



Park Ranger Andrew Long and the new Coltsville mobile visitor center.

First NPS Employee dedicated to Coltsville.

Springfield Armory National Historic Site has a new Management Assistant, Andrew Long. Andrew will be working with Superintendent James Woolsey on the establishment of Coltsville National Historic Park (NHP) and the continued fostering of partnerships and community engagement. Expect to see him out and about in our new Mobile Visitor Center! Andrew has a history of leadership and management skills with over ten years of experience in the US Marine Corps.

“I realized I was much more attracted to public service than the private sector”

After the military Andrew received a Master’s in Business Administration (MBA) from the Yale School of Management. He is passionate about public service, history, and conservation. “At Yale I realized I was much more attracted to public service than the private sector. Like the military, I love being a part of something bigger than myself.”

At Yale he focused his studies on public policy economics, management of nonprofits, finance, operations, and data analytics.

Andrew sees a big opportunity to use data driven decision making in the Park Service and was selected to the Business Plan Internship in the summer of 2016. This internship, places internal consultant teams at major parks across the country to help solve complex problems. “We were able to bring our business and analytical skills to give a fresh perspective and offer recommendations to tough park problems,” Andrew was selected from a pool of over 300 applicants and worked at Fire Island National Seashore. “It was an amazing opportunity to learn about the park service.”

“I couldn’t imagine a better place to start”

After graduating from Yale, he decided to join the Park Service. “I couldn’t imagine a better place to start my career than at the National Park Service and Coltsville NHP” he says about his first park service role.



Andrew en route to Fire Island National Seashore

Andrew will be an employee of the Springfield Armory whose role is to work on the development of the Coltsville site. “It’s such an amazing time to come onboard, to be a part of the establishment, development, and vision of the park is an incredible learning opportunity.” Andrew will be working in conjunction with numerous local community groups to build a cohesive partnership network in Hartford. “One unique thing about this Park, is the passion and commitment of the local community,” says Andrew, “and I’m excited to get involved.” Andrew lives in Madison, CT with his wife Emma, and two sons, Michael and Christopher.

Mobile Visitor Center



Left side of the Colt Mobile Visitor Center

The National Park Service has acquired a high top van that will be used as a mobile Coltsville Visitor Center, until a permanent Visitor Center can be established. The mobile unit has the advantages of taking the information on the Coltsville National Historic Park to the community.

Coltsville Visitor Center Brainstorming

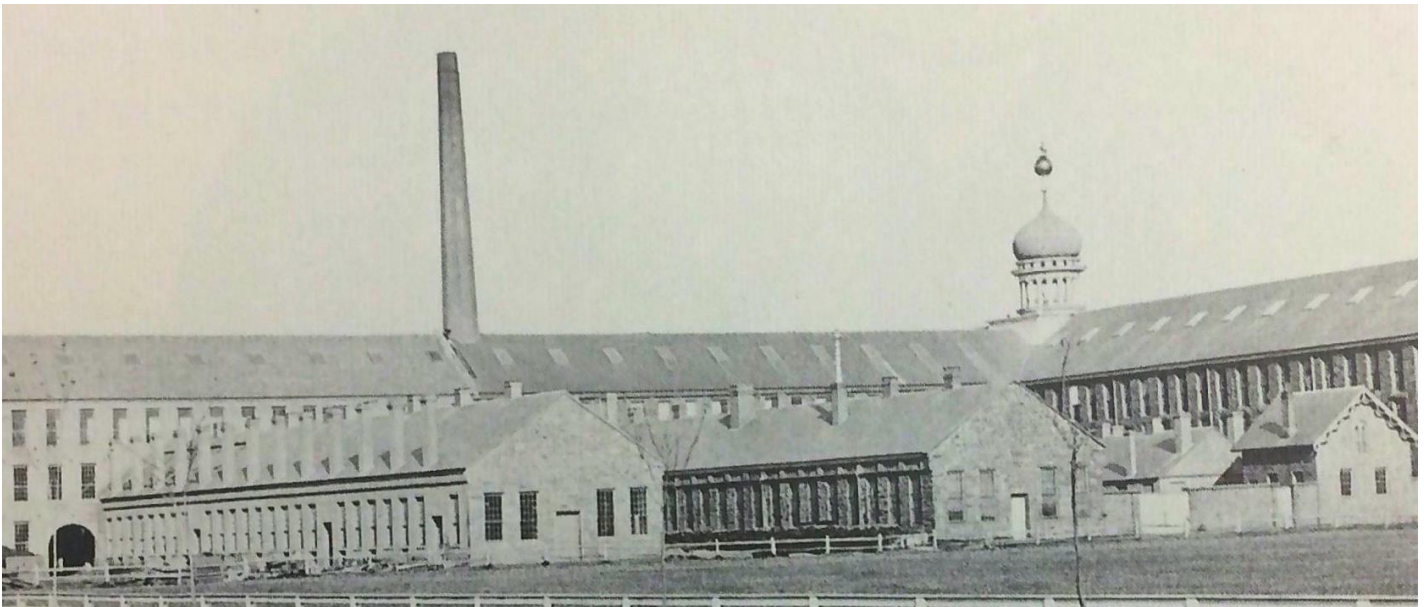
The Park Service has contracted with the Davis Brody Bond architecture firm to come up with some potential ideas for the design of the Coltsville Visitors Center. On January 10th, 2018, members of the community and the National Park Service gathered together for an informational meeting.



Public Comments for Visitor Center Brainstorming

The various community members and park personnel shared ideas for programming, use, and what they would like to see incorporated into the design of the visitor’s center. The group had a shared vision of Coltsville as a gateway to highlight, inform, and bring visitors to greater Hartford. The idea conveys that as visitors travel to Coltsville NHP they will be exposed not only to the story of Samuel and Elizabeth Colt, but how the Colt story ties in to greater Hartford, the local community and other wonderful Hartford resources and destinations. Together, Coltsville and Hartford’s community groups and institutions have the goal of mutual promotion, interpretation, preservation, and economic development for the area.

Representatives from a wide range of groups attended including: National Park Service, Coltsville Heritage Partnership, Connecticut State Library, Wadsworth Athenaeum, Church of the Good Shepherd, Colt Gateway LLC, Friends of Colt Park, the Coalition to Strengthen the Sheldon and Charter Oak Neighborhoods, Connecticut Landmarks, iQuilt, Congressman Larson’s office, local artisans, other community members, and the City of Hartford among others.



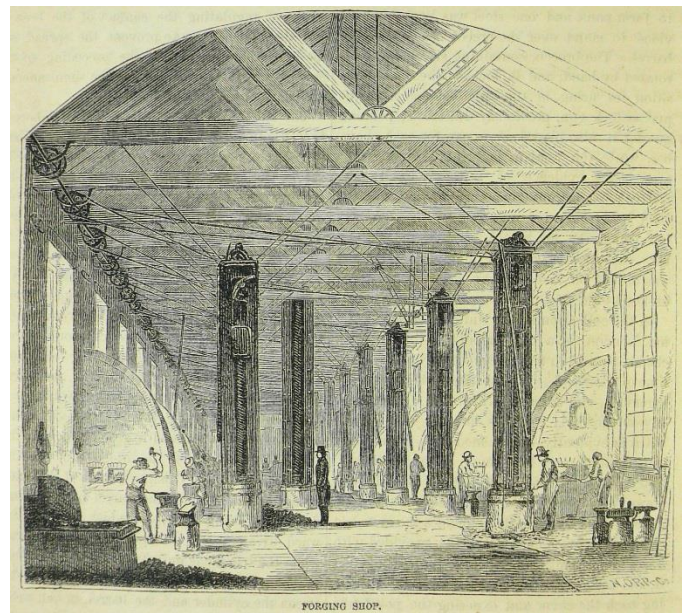
1861 Photo of Colt Factory with existing forge/foundry building in center with white door on end of building

Historic Forge and Foundry Buildings

Based on the agreement to transfer the only remaining buildings from the 1855 Colt Firearms Factory to the National Park Service for use as a Coltsville visitor center the National Park Service contracted with EYP Architects and Engineers to conduct two linked studies. Their structural study has identified dangerous conditions and weaknesses in the roofs, trusses and masonry, and suggested immediate and longer term projects to make the buildings safe and stable. Simultaneously, with assistance from our partners at the Connecticut State Library and the Connecticut Historical Society, EYP developed a historic structure report, or HSR. The purpose of such a report is to identify, through its history and careful on-site investigation, the character-defining features of a building, to limit negative impact of proposed uses and architectural and structural interventions.

The historic structure report has unearthed a remarkable detail of the two long, low, free-standing structures. At first glance, the forge and foundry appear to be simple factory buildings, with solid, load-bearing masonry walls and regular bays of ample glazing. It turns out that they were constructed with hidden features that provided for controlled input of fresh air and exhaust of heat, combustion gas and smoke, or in modern terms,

mechanical ventilation. In 1855, such features were groundbreaking.



1857 illustration of the drop forges

The illustration above from the United States Magazine of March 1857, shows the set-up of the forge, with hearths along the walls and Eli Root's drop hammers at similar intervals down the center. One can imagine that such a space would be hot and smoky, but in 1859 a visitor wrote that there were "a host of forges, roaring like so many lions, and yet the air [was] ... perfectly pure." How could this be? The author of the 1857 piece had noted that "Along each side range stacks of double covered

forges – the blast for which, entering and discharging through flues in the walls, carry off the smoke and gases. Here, for the first time in our life, we were in a blacksmith shop in full operation, yet free from smoke, cinders, and with a pure atmosphere.” The hearths have disappeared, but EYP noted small brick infills at every other pier too, and found vertical flues behind them. One infill is at waist level, to provide air to the hearth, the others higher, to exhaust its gas and smoke. The lower part of the flue comes from below grade, the upper part leads to a hollow masonry duct that runs the length of the entablature.

Any engineer will protest that such long horizontal ducts will not be effective in moving the hot air out of the building. The ducts run to the walls that once enclosed a room that linked the two buildings. It had a very tall chimney, the one seen in this 1861 photograph. EYP believes that the room also contained steam-driven exhaust fans that would have pulled exhaust out of the ducts and into the chimney.

In researching the development of this technology, EYP found that in 1851 Colt attended the Great Exhibition in London. A nearby exhibit showed a model of a steam-driven exhaust fan. The inventor, William Brunton, was a member of Britain’s Institution of Civil Engineers, to whom Colt had delivered a talk in 1851. In 1852, Colt built an armory in Millbank, London, but in 1854, Charles Dickens described the Millbank plant as hot and stinking of oil, implying that the ventilation was poor. In 1853, Colt patented his design for a hearth that would allow careful control in heating metals for casting and stamping. In it he described an

exhaust flue “that runs into a brick flue which leads direct to a chimney.” There seems to be every indication that the construction of the foundry and forge at Coltsville reflected his experience in London, leading to perhaps to the first buildings in the United States to be expressly designed for steam ventilation.

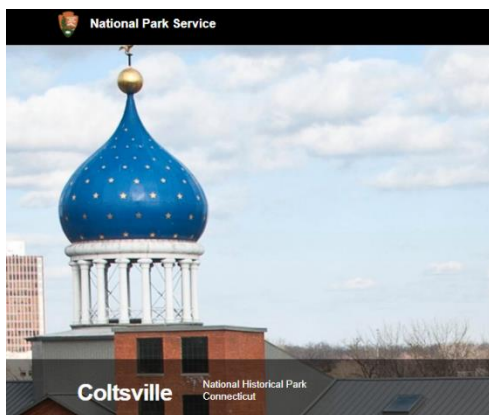
Legislative Correction

The initial language of the Coltsville authorization law required that Colt Gateway LLC “*donate at least 10,000 square feet in the East Armory,*” to be used as a visitor center. When the original bill was signed, however, the East Armory Complex had already been leased and redeveloped. This was an administrative obstacle for park establishment. Fortunately, there was an even better option: to use the brownstone buildings that date back to Samuel Colt’s time, but the original law needed amending.

Thanks to the efforts of Congressman John Larson (D-CT) an amendment was written, passed through both the House and Senate, and was officially presented to the President on December 29th, 2017.

On January 10th, 2018, President Trump signed H. R. 863 a resolution to officially amend the language of the Coltsville NHP Public Law from “*East Armory*” to “*Armory Complex,*” and the resolution became Public Law 115-111. This amendment achieves yet another step toward establishment for Coltsville. The final requirement is the completion of the donation of the two brownstone buildings.

Contact Us



Andrew Long

Management Assistant, Coltsville National Historical Park
Andrew_Long@nps.gov
413-271-3972

James Woolsey

Superintendent, Coltsville National Historical Park
James_Woolsey@nps.gov
413-271-3980