeguarding and revitalizing our parks and historic sites is one of my top priorities. While the system offers some of the finest natural, historic, and recreational resources in the country, its infrastructure and many of its facilities are aging, neglected, and sorely in need of rehabilitation. With Governor Spitzer's support, I hope to secure substantial capital funding to rejuvenate and improve the parks and historic sites.

Many of the buildings, landscapes, roadways, camping areas, trails, parking lots, and utilities in our parks and at our historic sites date from the system's early twentieth century development and subsequent expansion. Many of the parks also contain structures that are architecturally significant and worthy of preservation. Through the years funding for ongoing maintenance, much needed repairs, and new facilities has fallen far behind the system's continuing growth and increased use. It is now time for us to take proactive steps to reverse this decline through a phased program of rehabilitation.

We are actively developing a new capital funding initiative to tackle not only the system's most important physical needs but also to plan for its long-term protection and enhancement. Our multi-year proposal seeks to address a nearly \$650 million backlog in capital projects in an effective, efficient, and expeditious manner. As the program evolves, we also plan to incorporate high-quality design and construction standards while exploring new technologies such as "green building" innovations.

With adequate levels of funding and through thoughtful planning and implementation, I am confident that we will oversee a system-wide refurbishment, preserving the quality and character of our parks and historic sites while improving and enhancing these assets for the continuing enjoyment and benefit of us all.



Built in 1857 and designed by Calvert Vaux, the Hoyt House is a significant example of picturesque architecture in the Hudson Valley. Located in Mills-Norrie State Park, the house was last occupied in the 1960s and is in urgent need of stabilization. The capital projects initiative could provide the funds to rescue and reuse this landmark.

Carol Ash, Commissioner
State Historic Preservation Officer

Your State Plan

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is in the process of preparing the state's 2007-2011 master plan for historic preservation. While the five-year plan is a requirement for federal funding from the National Park Service, the document is not intended to be a work program for the SHPO. Rather, the plan is expected to set priorities for all historic preservation activity in the state and focus on how the SHPO can best meet the needs of the public. The planning process is

parts of the state to provide guidance on the preparation of the draft plan, which must be ready for National Park Service review by spring 2008.

The plan must follow established federal standards and address a wide array of issues, resources, and constituents as well as consider social, economic, political, legal, and environmental influences. The plan must also consider the full range of historic and cultural resources found in New York and coordinate with

transportation, recreation, land use, and other planning efforts. Ultimately, the master plan's goals, objectives, and recommended actions must be broad enough to assist preservation activities in various communities and be flexible enough so that the SHPO can adjust its program and services to address a variety of needs.

One of the strongest

messages that emerged from the public meetings is that historic preservation has the potential of playing a central role in changing the way communities approach the redevelopment of their commercial, industrial, and residential neighborhoods. The SHPO strongly supports this view and hopes that preservation can be more fully integrated into local, regional, and statewide planning efforts, especially smart growth, sustainable community improvements, environmental management, and green building advancements.

The SHPO thanks everyone who participated in the planning initiative and will continue to encourage public input throughout the process. By working cooperatively with colleagues and new partners, the SHPO is confident that preservation will play an increasingly positive and productive role in reinvigorating New York's communities.

For more information, contact Amy Facca at the Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau by calling 518-237-8643, ext. 3109 or visit www.nysparks.state.ny.us/shpo/planning.



The preservation planning meetings encouraged active public participation, as shown here in Ithaca.

an opportunity to step back, evaluate, and take stock of the needs and challenges associated with preserving and revitalizing New York's historic and cultural resources.

Involving the public in the planning process is a top priority. Over the past several months, regional public meetings have been held around the state to gather information and ideas for updating the plan. The meetings attracted diverse audiences and engaged a wide range of participants, including local residents, public officials, and professionals in many fields. The discussions have been lively and the constructive and insightful comments will help to inform the development of the new plan. The meetings also raised local preservation awareness and educated new audiences about the benefits of historic preservation.

The next phase in the planning process involves evaluating the public comments and researching preservation-related topics, such as community development, growth, and economics. The SHPO will be inviting key partners in various fields and from various

Can You Hear Us Now?

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation is exploring new ways to interpret state parks and historic sites. During 2007 two historic sites offered new audio tours that visitors accessed through their cell phones. By calling Schuyler Mansion's designated number, visitors listened to a curator describe an exhibit highlighting the portraits and lifestyles of the Schuyler family. At Sackets Harbor Battlefield, the tour

provided information about the site's role in the War of 1812. These pilot projects were developed in cooperation with Guide by Cell, a company specializing in cell phone tours for museums, to test the feasibility of offering similar programs at other properties. In addition to sharing the technology, the company documented the number of calls, the length of each call, and the stops selected during the tours.



A visitor at Schuyler Mansion State Historic Site uses his cell phone to learn about members of the Schuyler family.

Change for the Better

The state rehabilitation tax credit program is an essential tool for promoting local preservation and redevelopment efforts, but it could still be improved. The State Historic Preservation Office supports proposed amendments that will expand the incentives and encourage greater public participation. For commercial projects, positive amendments could include an increased tax credit for qualified rehabilitation, no cap on project costs, and a credit that is transferable. For residential projects, productive amendments could provide for increases in the tax credit and the project cap, a credit rebate with conditions, and the broadening of the statutory definition of "distressed areas" to increase the number of eligible properties.

For more information, visit www.preservenys.org.



Lorenzo the Magnificent

Celebrating 200 Years of Architecture and Design

“Arrived about noon, yesterday, at Cazenovia... Walked with Mr. Lincklaen to see where he intends building [Lorenzo], which is on a gentle elevation [near] the east end of the lake....It will afford an opportunity of laying out pleasure grounds to much advantage, and will be one of the most beautiful seats in the state.”

Dr. Coventry's description of Cazenovia, 23d August 1806

When Dr. Coventry recounted his visit to Cazenovia Lake, John Lincklaen had been in the United States for sixteen years. Born in Amsterdam, Holland, in 1768, Lincklaen originally came to Philadelphia on leave as a Dutch naval officer. Shortly after his arrival, Lincklaen and fellow Dutch émigré Gerrit Boon conducted two speculative land expeditions on behalf of Theophilus de Cazenove, a Swiss agent representing the Dutch banking syndicate later known as the Holland Land Company. Lincklaen's forays into the wild lands of modern-day Madison County and central New York precipitated the eventual development of the village of Cazenovia on the shore of Cazenovia Lake.

While on assignment for Cazenove, Lincklaen recorded the following journal entry on October 11, 1792, “Arrived at the Lake where we encamped: situation superb, fine land.” The following May Lincklaen

returned with a grand vision and ten fellow settlers to ready the lands for sale. In 1795 as the settlement began to grow and prosper, the Holland Land Company paid for Lincklaen's first permanent home, on the eastern shore of Cazenovia Lake. A few years later, in 1801, Lincklaen purchased “a farm at the south end of the lake” with the intention of developing a country seat.

Work on the new house did not commence for another five years, but in September 1806 Lincklaen paid Daniel Thompson \$15 for “drafting a plan” for his new dwelling. During the fall Lincklaen paid for the purchase of lime, well digging, grafting of trees, and staking and setting out an orchard. Fortuitously, Lincklaen had requested a spring delivery of the building materials, as his first home burned to the ground on February 18, 1807, hastening construction of his new, fireproof brick residence. In May 1807 John Fosdick was paid \$225.82 for excavating

the cellar, and the cornerstone was laid that same month. Masons continued to work on the structure throughout the summer and fall, and in December Lincklaen wrote that “the building of my own House, engaged a great proportion of my attention, and employed most all the best mechanics that could be procured.” Work progressed through most of 1808, and in October the Lincklaen family moved in. By the year's end, the house had been completed at a cost of \$16,975.77.

Although no architectural drawings for Lorenzo have been discovered, its design is rooted in an ancient set of architectural ideals based on order, scale, and proportion that were re-examined and reinterpreted in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century English and American pattern books and applied in both urban and rural settings of the early Republic. In America, builder's manuals and pattern books emerged in response to the market desire for

architectural designs in the Neoclassical idiom. These widely published books were often found in the libraries of men of means, such as John Lincklaen. Although there is no record that Lincklaen owned such books, they were also widely available to builders and may have been a source for Lincklaen or his carpenter-builder.

The Lincklaen estate also evokes an earlier revival of classical architecture. John Lincklaen's first known use of the name Lorenzo occurred in an 1808 letter. Although there is no record of why, how, or when Lincklaen's country seat came to be named Lorenzo, popular lore suggests that the name was inspired by the prominent Florentine House of Medici and, specifically, Lorenzo de Medici (1449-1492), known as "Lorenzo the Magnificent." Francis A. Van der Kamp, an associate of Lincklaen's, hinted at a more specific motivation when he wrote to a Dutch compatriot in 1793, saying that "...Old Fort Schuyler (Utica) [must be] transformed [into] an opulent mercantile city, where future Lorenzos will foster and protect arts and sciences, where the tomahawk and scalping knife shall be replaced by the chisel and pencil of the artist, and the wigwam by the marble palaces." Van der Kamp's description alludes to the prosperous and civilized society envisioned by central New York's early settlers. That the name was eventually applied to Lincklaen's residence suggests his conscious association with the fifteenth-century Renaissance revival of the classical ideals of order, balance, and beauty.

Lincklaen's emulation of Renaissance-inspired country architecture is supported by Lorenzo's



The view from Lorenzo's ocular attic window offers a sweeping view of Cazenovia Lake.

similarity to Medici's fifteenth-century Villa di Poggio a Caiano, an important example of Renaissance country villa design. Like Caiano, Lorenzo was a significant architectural statement for its time, grander in size and sophistication than many



Villa Medicea di Poggio a Caiano, near Florence, Italy.

of its contemporaries. Both houses dominate their sites. Medici's estate house is sited on a shallow natural hill with a commanding overlook of the surrounding lands, gardens, and outbuildings. Similarly, Lorenzo occupies an equally impressive site at the south end of Cazenovia Lake, where it captures an expansive view

of the water. Lincklaen's estate house itself recalls Medici's in the massing of the main building block and its shallow surmounting hipped roof. The Italian influence on Lorenzo is reinforced by its delicate, applied, Federal period decoration inspired by the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii.

Today, Lorenzo remains remarkably intact to Lincklaen's era. This is perhaps because the estate remained in the same family until 1968, when it was conveyed to New York State as a historic site. To mark its bicentennial, Lorenzo opened two new exhibits, which visitors can enjoy through 2008: Celebrating 200 Years of Architecture and

Design at Lorenzo and Enter the Modern. The latter traces two centuries of technological innovations at the mansion.

Lorenzo is located on Rippleton Road (Route 13S) in Cazenovia. Call 315-655-3200 or visit www.nysparks.com and www.lorenzony.org for more information on hours, fees, and events.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS •

New York State

Historic Preservation Awards

The state historic preservation awards honor excellence in the protection and rejuvenation of New York's historic and cultural resources. By recognizing exemplary preservation achievements and expressing gratitude on behalf of all New Yorkers, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation believes that these awards will inspire others to safeguard the state's heritage.

Sam Hoyt, New York State Assembly

State Assemblyman Sam Hoyt has made an outstanding contribution to advancing historic preservation and community improvement activities across the state, especially in western New York. Representing the 144th District since 1992, Assemblyman Hoyt is a dedicated public servant who demonstrates a strong commitment to enhancing the conditions and economic vitality of neighborhoods and historic places in his district, which includes Buffalo's west side and Grand Island on the Niagara River. He has promoted a variety of community-based programs and initiatives that have helped to support the reuse and rejuvenation of existing resources, while encouraging



sustainable smart growth redevelopment strategies. He is also a strong supporter of environmental protection, promoting renewable energy sources, green building technologies, and open space conservation.



Assemblyman Hoyt has been a prime advocate for establishing and expanding the new state preservation tax credit program, which contains incentives for both commercial reinvestment and residential rehabilitation projects.

The state tax credit promises to be an important catalyst for furthering community revitalization efforts around the state.

The awards ceremony was held on December 13, 2007 in the visitor center at Peebles Island State Park, which is situated at the confluence of the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers in Waterford. The visitor center is housed in the rehabilitated power house of a former textile processing facility developed by Cluett, Peabody & Company in the early 1900s. Located at the northern end of the park, the factory complex is home to the State Historic Preservation Office and the Bureau of Historic Sites. The scenic 158-acre park is open to the public and offers a variety of recreational activities, such as hiking and kayaking.



He has also actively supported the preservation of some of Buffalo's most significant landmarks, including the Guaranty Building, designed by Louis Sullivan and Dankmar Adler, Kleinhans Music Hall, designed by Eliel and Eero Saarinen, and the remains of the historic Erie Canal. As one of the founding members of the Martin House Restoration Corporation, Hoyt has helped to secure millions of dollars in state funding for the restoration and reconstruction of the Darwin Martin House complex, which was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in the early 1900s. He supported the construction of a new

boathouse for the West Side Rowing Club based on an original Frank Lloyd Wright design. Rescuing and rehabilitating the H.H. Richardson complex at the Buffalo State Hospital has been one of Hoyt's top preservation priorities. The state recently committed \$100 million towards the restoration and reuse of this long-neglected yet nationally significant landmark, and a public/private committee has been established to oversee the property's redevelopment. We salute Assemblyman Hoyt for his long commitment to improving the quality, character, and heritage of this great state.

Adirondack Architectural Heritage

Established in 1990, Adirondack Architectural Heritage (AARCH) has played an important role in recognizing and preserving the Adirondack region's history and culture. This regional nonprofit organization is dedicated to

expanding and enhancing the public's understanding, appreciation, and stewardship of the area's historic and cultural treasures. This legacy includes not only well-known examples of rustic camp architecture but also the many vernacular properties that recall the region's development and growth, such as farmsteads, commercial centers, civic buildings, transportation resources, and industrial sites. Through the years, AARCH has developed an impressive range of public education initiatives, among which are a popular program of guided tours, an



Camp Santanoni Gate Lodge, Newcomb.

informative newsletter, technical services that promote long-term preservation efforts, and a variety of effective public/private partnerships that have helped to safeguard some of the area's most significant historic places.

Camp Santanoni, the former wilderness retreat of the Pruyn family in the town of Newcomb. Through what has become a model of private support for a public



property, many of the camp's impressive yet long-neglected buildings have been rescued, repaired, and interpreted for the benefit of all who visit this scenic and historic preserve. The organization is also recognizing and preserving the region's historic fire observation towers, which were built during the early twentieth century to protect the area's vast and valuable forests. Due to advances in fire detection technologies and the increasing costs of operating the remote stations, the fire

towers have become obsolete. Through a wide range of cooperative efforts, AARCH has helped to preserve many of these significant yet endangered historic properties. Through its dedication, hard work, and extraordinarily effective education and advocacy activities, AARCH has made outstanding contributions to preserving the Adirondack region's rich heritage.

Universal Preservation Hall, Saratoga Springs

Through the outstanding commitment and cooperation of a dedicated group of local citizens, civic leaders, and professionals, the Universal Preservation Hall project in downtown Saratoga Springs has transformed a distinguished yet deteriorated historic church into a vibrant center for art, culture, and community events. Built in 1871 for the Troy conference of the Methodist Episcopal

Church, the impressive brick and stone structure is a fine example of High Victorian Gothic ecclesiastical architecture. The church became a center for religious activities, while its annual meetings featured some of the nation's most prominent public speakers and social reformers, including William Jennings Bryan, Henry Ward Beecher, and Frederick Douglass.

Through the years the church prospered and eventually moved to a new location in 1976. The congregation sold the 1871 building to the Universal Baptist Temple, which used it until its deteriorated condition made it unsafe. In 1999 concerned citizens and church members joined together to rescue the local landmark. They formed a nonprofit partnership to preserve and convert the building into a center for performing arts and special events, while setting aside a small worship space for the Baptist congregation. The church is now structurally sound, weather tight, and is being adapted for community use. Through this collaboration and with the support of various public and private partners, the project sponsors were directly responsible for preserving this valuable historic resource and infusing it with new life and vitality.

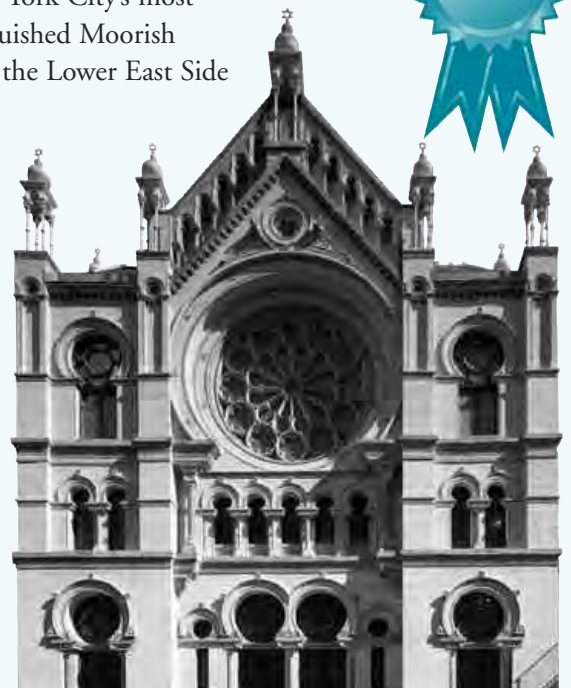


Architect's rendering of the completed interior of Universal Preservation Hall.

Eldridge Street Project, New York City

Established in 1986, the nonprofit Eldridge Street Project has made an outstanding contribution to restoring and revitalizing the Eldridge Street Synagogue, one of New York City's most prominent historic religious properties. Opened in 1887, the distinguished Moorish Revival style synagogue was the first great house of worship built on the Lower East Side by Eastern European Jews. The nationally significant landmark became a symbol of religious freedom and economic opportunity for the thousands of immigrants who settled in the surrounding neighborhood. The synagogue was not only a place of worship but also a community social center, providing support to hundreds of people in need. Due to population shifts and a dwindling congregation, the synagogue gradually declined. By the mid-twentieth century, the building was underused and severely deteriorated.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, a group of dedicated volunteers formed Friends of Eldridge Street Synagogue to rescue and stabilize the structure. The Friends subsequently established the Eldridge Street Project to oversee the synagogue's complete restoration. For close to twenty years, the organization has expertly managed the \$20 million preservation project, while welcoming



more than 500,000 visitors to the synagogue. Throughout the restoration project, the organization has offered a wide range of educational opportunities, including workshops for students and teachers, concerts, exhibitions, and interpretive programs. This project, which has received

state grant assistance, combines outstanding preservation practices with exemplary stewardship and a strong commitment to interpreting the history, architecture, and culture of the Lower East Side. We salute all those associated with the Eldridge Street Project.

Town of Roxbury

The Town of Roxbury stands out for the variety of creative approaches it has used to integrate historic preservation into the everyday life of the community,

The town is also utilizing various state and federal programs, such as grants and tax incentives, to rehabilitate its historic properties. Most recently, the town has

especially in the hamlet of Roxbury. Located on the East Branch of the Delaware River and set within a scenic mountain landscape, the hamlet boasts a rich history and has important associations with financier Jay Gould, a native son, and his daughter, Helen Gould Shepard. The Gould family endowed several community and civic landmarks, including the Jay Gould Memorial Church, Kirkside Park, the YMCA, and the Shepard Hills Golf Club.

Beginning in 2003 with Preserve New York grant assistance, the town sponsored a historic resources survey for the hamlet of Roxbury. The project culminated in the listing of the entire community on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. In 2005

Roxbury was one of the first communities in the state to participate in the federal Preserve America program and was awarded a grant for several innovative educational and tourism projects, including a community-wide heritage festival and a tour brochure highlighting local history and architecture. Through a series of continuing programs and events, the town is combining historic preservation with heritage tourism to promote its special character and stimulate local economic development.



Budding historians from local schools lead tours of Roxbury.

drafted a preservation zoning ordinance and is considering Certified Local Government designation; Roxbury is one of the first municipalities in the Catskill region to propose local preservation legislation. The Town of Roxbury has made impressive progress developing a comprehensive educational, economic, and social program that draws upon its history. These efforts serve as a model for other communities in the region and across the state.



Harold and Lillian Bishop were in the market for a new home. The Bishops had lived in two traditional houses since their marriage in 1941, but with a busy job and a new infant on the way, the young couple had tired of the maintenance required by their older wood-frame home. As they explored options, the Bishops came across the Lustron Corporation's advertisements for a new, all-steel house that could be constructed quickly and was virtually maintenance free. In the fall of 1949 the couple toured a model Lustron erected in Scotia, New York. Liking what they saw, the Bishops decided to purchase the unusual house. True to the company's promise, construction was completed in under a month, and the family moved in on November 4.

The Lustron Home, the distinctive, prefabricated, porcelain-enameled steel house, was the invention of businessman and engineer Carl Strandlund. Although only a few thousand were constructed, the Lustron was one of the most heavily subsidized housing initiatives in United States history. Carl Strandlund (1899-1974), born in Sweden and raised in America, came from a family of inventors. From an

early age, Strandlund showed an aptitude for invention and an obsessive desire to see how things worked. He studied engineering through a correspondence school before taking a job at the Minneapolis-Moline Tractor Company, where he created over 150 patents that revolutionized equipment use in the Depression-era farming industry. Over his lifetime Strandlund invented everything from a wallpaper remover to theater air-conditioning systems.



Carl G. Strandlund, 1899-1974.

The name "Lustron" originated with the Chicago Vitreous Enamel Products Company, which specialized in steel enamelware for household appliances. In 1937 the company trademarked the term to refer to the porcelain-enameled steel architectural panels it was creating for storefronts and interior walls. Distinguished by a sleek, glass-like appearance, Lustron was extremely durable and easy to clean. Before World War II, Lustron panels were found on White Castle restaurants and Standard Oil service stations. At

the onset of the war, with steel reserved for the defense industry, Chicago Vitreous ceased producing Lustron panels. Meanwhile, in 1942 Carl Strandlund joined the company, and by September 1943 his success in

developing improved tank armor that could be manufactured quickly had earned him a promotion to general manager. His contribution to the war effort propelled him into the social circles of Washington's most powerful players.

As the war came to a close, the United States faced a housing crisis of epic proportions. Millions of returning soldiers were marrying and starting families, and the middle class was exiting the nation's cities for the "modern" lifestyle and architecture of the suburbs. Meanwhile the housing industry had been stalled for almost five years. These factors created an unprecedented demand for new housing. When Wilson Wyatt, the former mayor of Louisville, was appointed by Harry Truman to head the Veterans Emergency Housing Program, he set a goal of producing 1.2 million new homes during 1946. Thus when Strandlund approached Wyatt that same year to request release of enough government steel to construct 500 enameled steel gas stations, he learned that steel was still reserved, now for new housing.

However, the meeting provided Strandlund with an idea that he took back to Chicago Vitreous. What if the company's porcelain-enameled steel panels could be used for mass-produced houses constructed in an automobile-style assembly line? Over the next several months, Strandlund and his designers developed the first Lustron prototype. Returning to Washington with drawings and a manufacturing plan, Strandlund received immediate support from Wyatt, who not only approved Strandlund's request for funding and materials but also promised a wartime assembly plant and a guarantee to cover the cost of the first 15,000 homes produced.

Despite Wyatt's recommendation, Strandlund still had to secure the actual funds from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), and by 1947 Chicago Vitreous was developing a working design. The first model was designed by architects Roy Blass and M.H. Beckman. Strandlund instructed them to design a building based on the popular bungalow but constructed entirely of steel and metal components. The Lustron prototype, "The Esquire," featured porcelain-enameled steel exterior walls and aluminum casement windows. The one-story building was rectangular in

plan with a low-pitched gable roof, small cut-out entry porch, and a downspout with zigzag motif (later a Lustron signature). The interior, also clad in Lustron panels, featured a living room, kitchen/dinette, utility room, bathroom, and two bedrooms. What the house lacked in size it made up for with a multitude of space-saving features, including metal pocket doors between rooms and plenty of built-in storage in the kitchen and bedrooms. The house was heated with radiant heat from the ceiling panels. Erected in Hinsdale, Ohio, the prototype generated the interest Strandlund needed to convince the RFC to back his invention.



The first Lustron model being built in midtown Manhattan, 1948.

Nevertheless, considerable negotiations and intervention from Congress were involved before the RFC eventually approved a \$12.5 million loan. It came with the stipulation that Chicago Vitreous would be liable if the Lustron failed. Fearing massive losses, the company parted ways with Strandlund, who used his 86,000 shares of company stock to buy the Lustron trademark, panel patent, and machinery. The new Lustron Corporation was formed on October 31, 1947, converting a former aircraft plant in Columbus, Ohio, into a manufacturing plant. By early 1948 over \$7 million of machinery and equipment had been purchased for the sole purpose of manufacturing Lustron homes.

Before production began, the Lustron Corporation carefully crafted an extensive national marketing campaign targeted toward returning soldiers, housewives, and other American families looking to escape to post-World War II



A group of Lustron Corporation executives and managers outside the company's factory in Columbus, Ohio, c1947-1950. Courtesy Ohio Historical Society.

suburban communities. Strandlund enticed prospective buyers with the slogan: "Lustron: A New Standard for Living." By the time Strandlund began to build 100 model houses across the country, the company had improved the design. The new, modified ranch style "Westchester" had significantly more built-in features, including a kitchen/dinette china cabinet with convenient pass through, an elegant bedroom vanity surrounded by floor-to-ceiling closets, and an innovative combination

clothes and dishwasher manufactured specifically for the company. Buyers could choose a two- or three-bedroom model, with or without the deluxe built-in packages, in dove grey, maize yellow, surf blue, or desert tan. Interior color options were grey, ivory, blue, yellow, and pink. The homes came with magnetized hooks for picture hanging and a brochure detailing required maintenance; each house was assigned a unique serial number. Later the company developed

smaller models, including the "Newport" and the "Meadowbrook"; however, the Westchester remained the company's most popular design. Other later options included garages, breezeways, and carports, and pink or lime green exteriors.

In April 1948 the first Lustron model, furnished and decorated by *McCall's* magazine, was erected at the northeast corner of 52nd Street and the Avenue of Americas in Manhattan. In the sixteen days it was open, more than 60,000 people toured the model. Visitors included government officials from New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. The *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, and other leading newspapers all featured articles on Lustron. Advertisements were run in *Time*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Foreign Service*, *Architectural Forum*, and *Banking*. An April 19, 1948, issue of *Life Magazine* contained a two-page Lustron advertisement proclaiming the "New Standard for Living" and including a coupon that readers could submit for more information. This advertisement generated more than 50,000 requests for information. An article in the *Army Times* resulted in an order for more than thirty-five houses for the U.S. Marine Corps base in Quantico,

The New York State Lustron Project

Funded by a Preserve New York grant, the Historic Albany Foundation has embarked on a statewide survey of Lustron houses. Over 100 Lustrons were constructed in New York State, and approximately one-third of the surviving examples are located in the Capital District. The project goal is to locate, record, research, and nominate to the State and National Registers as many as possible. The larger goal is to encourage the preservation of these innovative homes, which, as they age, are increasingly threatened by development pressures or remodeling.

For information about the project contact Historic Albany Foundation at 518-465-0876 or <http://www.historic-albany.org/lustron.html>.

Virginia. Lustron homes were endorsed by *Consumer Reports* and won the approval of Emily Post, who praised the “intelligent planning [that had gone] into this house.” At this point, not a single private home had rolled off the assembly line.

The company set up a dealership network with individual contractors, much like the automobile industry. It was the dealer’s responsibility to sell, build, aid in the financing process, and service the house after the sale. Theoretically, a shiny new Lustron would be as easy to buy and own as a new Ford or Chevrolet. The company also developed an efficient way to deliver the 3,000 building components to the worksite. A specially designed truck, holding all the parts for a single house, was loaded so that parts could be unpacked in exactly the order in which the house was to be constructed. The elaborately configured fleet cost \$4.5 million dollars; however, the trucks helped to decrease the average construction time to just over two weeks.

The process of fitting out the factory to produce the housing components took nineteen months, and the building was not fully operational until January 1949. The first house was shipped to a St. Louis suburb. By this time, the company had amassed six more high-interest loans from the RFC totaling \$37.5 million dollars and requiring a monthly payment of \$1.25 million. Unfortunately, the Lustron Corporation had spent more time promoting its product than living up to its promises of efficient production and affordable cost. Although the corporation boasted that it could manufacture 100

houses per day, actual daily production never exceeded twenty. Originally promoted at an average price of \$6,500, actual costs soared to over \$10,000, excluding land. The relationship with dealers was consistently strained due to Strandlund’s insistence that they pay cash at the factory, putting the liability to sell the houses on the contractors. Mounting protests from building trade unions and lumber and concrete

Strandlund filed for bankruptcy and ultimately lost everything.

Despite the innovative design, efficient production method, and potential appeal to young homeowners, fewer than 2,600 Lustron homes were sold nationwide. More than 100 were shipped to New York State, where they were sold by thirteen Lustron dealerships. The largest number was marketed by dealers serving the Capital District region, with others appearing in the



The Lustron “Westchester” model featured a master bedroom with a built-in vanity and closets. Photograph from original Lustron catalogue.

companies who feared the potential loss of jobs in their industries eroded political support. With the government investigating funding irregularities, the RFC filed foreclosure proceedings in March 1950, and the company ceased production the following month. Between dealer investments and government and private loans, the Lustron Corporation had amassed a debt of over \$50 million (equivalent to more than \$400 billion today). With 236 creditors,

lower Hudson Valley, Long Island, Adirondack, Syracuse, and Binghamton regions, and in the state’s westernmost counties. Dealerships, which had to maintain their production schedule in order to profit, were hard hit by the company’s failure, and dealers and their investors took an estimated \$50 to \$70 million loss after the plant closed in June 1950. Large orders in New York City and Buffalo were canceled, and many disappointed buyers were left with their orders unfilled.



Harold and Lillian Bishops' Lustron house, which they have owned for fifty-nine years.

After nearly sixty years, Harold and Lillian Bishop still live in their Lustron home (Westchester model, Serial No. 01458) in Glenville, New York. Now in their eighties, the couple has done little to change the house. With the exception of a new heating system and replacement of one door, the Lustron survives as built. Among few original Lustron homeowners in New York State, the Bishops have maintained their home exactly as the company instructed, taking care to preserve even the blueprints and original brochure, which are stored in a kitchen drawer. The Bishops' satisfaction with their home suggests that the Lustron Corporation's promise of an enduring, virtually maintenance-free structure was not a marketing gimmick but a design and engineering achievement.

Although some of New York's Lustron houses have been demolished or greatly modified, a new generation of Lustron owners, often drawn to the design's retro-appeal, have united to recognize Strandlund's contribution to mid-twentieth-century residential design and to preserve these dwindling resources. Lacking a contemporary source for parts or contractors trained to repair them, owners have formed an internet community to trade ideas and share their preservation experiences. The Lustron

story provides an insight into the optimism of the post-World War II generation, while the surviving houses document their creator's ingenuity. What was ultimately Carl Strandlund's greatest failure has an enduring legacy through the thoughtful and diligent caretakers of his homes.



A kitchen/dinette china cabinet with pass through was one of the space-saving, built-in features offered in a Lustron. Courtesy Library of Congress.

RECENT LISTINGS

CAYUGA COUNTY

Auburn: Auburn Button Works and Logan Silk Mills
Weedsport: Orrin W. Burritt House

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Copake: Copake United Methodist Church and Copake Cemetery

DELAWARE COUNTY

Bovina vicinity: Burns Family Farm
Sidney: Pioneer Cemetery

DUTCHESS COUNTY

Red Hook vicinity: Hendrick Martin House
 Parker Training Academy
 Dutch Barn
Schultzville: Warren Masonic Lodge #32

ERIE COUNTY

Buffalo: Corpus Christi Roman Catholic Church Complex
 Parke Apartments
Orchard Park: Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh Railway Station

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Dickinson Center vicinity: Hastings Farmstead

GREENE COUNTY

Catskill: East Side Historic District (Additional Documentation Approved)
Haines Falls: Twilight Park Historic District

HERKIMER COUNTY

Norway: (Former) Norway Baptist Church

JEFFERSON COUNTY

Clayton: Fairview Manor

KINGS COUNTY

Brooklyn: 75th Police Precinct Station House
 Christ Evangelical English Lutheran Church
 Houses at 216–264 Ovington Avenue
 Saitta House

LEWIS COUNTY

Lowville: Lowville Presbyterian Church
Lyons Falls vicinity: The Pines

LIVINGSTON COUNTY

Dansville: Dansville Downtown Historic District

NASSAU COUNTY

New Hyde Park: Cornell–Van Nostrand House

NEW YORK COUNTY

New York City: Engineering Societies' Building and Engineers' Club
 Gansvoort Market Historic District
 House at 20 West 16th Street
 St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church

NIAGARA COUNTY

Lockport: Bacon–Merchant–Moss House
 Peter D. Walter House
Youngstown vicinity: John Carter Farmstead

ONEIDA COUNTY

Utica: John C. Hieber & Co. Building

ONONDAGA COUNTY

Baldwinsville: Mrs. I. L. Crego House
Syracuse: Harry N. Burhans House

ONTARIO COUNTY

Farmington: Farmington Quaker Crossroads Historic District

ORANGE COUNTY

Montgomery vicinity: Colden Mansion Ruins

ORLEANS COUNTY

Oak Orchard: Cobblestone Inn

RENSELAER COUNTY

Rensselaer: W. P. Irwin Bank Building

RICHMOND COUNTY

Staten Island: Temple Emanu–El

SENECA COUNTY

Junius: Cobblestone Farmhouse at 1027 Stone Church Road

Cobblestone Farmhouse at 1111 Stone Church Road
Ovid vicinity: David and Mary Kinne Farmstead
Seneca Falls vicinity: Julius and Harriet Bull House

SUFFOLK COUNTY

Dix Hills: Coltrane House
Huntington: The Crest
North Amityville: Sisters of St. Dominic Motherhouse Complex
Shelter Island: Smith–Taylor Cabin
Stony Brook: Gamecock Cottage

SULLIVAN COUNTY

Beaverkill: Beaverkill Covered Bridge

ULSTER COUNTY

Milton: Milton Railroad Station

WESTCHESTER COUNTY

Bronxville: Bronxville Women's Club
White Plains: Bar Building
Yonkers: Plashbourne Estate

WYOMING COUNTY

Attica: Augustus A. Smith House
Perry: Brick Presbyterian Church

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Final Words

On June 16, 1885, as the bright green leaves of spring matured into full summer foliage, Ulysses S. Grant, his wife Julia and other family members, friends, employees, and physicians embarked upon a journey from which the former president would never return. Terminally ill with throat cancer, Grant accepted an invitation



For more information about Grant Cottage State Historic Site, call 518-587-8277 or visit www.nysparks.com or www.grantcottage.org.

from his friend Joseph W. Drexel to escape the sweltering streets of New York to a cottage in the Adirondack Mountains. In that rural retreat on Mt. McGregor, Grant spent his final days preparing his memoirs for publication.

Four years earlier, Drexel, a wealthy banking executive, and several other investors had purchased property on Mt. McGregor,

located about ten miles north of Saratoga Springs. Over the next few years, the Mt. McGregor, Lake George, and Saratoga Railroad Company transformed the area, building a narrow gauge railroad and constructing the large Balmoral hotel. When Drexel learned that Grant's doctor was searching for a suitable location in which the ailing former president and his family could spend the summer, he purchased a cottage on Mt. McGregor and had it renovated. Freshly decorated, with a wide, covered veranda, the cottage was situated close to the railroad and offered spectacular views of the Adirondacks.

As word spread that Grant was staying at the mountain getaway, reporters, well-wishers, and curious spectators overran the Balmoral. Meanwhile, Grant, driven by financial need, worked to finish his memoirs with the assistance of his son Fred and stenographer Noble Dawson. As Dawson recalled, Grant was still trying to get down text as his strength failed, prompting Dawson to caution Fred that "we have to tell him that the book is done." Although Grant had planned to continue on beyond his military career, Dawson and Fred prevailed upon him to conclude with the military part of his life, and the former president finished the memoir just days before he died.

After Grant's death on July 23, 1885, crowds, now in mourning, continued to flock to the cottage. When Joseph Drexel died three years later, his executors, in accordance with his wishes, donated the Mt. McGregor cottage to the Grand Army of the Republic, which opened it for public visitation in 1890.

"After I came he began to dictate, and he continued this as long as he was able to do so. As he went on his voice became weaker and weaker, and toward the last, I had to take my seat very close to his, and he whispered his words in my ear."

Noble Dawson,
Philadelphia Inquirer,
February 6, 1894

In 1957 the property became a state historic site, and today it is operated by the Friends of Ulysses S. Grant Cottage.

In 2006 the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation transformed a garage on the property into a visitor center, freeing up space in the cottage that once served as a bookshop and ticket sales area. The Friends group approached curators at the Peebles Island Resource Center (PIRC) for assistance in creating a vignette within this room to illustrate its historic use as the office in which Fred Grant and Noble Dawson worked on Grant's memoirs.

Despite some later alterations, the cottage and many of its furnishings remain the same as when the Grant family was in residence. Grant's death bed is still in situ, and, poignantly, the mantel clock remains stopped at 8:08 a.m., as Fred Grant left it to mark the time of his father's death. Floral arrangements sent for Grant's funeral have been preserved and left in place in the adjacent dining room. Unfortunately, no original items from the office survive and there are no known images of the room that date to Grant's short stay. Without this documentation, it was a challenge for PIRC curators to recreate the room's appearance during the Grant period. In addition, the 1885 office, not a standard feature of a summer resort, was probably a temporary arrangement, presenting an additional challenge.



Grant Cottage remains a remarkable time capsule of Ulysses S. Grant's last days, which are especially recalled in the room in which he died.

In carrying out their research, the curators identified typical late nineteenth century office accoutrements such as pencils and the lined pads of paper that Grant favored. They also studied the collections of other properties within

was treated by the PIRC's furniture conservator and moved to the site. A dining room chair was moved into the room to serve as a desk chair, as historic photographs suggest that the Grant family frequently moved these chairs around the cot-



The newly recreated office in Grant Cottage where his memoirs were finalized.

New York's historic site system to locate typical period furnishings for the office. Based on their findings, curators were able to develop a list of appropriate furniture and accessories and acquire both original period pieces and reproduction items.

A large nineteenth-century desk in the collection of Senate House State Historic Site in Kingston

tage. Reproductions of letters and telegrams were created by scanning original documents, and the replicas were used to recreate the clutter of correspondence that arrived daily at the cottage. Together these items were used to create a scene representing the room's function in 1885. Although they occupy only a portion of the room, the office furnishings add a crucial dimension to the interpretation of the site, helping visitors to understand the tremendous effort it took on the part of Grant, his son Fred, and the stenographer Dawson to ready the memoirs before time ran out.

Thirty years ago...

When the Hudson-Mohawk Urban Cultural Park (UCP) was established in 1977, its founders had a vision of 'park' that encompassed smokestacks as well as tall trees, concerts along with cycling, and row houses instead of campsites. It was an exciting time. Historic preservationists were rallying to protect

marathons, bike tours, and festivals, and the fireworks and tall ships commemorating the nation's bicentennial had made history fun for the public. In this dynamic context, the Hudson-Mohawk UCP (later known as RiverSpark) hatched an ambitious agenda for supporting economic development through preservation, education, and recreation.

Recreation to research and report on establishing a statewide system of urban cultural parks. Consultants Jonathan Lane and Dennis Frenchman were hired to undertake the study, which included a statewide survey of potential urban cultural park locations, development of historical themes and selection criteria, a public outreach program, and a series of published newsletters and reports. The completed plan won the "Outstanding Planning Program Award" in 1981 from the American Planning Association.

Twenty-five years ago...

What followed in 1982 was the Urban Cultural Parks Act, creating the nation's first statewide heritage area system. The legislation, sponsored by Assemblyman (now Congressman) Maurice D. Hinchey and Senator Joe Bruno, established New York's system of urban cultural parks under the direction of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and designated the first thirteen UCPs (including Hudson-Mohawk). The legislation also set up a statewide UCP Advisory Board and formally declared a state policy of cooperation with other public and private entities to meet the goals of historic preservation, education, recreation, and economic revitalization.

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary...

UCPs have been renamed heritage areas and the statewide system has grown to include twenty



During the Heritage Development Forum a special award was presented to Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey (left), a longtime champion of heritage development, by David Altieri (center), President of the New York Heritage Area Association and Sackets Harbor Heritage Area Director, and Andy Beers (right), OPRHP Executive Deputy Commissioner.

character-defining places of local significance. Social historians were rewriting history textbooks to include women, minorities, and working people. Conservationists were turning their focus from wildlife to lifestyle issues, such as walkable neighborhoods. Cities large and small were venues for

State legislators recognized that such a program could benefit urban areas throughout the state that had been ravaged by urban renewal and abandoned by investors. Consequently, in addition to establishing the Hudson-Mohawk UCP, the 1977 legislature directed the New York State Office of Parks and



The founders of the heritage area program were inspired by extraordinary historic and cultural resources, such as Henry Burden's 1852 waterwheel, an icon of the RiverSpark Heritage Area. Courtesy Rensselaer County Historical Society.

heritage areas and corridors; the Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor in Buffalo, was designated in 2007. The state's heritage network has grown to include three National Heritage Areas, two state-designated greenways, twenty Scenic Byways (seventeen state and three national), six state Heritage Trails (including over 140 designated sites), plus countless programs, plans, and projects dedicated to the "beneficial enjoyment and revitalization" of New York's special places. For the heritage areas, the twenty-fifth anniversary provided both an occasion for celebration and a vantage point for retrospection and looking ahead.

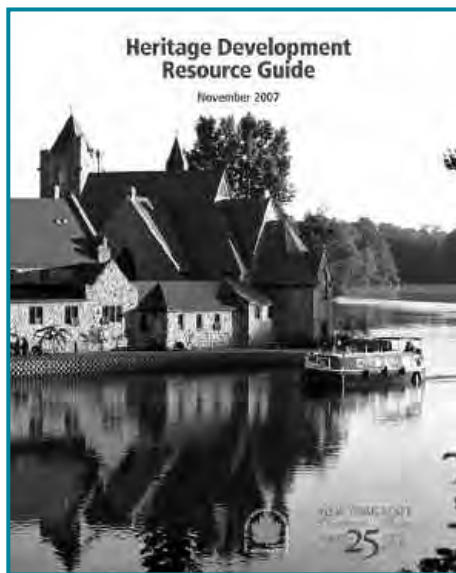
The capstone of those celebrations was the Heritage Development Forum convened in Troy on November 13, 2007, by heritage area staff with support from partners in the Erie Canalway and Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area programs. Over 160 attendees, drawn from government agencies, nongovernmental organizations,

and the private sector, came together to discuss heritage experiences and goals. While their backgrounds and expertise were diverse, participants were united in defining heritage development as a revitalization strategy

that incorporates smart growth principles to promote sustainable development and enhance the quality of life. The goals are promoted through programs and activities in historic preservation, resource conservation, recreation, interpretation, and community capacity-building that demonstrate respect for people, places, and the past.

Forum participants described exemplary projects, reflected on commonalities, set priorities, and generated strategies for the future. Past achievements were presented side-by-side with contemporary

trends, including Governor Spitzer's smart growth initiatives. The day concluded with a call for continuing coordination and dialogue.



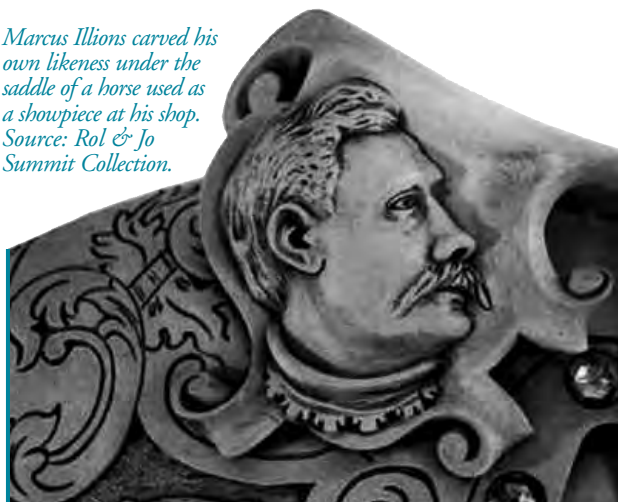
For more information on the state's heritage area program or to download the Heritage Development Resource Guide, visit www.nysparks.state.ny.us/heritage/herit_area.asp.

Pony Preservation

A masterpiece of hand-carved artistry, the carousel at Hempstead Lake State Park has been delighting visitors for nearly eighty years. Hempstead Lake is one of Long Island's oldest state parks. Developed on property once held by New York City, the park includes the largest freshwater lake on Long Island. The establishment of a park here in 1925 was important in the history of the Long Island state park system because it helped to determine the route of the Southern State Parkway. The park's early popularity also demonstrated the benefits of state parks, helping to justify the extensive park system proposed by Robert Moses.

The carousel was donated by August Heckscher (1848-1941), an industrialist, philanthropist, and park benefactor. Although the Long Island State Park Commission's annual report for 1929 noted that the carousel had been erected in that year, research has not revealed its original location or how Heckscher acquired it. Interestingly, Heckscher was listed as a patron in the manufacturer's 1925 catalogue, inviting speculation that he owned the carousel himself before donating it to the park.

Marcus Illions carved his own likeness under the saddle of a horse used as a showpiece at his shop. Source: Rol & Jo Summit Collection.



About the carousel's creators, however, much has been written. The machine was manufactured by M.C. Illions and Sons, among the most talented and innovative carousel makers of America's "golden age of



The carousel pavilion at Hempstead Lake State Park, 1960s.

carousels." The idea for the carousel originated during the Middle Ages, and mechanical devices based on this idea were popular amusements in Europe during the eighteenth century. The steam engine transformed the industry by greatly increasing the size and complexity of the machines, considerably expanding the variety of rides. Although hand-cranked carousels appeared in the United States by the early nineteenth century, the arrival of a group of European immigrant craftsmen in the late nineteenth century sparked the major period of hand-carved carousel production (c1880-c1930), during which approximately 10,000 machines were produced.

One of the centers of American carousel production was Brooklyn's Coney Island, a dense enclave of oceanside amusement parks whose rapid late nineteenth century development was fueled by a burgeoning urban population and a steady stream of immigrant craftsmen. The latter carried the mechanical and artistic development of the carousel to new heights. Charles I.D. Looff, a Swede, installed the first carousel at Coney Island in 1876, and his fanciful galloping horses with muscular bodies and bejeweled ornamentation defined what became known as the "Coney Island style."

Looff also operated a factory, employing many immigrant carvers. Another innovator, German-born William F. Mangels, advanced carousel mechanics by developing the overhead crank that moved the horses up and down. The crank encouraged carvers to experiment with horses in motion, galloping and kicking their hoofs, heads thrown back, and manes blowing in the wind.

Marcus Charles Illions (c1866-1949), born in Lithuania, was the son of a horse trader. As a youth Illions was apprenticed to a wood carver; he later traveled to England, where he studied carving before emigrating to America in 1888. He worked in Looff's shop before teaming up with Mangels to restore a fire-damaged Coney Island carousel. Later he and Mangels collaborated on a series of notable machines that capitalized on Mangels's mechanical genius and Illions's artistry. Even after he opened his own factory (M.C. Illions and Sons Carousell Works) in 1909, Illions often purchased mechanical parts from Mangels.

Illions's early carousel figures were influenced by Looff, but after 1900 he began to distinguish himself within the Coney Island tradition. Illions's horses were more flamboyant and exotic than his mentor's, and his better understanding of anatomy also made them more realistic. Illions explored the depiction of movement, musculature, and expression, capturing the anxiety and excitement of speed in his horses' wild eyes, fearsome faces, and dramatically wind-whipped manes. Their highly decorative bodies featured elaborately detailed trappings, incorporating intricate foliate, beadwork, or feather motifs decorated with silver and gold leaf and layers of meticulously applied lacquers. Even as his workshop expanded, Illions always carved the heads himself.



M.C. Illions (near right) in his workshop in Coney Island, c1910-12. Source: Bernard J. Illions Collection.

Like most carousel manufacturers, M.C. Illions and Sons, which prospered until the late 1920s, produced a variety of models. The company's largest ("The Supreme"), a four-abreast model, held seventy-four horses. The Hempstead Lake carousel is a "Portable Monarch II," a smaller model designed to be easily moved. It carries thirty-six horses, arranged three abreast, and two chariots. Illions produced fewer of these smaller models and this is a rare surviving example still in operation.

In 2001 with state preservation grant assistance, the Hempstead Lake carousel was restored by Carousel Works, Inc. Paint was stripped from the horses, the wood was repaired, and they were repainted using a process similar to the original. Horses not manufactured by Illions were replaced with four originals found in storage, antique Illions horses from another carousel, and new horses carved in Illions's style. Other decorations were replicated or refurbished; mechanical works were repaired or replaced; and the platform was refinished. Finally, the 1931 carousel pavilion received a new roof and the carousel reopened in 2005.



Lustron delivery truck loaded with the prefabricated parts to build a Lustron house, c.1949.



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