

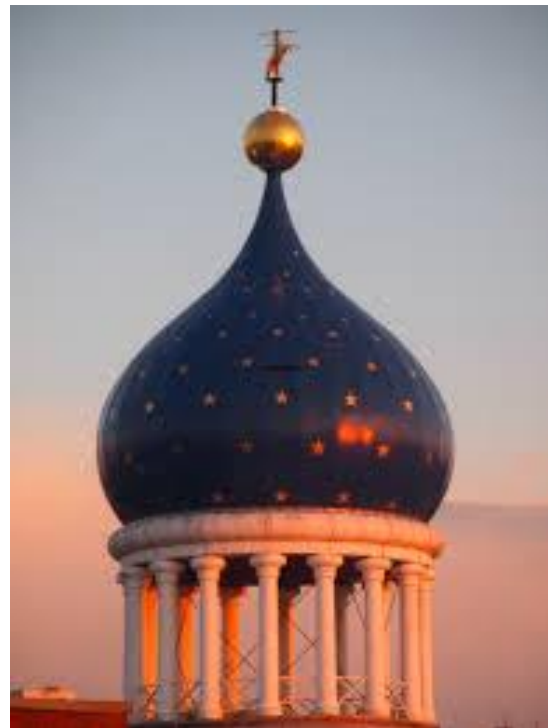
Colt Armory 1857 Engraving

The Colt Dome

Completed along with the East Armory in 1855 the bright blue dome certainly stands out. Many people wonder why Sam Colt would build something like this in the first place. The answer seems to be a combination of factors, Sam knew how to market his products and himself, and he likely would have wanted to exhibit his close ties to European high society, particularly that of the Russian Czar, Nicolas I.

The first dome burned along with the armory in 1864, but was rebuilt in the same style by Elizabeth Colt in honor of her husband's memory. That dome still graces the skyline, although the rampant colt on top has been replaced. The 1867 colt was removed in the late 1980's and is on display at the Museum of Connecticut History. A gilded replica was created to preserve the original appearance of the dome shining above the city as a beacon of the Colt legacy in Hartford.

An extended history of the dome will be coming to our website soon, along with a Virtual Tour of the view from the dome. Stay tuned!



Elisha King Root

Elisha King Root was born in 1808 in Ludlow, MA. He worked in a cotton mill from age 10 and at the age of 15 he began working in a machine shop. At age 24 he was hired to work at the Collins axe factory in Canton, CT. There he invented a unique die casting process and a series of precision machine tools that increased both the quantity and quality of axes produced by the company. In 1849 Samuel Colt hired Root to serve as foreman and shop superintendent. While working for Colt, Root designed a drop hammer, (which was soon used in every forge in the world), boring machines, gauges, jigs, and perfected the “Lincoln miller” milling machine, 150,000 of which were sold in the late 19th century, making it the most important American machine tool of the era.

The Colt Model 1855 Pocket Revolver was popularly known as the “Root Revolver” due to the primary role Elisha K. Root had in its design. After Colt's death in 1862, Root took over as president of Colt's Patent Firearms until his death in 1865.



West Point Cadet George Armstrong Custer holding a Root-Colt revolver



Plenary Panelists Left to right: Rev. Henry Brown, Warren Hardy, Sarah Pharaon, Thea Montanez, Iran Nazario, Rebecca Stanfield McCown, Mayor Luke Bronin standing

Public Plenary: A Call to Action

On March 25th the National Council on Public History hosted a panel discussion: *Considering Coltsville: A Revolving Story* at Center Church sponsored by Connecticut Humanities. The session offered opportunities for exploratory conversations about challenges in interpreting gun violence. Rebecca Stanfield McCown, Director, Stewardship Institute, expertly represented the National Park Service (NPS) alongside community members from the Connecticut Center for Nonviolence, Mothers United Against Violence, Hartford City Hall, and the Peace Center of Connecticut, Inc. Sarah Pharaon of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience moderated the panel. The standing room only event challenged all to imagine the role of the NPS in telling difficult stories, like Coltsville, our role in the community and how to be inclusive and to create space for empathy amidst difficult conversations. The takeaways included a call to action for the NPS to engage with Hartford youth in meaningful ways to build trust, develop skills and share stories.

Colt Park Establishment Update

Great news! The National Park Service (NPS) has approved the official legal descriptions of the future Coltsville visitor's center. Our partners at Colt Gateway LLC are now updating site drawings and reviewing the documents for final revisions and approval. Once approved, the NPS will undergo contracting for a new title search. This title search will be methodical and time consuming. The wait will be worth it, however, as this will give the NPS and Colt Gateway an up to date checklist of things to be accomplished to prepare the title for transfer to the government. Check out our Facebook page for some great conceptual images of what the visitor center might look like!

Youth Engagement

Last October Coltsville began a youth engagement program in Hartford in partnership with the National Park Service, Groundwork Connecticut, the National Park Foundation and the Peace Center of Connecticut. The nine month program is actively seeking community partners for collaboration in identifying and developing strategies for community engagement focusing on cultural and natural resources stewardship.

Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park staff, volunteers and youth program participants visited with staff, interns and partners of the emerging Coltsville National Historical Park and toured the site. The visit sparked conversations of shared stories with Samuel Colt operating his first factory, the Colt Gun Mill, at the base of Great Falls in Paterson, NJ from 1836 to 1841. The visit opened the door for further collaborations as Paterson Great Falls staff have navigated the process of starting up a new park.



*Amy Glowacki Interpretation & Education
Program Manager*

Coltsville Interpretation & Education Program Manager

The National Park Service is pleased to introduce Amy Glowacki, the Interpretation and Education Program Manager for Coltsville National Historical Park and the Springfield Armory National Historic Site. Ms. Glowacki has worked for the National Park Service for 26 years. She holds master's degrees in public history and in resources interpretation. She previously served as the Youth and Volunteer Programs Manager at the Lowell National Historical Park and for the National Park Service Northeast Region.

In her current role, she supervises the front-line rangers and interns who will be the face of the park with the visitors and community. She is "thrilled to be a member of the team establishing a new park, and meeting partners and community members who are working to tell the stories of Hartford and the Colt family." As part of her role, she is identifying topics for interpretation and engaging local college students while focusing on providing a space where all voices are welcome.



For two days the scholars and staff toured the sites and debated various Colt story topics including innovations, marketing, female leadership, western expansion, the globalization of American products, labor history, guns in our culture, the role of the park in the community, and identifying stakeholders. The event culminated with a public conversation including the scholars' reflections. The engaging conversation supported the commitment to include all voices.

Scholars included:

- Daniel Bluestone, Boston University, History of Art and Architecture
- Ashley Hlebinsky, Cody Firearms Museum at the Buffalo Bill Center of the West;
- Carole Emberton, University of Buffalo, 19th Century American history, the Civil War era and Reconstruction, Gender and Sexuality, the History of Slavery and Emancipation;
- Steven Lubar, Brown University, American Studies, History of Art and Architecture, and History.

Scholars Roundtable

As we work towards park establishment, efforts include laying the foundation for visitor experiences. Staff from the National Park Service and the Organization of American Historians hosted four scholars in March as part of a roundtable discussion exploring the significance of Coltsville and identifying topics for further discussion.

Contact Us



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