Still Serving

Reusing America's Historic National Guard Armories

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National Trust for Historic Preservation
National Guard Bureau

National Trust for Historic Preservation
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, chartered by Congress in 1949, is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the irreplaceable by working to save historic buildings and the neighborhoods, and landscapes they anchor. Through education and advocacy, the National Trust is revitalizing communities across the country and challenges citizens to create sensible plans for the future. It has six regional offices, 20 historic sites, and works with thousands of local community groups nationwide.

The National Guard Bureau
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The National Guard Bureau was created in 1908 in the office of the Secretary of War as the Division of Militia Affairs. Today one of the oldest components of the Department of Defense, the Bureau is unique because it is both a staff and an operating agency. As a staff agency, the Bureau participates with the Army and Air Force Staffs in the development and coordination of programs pertaining to or affecting the National Guard. As an operating agency, the National Guard Bureau formulates and administers the programs for the training, development, and maintenance of the Army and Air National Guard, and acts as the channel of communications between the Army and Air National Guard in the states, and the Departments of the Army and the Air Force. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau is appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Bureau's Vice Chief is appointed by the Secretary of Defense with the advice and consent of the service secretaries.

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FOREWORD

On Park Avenue in New York City stands the 7th Regiment Armory. Completed in 1879 under the direction of regiment veteran and architect Charles W. Clinton, this lavishly detailed structure includes several rooms designed by Louis Comfort Tiffany, Stanford White and the Herter brothers. The 7th Regiment, whose ranks once included men from New York's wealthiest and most prominent families, built the showcase armory on the city's Upper East Side primarily through private donations. Esteemed for its historic and aesthetic contributions, the structure is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has been designated as a New York City historic landmark.

Yet for all its glory, this commanding, but elegant structure has become seriously tarnished over time due to extensive water stains, structural cracks, and general deterioration. While used for antique shows and other civic functions, the state-owned armory is in need of major funding and a strong vision for the future. Indeed, the plight of the 7th Regiment Armory is so severe that it now shares a place on the World Monuments Fund "100 Most Endangered Sites" with other monumental notables such as Egypt's Valley of the Kings and the Teotihuacan Pyramid in Mexico.

Another regimental armory remains threatened in Providence, Rhode Island. Standing majestically over Providence's historic West Broadway neighborhood, this 165,000 square foot building, constructed in 1907, sits vacant. Concern over the need to find a new, economically viable use for this Romanesque Revival structure prompted the National Trust for Historic Preservation to list the Cranston Street Armory on its list of America's Eleven Most Endangered Historic Places in 1997.

Not every American city has a regimental armory waiting in the wings. But most cities have historic armories that once served and can still serve. These armories, often centrally located, may no longer meet the needs of the National Armory Guard. The demands of modern military training require a more functional structure that can accommodate large equipment and technological advances. However, they still retain their ability to meet the needs of the community, as they often did in the past. The cavernous "drill sheds" can be used for showroom space, a dance hall, a basketball court, or atrium. The "head sheds" are readily adaptable for use as offices or classrooms. Indeed, yesterday's armories have been successfully converted into school buildings, apartments, libraries, museums, and community centers around the country.

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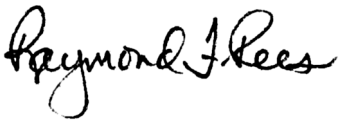
From Massachusetts to California, National Guardsmen, concerned citizens, and developers have teamed up with city and state officials, financial institutions, historic preservation organizations and others in search of solutions to pump new life into these aging structures. As shown in the pages that follow, the Savannah College of Art and Design purchased and refurbished a late 19th century Richardsonian-Revival armory for use as its principal administrative building in Savannah, Georgia. A museum in need of a new home in Deming, New Mexico acquired the town's all brick, castellated armory from the State Armory Board, providing much-needed exhibition and administrative space. With help from the state legislature, the citizens of Dawson, Minnesota were able to renovate their town armory for use as a library and 10-unit apartment complex.

As the story of each armory conversion unfolds, it becomes apparent that one ingredient was shared by all—*vision*. Each of these projects succeeded because an individual or group within a community had the vision to see their armory's full potential.

While many armories have found new uses, countless others are waiting to serve. This booklet, made possible by the National Guard Bureau, highlights successful projects from around the country with the hope that they will inspire you to follow. We believe that these case studies will help you to envision new uses for your aging armory. The task is not easy, but the rewards are countless.



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As part of the research for this book, National Guard officials in each state were contacted. Many contributed valuable information that helped shape the overall story. Regrettably, stories from each of the states could not be included in the final publication.

Readers are encouraged to work closely with local National Guard units and their respective state headquarters if they are contemplating the reutilization of a former armory in their community. State Historic Preservation Offices also can provide valuable assistance.

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Reusing America's Historic National Guard Armories

This casting of the classic minuteman is more than two stories tall and stands vigil against the front facade of the Army National Guard Readiness Center building in Arlington, Virginia, not far from the Pentagon.

National Guard armories in nearly 2,700 communities across the United States occupy a unique and important position in American life: part fortress—part dance hall—part classroom—part shelter from a storm.

However, for all of their military and civic utility and long years of service, many of these armories have aged into real estate holdings that can no longer meet the National Guard's demanding missions to serve state and nation. Now vacant or relegated to little more than warehouse duty, several of these structures have become candidates for vandalism, and ultimately, demolition.

Charmed by their distinctive architecture and historical presence, several communities across the county have hushed the bulldozer's roar by finding new uses for these aging armories, ranging from school buildings and family resource centers to libraries and museums. These new uses have helped to preserve the historical and architectural value of the armories while capitalizing on their distinctive capacity for community service.

This handbook highlights these success stories so that other communities may benefit. The book briefly outlines the historical and architectural significance of the armory and its importance to the National Guard and the community at large. It then explains, in detail, how five communities across the United States found new uses for their old armories. As shown by these case studies and several related articles, elected officials, civic leaders, entrepreneurs, military personnel, preservation leaders, and others can join forces to find creative, economically viable solutions. Their combined efforts help to ensure that our country's aging armories become community assets once again.

Early Colonists Brought Militia to the New World

The National Guard has its roots in the earliest days of colonial America and is the oldest component of the armed forces of the United States. European settlers, especially those from England, brought with them the practice of organizing all able-bodied males into military units that were designed to protect local citizens and their communities. As settlement of the colonies continued, these military groups matured into trained units that could be called upon to serve the defense needs of the evolving nation. These colonial militias protected their fellow citizens from Indian attacks and foreign invaders, and later helped to win the Revolutionary War.

From the declaration of independence in 1776 through the ratification of the U.S. Constitution by the states in 1789, the militia tradition continued as part of American life. Subsequent federal and state laws, plus long-standing practice, continue to sustain this tradition. Founders of the nation were wary of, and could not afford to maintain, a large standing army. Thus the practice of calling on militia units to supplement the defense needs of the nation was established. For example, the bulk of troops during the Mexican War, the Civil War, and the Spanish-American War came from militia units in the

states. In the early years of the 20th century, when "National Guard" became an official title, important national defense legislation further increased the military role of units in each state as a federal reserve force.

Today's National Guard units have become an integral part of our nation's defense establishment—in a contemporary term, the "Total Force" —that is made up of active duty service members, civilian employees of the military, and reserve components. The Army National Guard and Air National Guard are reserve components of the active duty Army and Air Force. Units are evenly spread across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The men and women who make up these units—all of them volunteers—are trained and equipped to identical standards as their active duty counterparts.

First by colonial custom and later by state and federal statute and Department of Defense policies, the National Guard has evolved into a unique U.S. military organization commanded by respective governors during peacetime and by the president when called to federal service. This dual mission—state AND federal—provides the National Guard with distinctive organizational strengths and complexities. The vast majority of funding and regulatory authority for military matters comes from the federal government. Because the National Guard is organized on a state-by-state basis and each governor is a commander-in-chief, National Guard units maintain close allegiances with state and local governments and have first-response obligations during local emergencies. Understanding these historic and legal connections to state government is especially important when evaluating the possibilities of converting a National Guard armory to civilian use.

The Evolution of the Armory

Stand in front of any National Guard armory, especially the huge regimental-sized monuments built in the late 19th or early 20th centuries, and try to imagine an earlier time when the units were "homeless" … or at least without a fixed address for equipment storage and training. Colonial militia units gathered on village greens or in other public spaces to conduct military training. Members provided their own rifles and uniforms. Nearby taverns served the social needs of a unit for the few hours the members would be together.

The concept of using a dedicated building for militia unit training—an armory—evolved during the 19th century. In the early decades of the century, a few states constructed arsenals for the manufacture and storage of their militia's military weapons and ammunition. But these buildings, like the 1798 Beaufort, South Carolina and 1847 New York State Arsenals did not function as true armories. They lacked the space for the practice of marching and close-order drill, the main form of military training in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Before the Civil War, some wealthier urban units addressed their need for drill space in bad weather by renting the top floors of large commercial buildings such as the Tompkins Market on New York City's Manhattan Island. Commercial tenants on the ground floor dominated the design and use of these buildings. Over time, rented "upstairs" commercial space proved less and less practical for the units.

The nation's earliest National Guard units trained on the village green. Each man in the unit supplied his own gear and kept it at home. They had no specific building to house their equipment. In 1985, the National Guard commissioned artist Don Troiani to paint "The First Muster," a view of how members of the Salem, Mass., militia unit conducted their training in 1637, not long after the first colonists landed in the Bay Colony. The first true armories were not constructed in major East Coast cities until the early part of the 19th century, with the majority of funds raised locally by members of the unit. Today, the Army National Guard maintains armories in more than 2,700 communities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Included in that number is an armory for the 101st Engineer Battalion of the Massachusetts National Guard, the Salem unit that continues an uninterrupted legacy of service to state and nation that began in 1636, making it the nation's oldest military unit.

How Did They Do It? New Uses for Old Armories

Vacant or underutilized National Guard armories can be found throughout the nation. They range in size from the massive downtown Minneapolis, Minn., armory, to the modest building in Haskell, Okla., population 1,500. While the fate of these buildings and at least scores more across the land remains—at best—under negotiation or uncertain, this handbook presents stories of cities where local efforts have revitalized armories to keep them in community service, or where campaigns are under way to save these historical landmarks from further decline.

The success stories share some common features:

- Groups of like-minded, energetic local citizens worked together to save the buildings and find new uses. There were differences of opinion, but a common goal prevailed. Reutilization projects are typically too large to be organized and directed by one person.
- Most of the buildings moved rather quickly from military to civilian use. None were totally unoccupied for long periods of time.
- In most cases, obtaining title to the building from the National Guard required financial breaks or legislative cooperation from state lawmakers.
- For armories that continue in some type of public (non-commercial) service, funding to support purchase and remodeling came from multiple government sources.
- The National Guard maintains legal and financial responsibility for its state-owned armories until the time the property is sold or transferred to a new owner. Unofficial historical connections may remain between the National Guard and an armory's new owner, but when the deal is done, the building belongs to the buyer.

New Uses for Old Armories

College Administration Building – In 1979, the Savannah College of Art and Design purchased and refurbished a late 19th century Richardsonian-Romanesque Revival style armory in Savannah, Ga. Today the 36,000-square-foot structure carries the name Poetter Hall, and it serves as a principal administrative building and showpiece of the urban campus and its 4,000 students.

High School Arts Center – Trinity High School in the Louisville suburb of St. Matthews, Ken., turned the headquarters of the 149th Infantry Regiment into its Communication Arts Center. Two-foot-thick poured concrete walls of this art deco structure will serve the 1,100 students of this Catholic, all-male high school long into the 21st century.

Apartment/Library Complex – Changing demographics and military requirements resulted in the National Guard unit leaving Dawson, Minn., in 1993. The armory, constructed at the start of the Roaring Twenties, continues to serve as a community center/library/apartment complex, winning a 1998 City Achievement Award from the League of Minnesota Cities for this agricultural community of 1,700.

Museum – Deming's Company I of the 1st New Mexico Infantry Regiment was ordered to federal duty in 1916, before construction on its National Guard armory had begun. The unit returned to call the castellated, red brick building its home for 60 years, experiencing two more wartime activations to federal service. Today the structure serves as the Deming Luna Mimbres Museum.

Family Resource Center – Children's voices now fill the rooms and drill hall of the Defiance, Ohio, National Guard armory, a castellated brick structure constructed in 1914 to house a company of the 148th Infantry Regiment. The armory has become home to the Defiance County Family Resource Center, with Head Start classes on the lower level and a variety of family-based activities on two upper floors.

Space often was limited, and the buildings could not be adequately secured or defended.

The Civil War draft riots in New York City, still the bloodiest civil disturbance in U.S. history, hastened the movement to fortress-like buildings for militia units. With professional police forces in their infancy, the militia was the largest force available to help keep public order. The draft riots and post Civil War labor unrest, such as the railroad strike of 1877, marked a boom in urban armory construction, often of large buildings designed in a style that came to be known as "castellated gothic."

Armories from this period typically featured a "head shed" for administrative offices and storage spaces, and a cavernous "drill shed" where the men could conduct close order drill or host social functions. When the unit was not in training, the drill shed could be rented for a variety of community events, generating income to help maintain the entire armory. Present day developers of armory reutilization projects continue to draw value from the head shed and drill shed combination. Administrative areas lend themselves well to conversion as office or apartment

In the summer of 1947, the Headquarters Company of Kentucky's 149th Infantry Regiment looked like this as the men prepared to depart for Fort Knox, and their first "summer camp" since returning from combat duty during World War II. The men departed for wartime service in 1940, just as construction was started on this building. The St. Matthews, Ky., armory was one of eight built in the Bluegrass State by the Depression-era Works Progress Administration.

space, while drill halls provide clear-span spaces for the addition of mezzanines or other forms of two-story interior construction.

In his book "America's Armories," MIT urban studies professor Robert Fogelson enumerates more reasons for the construction of substantial armories:

- Units needed secure storage space for weapons, ammunition, and equipment.
- Company-sized armories were too small and prevented the mustering of large numbers of troops during civil emergencies.
- Regimental armories (big enough for 600 to 1,000 members) were required to hone the coordination skills of officers and men.
- Renting armory space was expensive.

A large amount of unit, municipal, and state pride served as an important motivating factor in the funding and design of these large and formidable armories. Image counted for recruiting new members and maintaining visibility with state governments, which, during that time, funded nearly all of a National Guard unit's training and activities. If wealthy militia unit members in New York City could combine their own money with fund-raising events, the sale of bonds, and other state sources to construct a building, so could units in Philadelphia, Boston, and elsewhere. Armories across the nation, especially in major cities, became showpiece buildings. They served not only as the headquarters for a locally based military unit but also as an informal community center that housed a growing array of social and civic functions.

This antique postcard shows New York's 7th Regiment armory soon after it was finished in 1879. Some years later, the decorative tower was removed and two additional floors of office space were added to this large armory on Park Avenue in midtown Manhattan. Guardsman and architect Charles Clinton set a new standard for armory construction with the completion of this grand structure. Interior appointments were designed by artist Louis Comfort Tiffany and architect Stanford White; men who also were members of the 7th Regiment. This building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In the pre-skyscraper age, the local armory was usually one of the largest buildings in town. It was simultaneously a home for a National Guard unit, a clubhouse for its members, and a civic center for the community.

In the decades following the Civil War, influential architects designed the big armories, another reflection of unit and civic pride that grew with planning for these new structures. Often these architects were members of the unit, such as Charles Clinton who inked the plans for New York City's still-impressive 7th Regiment Armory. Rhode Island's William R. Walker designed Providence's Cranston Street Armory, a massive five-story building that was a decade in construction and cost $500,000, not including the building site. The elder Walker rose to the rank of major general in the National Guard, and his architect partner son, William H. Walker, served 20 years and retired as the state's quartermaster general.

The civic appetite and budget for large castellated armories faded away by the early 1900s, replaced by classic revival architecture and limited examples of art nouveau and art moderne styles. During this time, Guardsmen and their supporters began to realize that while their castellated structures were indeed formidable, the military value of their mostly downtown addresses was more for the

neighborhood convenience of their members than it was for tactical advantage. America's city centers did not need fortress strongholds to maintain peace and order.

The reality of the Great Depression brought out yet another shift in the style of armory construction. Guardsmen fought to secure a portion of the $4.8 billion appropriated by Congress for civil works projects. Hundreds of utilitarian armories were built in the south and southwest, regions that were mostly too poor or too new in the union to have constructed relatively expensive castellated armories without federal funding. Other regions of the country also received money for Works Progress Administration (WPA) armory construction. The WPA focused on building smaller, simpler buildings constructed of locally procured materials and built by unemployed, often-unskilled local men. Only a few regimental-sized armories were built during the Depression with money and guidance from the larger Public Works Administration program.

After World War II, federal and state governments began to share the cost of new armory construction at a ratio of 75 to 25 percent, respectively. This funding procedure remains in place today and has resulted in the construction of thousands of largely utilitarian armories. In small town America, these post World War II armories remain as prominent community centers since many were constructed in conjunction with high schools. Others are sited in suburban locations where land was more affordable and suitable for parking and equipment storage. Many of these armories are now entering the civilian reutilization market. Armories from this era frequently lack the architectural grandeur of their 19th and early 20th century predecessors, but still retain reutilization value for their stout construction, size, and location.

The Armory Today

In virtually all instances, National Guard armories are the province of the 367,000-member Army National Guard. In 1999, the Army National Guard maintained 3,166 armories in 2,679 communities. Most of the buildings—2,632—are on state-owned land. Fifty armories are located on leased property. The remainder—484—have been constructed on federal property. The smaller Air National Guard, with 109,000 members, operates flying units from 88 locations across the nation. Nearly all Air Guard units are located at major municipal airports or on active duty military bases. Air National Guard buildings, designed to support worldwide military aviation operations, are built and maintained with federal funds. Typically, Air Guard structures do not lend themselves as easily or economically to civilian conversion.

Newly constructed armories continue to serve as important community centers. Some states have entered into creative design and financing arrangements with public schools and city governments to create hybrid armory-civic center complexes. However, the demands of modern military training perpetuate architectural trends that are far more utilitarian than artistic. New construction tends to be in suburban industrial parks rather than downtown locations. The men and women who volunteer for today's Guard units drive their cars to training, often long distances. It is not uncommon for a large unit to require parking for 100 or more vehicles on a busy training weekend.

With respect to military vehicles, an infantry unit's Bradley fighting vehicle, for example, weighs nearly 34 tons. Drive one indoors for wintertime training and a visitor quickly understands why new armories have sections of floor built with double reinforced concrete instead of maple for a basketball court. As high-cost electronic equipment becomes increasingly complex, simple storage rooms now must provide temperature and humidity controls, as well as security against theft or other damage.

As a matter of policy, the National Guard Bureau manages its construction funds with an eye toward replacing an armory after it has been in service for 50 years. While some armories have remained open well beyond the half-century mark, the availability of federal construction funds supports the 50-year replacement policy and is a significant reason why armories become excess to the National Guard's needs. Reorganization of a state's National Guard units—a complex equation involving state/federal missions, recruiting demographics, and other factors—is the second way an armory can enter the real estate market. Sometimes, a combination of these actions results in the closure of an armory.

When military authorities determine that an armory no longer is needed, National Guard personnel at the respective state headquarters control the entire disposal process (e.g., sale, trade, or demolition) for those armories

Retired National Guard Staff Sgt. Ralph Hutchinson arranged to have this bronze plaque cleaned and reinstalled inside the foyer of the former Defiance, Ohio, armory where he served for more than 30 years. The plaque lists an installation date of 1913, while a capstone on the exterior of the three-story administrative area of the building announces 1914 as the completion date. Records are silent regarding the inconsistency.

National Guard or Reserves . . . What Is the Difference?

The federal mission of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard makes them identical to the Army Reserve and Air Force Reserve. Both organizations are reserve components of the active duty Army and Air Force and are organized, trained, and equipped to the same standards.

The National Guard has dual obligations to serve the respective states and the federal government. The governor is the commander-in-chief of the state's National Guard during peacetime and may call individuals and units to duty during state emergencies. The governor appoints the adjutant general, typically from the senior leadership ranks of that state's National Guard. The National Guard in each state manages the training of its units and is responsible for the maintenance and operation of armories.

Questions about the potential reutilization of Army or Air Force Reserve property should be directed to local Reserve (not National Guard) units. Reserve units have no legal affiliation with state government.

For nearly 20 years, the Washington, North Carolina, Parks and Recreation Department used the former National Guard armory as storage space for vehicles and supplies. When National Guard units vacate an armory, the buildings are often quickly taken up as storage or maintenance space, a low-cost alternative use that can keep the building occupied until more comprehensive reutilization plans are developed.

built on state-owned land. In a similar manner, federal procedures are used to dispose of National Guard armories built on federal land; however, the state headquarters administers the federal process. Typically this involves a cascading process of offering the structure to various levels of government. The offering process for state-owned property starts at the state level, while federal property begins with offers to federal agencies and then down through state and local jurisdictions. Groups or individuals interested in purchasing a former National Guard armory should contact the Facilities Officer at State Headquarters. A list of addresses and phone numbers can be found in Appendix F. The inquiry process for the potential purchase of an armory can start at any time.

Armories as Historical Landmarks

Because of their grand style and importance in the military history of our nation, many armories qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, state historic registers, and local registers in communities with historic preservation programs. Thus far, more than 200 historic armories have been included on the National Register. Qualified historic armories may also be eligible for important tax benefits and special treatment under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Further information on the National Register, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and tax incentives and other financial assistance programs can be found in the appendices to this publication.

Contact the National Guard at the Local or State Level

In addition to a National Guard unit that may be in or near your community, a National Guard headquarters is located in each state, usually in the capital city. The administrative leader of each state's National Guard is the adjutant general, sometimes called "the TAG," a military acronym for The Adjutant General. Within each state headquarters is a facilities officer who is responsible for the National Guard's real property in that state.

Questions regarding the reutilization of a National Guard armory should be directed to the Facilities Officer, in care of the adjutant general's office in your state. Officials at the state headquarters also can assist with historical information about the lineage and honors of a National Guard unit in your community. Units have histories that are decades, or even centuries, old. Historic documents, photographs, and artifacts such as flags, trophies, and plaques can provide valuable links to a unit's past association with an armory and community.

All states also maintain Web sites that offer more detail about their National Guard, including e-mail links and addresses. Visit www.ngb.dtic.mil to learn more about the federal role of the National Guard and to find a comprehensive, state-by-state Internet directory.

Historic Preservation Offices and Organizations Can Help

Each state operates a State Historic Preservation Office that offers assistance in the preservation and rehabilitation of historic properties. Maintained under the executive branch of government, these offices are separate from the National Guard, although they may work closely on related projects.

In addition to providing information on federal and state programs relating to historic resources, the State Historic Preservation Office can put you in touch with local organizations and city officials that may take an interest in your armory project. As demonstrated by the case studies that follow, successful armory rehabilitation often requires a team effort. State and local officials, community organizations, as well as the primary user for the resource, should be involved in the project. Points of contact for State Historic Preservation Offices can be found in Appendix G of this handbook.

Work on this armory-turned-apartment complex, in Washington, North Carolina, began in the early fall of 1996, shortly after Hurricane Fran had damaged large portions of coastal North Carolina. The developers were caught in a labor shortage, and they ended up doing much of the work alone. This view shows the former drill hall of the National Guard armory that now serves as an interior courtyard, complete with open-air skylights that allow residents to sample weather conditions.

Linking the Military Past With a Community's Future

Introduction to Case Studies

Historic armories can shed their "white elephant" status and become contributing members of their communities once again. The old drill halls and administrative rooms of the 19th and early 20th century armories have proven readily adaptable to new uses, whether as a college office building, a community arts center, a museum, or a library. The end result is a pleasing project that combines new and old, linking our country's military past with the civilian needs of the future.

As the case studies that follow demonstrate, the preservation of historic armories never happens magically. New life is breathed into these aging structures because of the untold efforts of individuals who have the insight and perseverance to put a re-use project together. Sometimes an armory project begins with the need for community space. In other cases, the project is driven by community sentiment that simply favors preserving a familiar face. In all cases, these projects have required the collaboration of individuals, communities, and state and local officials, both military and civilian.

Creative insight and resourcefulness, more than anything, are the key ingredients. Creative insight is needed to envision an armory's full potential. Resourcefulness is required to make the project viable. In Kentucky, an art deco armory was successfully converted into a high school arts center through a land swap between the school and the city owning the armory. In Ohio, the conversion of a downtown armory into a family resource center required state and federal grant money along with a major fund-raising effort.

These case studies demonstrate how cooperative community groups and individuals were able to find new uses for their aging armories. In many situations, a project's feasibility was fully dependent upon a state's bargain sale of the armory to the user.

The Deming, New Mexico Armory is on the National Register of Historic Places and New Mexico Registry of Cultural Property.

CASE STUDY

College Administration Building

Poetter Hall, Savannah College of Art and Design
Savannah, Georgia

Two hard-working, committed dreamers moved to Savannah in 1978, and with the help of equally tireless and dedicated parents, they purchased a former National Guard armory to start what has become one of the nation's leading art colleges.

During more than two decades of steady expansion, the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) has helped set the pace and often leads the way in the continued growth of Savannah's 2.2 square-mile National Historic Landmark District, one of the largest in the nation. More than 6 million visitors come to Savannah each year to walk the streets around 21 distinctive public squares where they sample the sights, sounds, and tastes of a city that has reaped significant value by caring for its past.

Richard and Paula Rowan had already begun careers as educators in the early 1970s when they focused their attention on starting a fine arts college in Savannah. One of their first introductions in the coastal city was to Mayor John Rousakis. In a booklet that commemorated the 15th anniversary of the college, Mayor Rousakis tells of testing the Rowans' sincerity by asking them if they were "sure."

"They said, 'We're sure.' And they were."

The mayor went on to say, "It (the college) was a bright new star for downtown. I felt very strongly about the pluses it would bring to the city of Savannah. There was a good, fresh feeling of something good coming to the city."

Second Choice

Before the first student could enroll, before the first lecture could be given, the Rowans needed a building to house their dream. Ironically, the Savannah Volunteer Guards armory, a building that had been essentially empty of citizen-soldiers since the pre-World War II activation of the National Guard, was their second choice.

The armory was too big, recalls Dr. Rowan, a graduate of Furman and Georgia State Universities. They were anticipating a starting enrollment of 50 and had developed their opening around the purchase of an empty furniture store. Price became a sticking point, so the Rowans turned to the armory, privately built by members of the unit and then owned by the members of the regimental association. These aging veterans had reached a point where it was increasingly difficult to manage the building that by 1978, housed a few commercial tenants and a small museum that memorialized the unit's exploits. The men were cautiously looking for a buyer who would continue some type of civic-minded purpose for the structure.

Savannah Armory Statistics

- Constructed 1892 - 1893
- Total interior area: 36, 248 square feet, three stories
- Main drill hall floor — finished wood
- Brick walls, with decorative terra cotta and wrought iron
- Designed by William Gibbons Preston in the Richardsonian-Romanesque Revival style
- Built by contractor James G. Cornell
- Original construction cost: $101,000 ($46,000 land, $55,000 building)
- 1978 purchase price: $250,000
- The armory is a Contributing Building in the Savannah Historic Landmark District, established in 1966. As such, it has similar status as buildings that are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

  The armory is also subject to Savannah's preservation law, which protects historice buildings from adverse changes that may harm the integrity of the resource.

  Approval from the Historic District Board of Review is necessary prior to the issuance of a building permit by the Department of Inspections.

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Finished in 1893 at a cost of $101,000, the Savannah Volunteer Guards Armory housed a succession of Georgia Army National Guard units until World War II. The Richardsonian-Romanesque Revival structure became the first campus building of the Savannah College of Art and Design when it opened in 1979, an institution that today operates from more than 50 historic buildings and serves more than 4,000 students. The college has received a series of local, state, and national honors for its historic preservation efforts, including the 1994 Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Buying an old building from an association of mostly senior citizens who were scattered in many locations presented challenges for the Rowans and Paul and May Poetter, Paula Rowan's parents, who had joined the young couple to assist with administrative duties. A majority vote of the association members had to agree to the $250,000 sale. If a member could not be contacted to record his vote, it counted as "no." Dr. Rowan still has thanks for association member Henry J. Kennedy, who helped negotiate the sale and traveled throughout the region contacting members.

Finally, SCAD had title to the building and growing intellectual capital in the form of eight faculty members who would begin teaching 71 students in the fall of 1979. Their plans for transforming the interior of the armory into a school were reviewed and approved by members of the National Historic Landmark District. Other than repairs, the Rowans made no significant changes to the exterior of the building, a practice they have continued with the many subsequent additions to the college's inventory of real estate.

As administrators, the Rowans and Poetters were adding sweat equity to their dream. A good share of the early restoration work on the armory came at the hands of Dr. Rowan, president of the new college and principal restorer of its only building.

"He's painting . . . "

During an interview, Dr. Rowan recounts the story of an early visitor who entered the armory, asking to speak with the college president. "He's painting on the third floor," someone on the small staff explained. Thinking that the president of an art college would naturally be in a studio and not welcome to interruption, the visitor said he would return the next day. "No, he's PAINTING, with a brush and roller," responded the staffer, who pointed the way upstairs. Yet another time, a visitor found Dr. Rowan painting and asked him if the president was in. The college's chief painter said "yes" and directed the visitor downstairs to his office. Dr. Rowan put down his tools, hurried down a back staircase and greeted the stranger when he reached his office.

"We just worked very hard," remarks Ms. Rowan, now the provost of SCAD. "With basic intelligence and hard work, you can learn to do just about everything." She further advises that individuals or groups considering the purchase of a historic building should not look too critically at a building and consider it "too precious" to touch. "The bones are there," she says of the strength they have found in Savannah's old structures, so new owners should not be timid about digging in and adapting a building for the present and future. "They're not so fragile. It (restoration) makes you feel that you are part of the continuum of history."

Dr. Rowan cautions that hard work quickly becomes part of any restoration effort, adding, "don't listen to anyone else when someone says it can't be done." He further recommends that restoration projects should not be tackled solo. The Rowans and Poetters had to rely heavily on each other during the early years of the college. Dedicated staff members and students warmed to their commitment to changing the former armory into a college, but they did much of the early work alone. "Just because it's a good thing," he advises, "folks won't necessarily help you."

The Regiment Carries the Family Name

To the keepers of military history, especially of Army units, a regiment's number and name are the equivalent of a family name in establishing a bloodline. Modern units often are fiercely proud and protective of their regiment's colors, combat record, and legends, even though the term "regiment" is rarely used in the operational structure of today's U.S. Army units, including those in the Army National Guard.

In Savannah, the Georgia National Guard's 118th Field Artillery Group is the much-reorganized descendant of the Savannah Volunteer Guards, a regimental military unit that counts its birthdays from 1802. That year the city's militia members put on their uniforms for a parade that honored Vice President Aaron Burr's visit to the port city that was becoming the South's economic hub during the era when growing and marketing cotton dominated the region. Year by year, the unit grew in its social and military prominence. Life wasn't all parades and parties for the men, who exchanged their dress uniforms for field gear and combat assignments in every conflict from the War of 1812 to World War II.

By the late 19th century, the Volunteer Guards, burned out of their armory in the downtown fire of 1889, hired Boston architect William G. Preston to develop plans for a new home on the southeast corner of Madison Square. Madison Square is one of the 24 original squares that give Savannah so much of its architectural and historical character. Trained at Harvard and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, Preston already had designed the city's Cotton Exchange and would go on to complete commissions for many fashionable homes, the DeSoto Hotel, and the Chatham County courthouse.

In Richardsonian-Romanesque Revival style, Preston first drew plans to remodel an existing orphanage that would be attached to a new drill hall built in the rear. But construction workers encountered early difficulty with remodeling, and the regiment's leaders realized their armory would be too small. "Build bigger" became the next command.

Armories Were Self-Sustaining

While tradesmen demolished the old structure, Preston expanded his plans to create the complex that today is one of SCAD's signature properties —"the soul of our college," in the words of Ms. "Cuffy" Sullivan, an executive with the Savannah Development and Renewal Authority. In the style and practice of the era, the Savannah Volunteer Guards were interested in two things. They wanted a durable, architecturally impressive building that would house their units for training and social functions. They also wanted the building to pay for itself. Thus Preston's plans called for plenty of premium commercial space that could be rented to shopkeepers and professional people in need of offices.

When work was finished in 1893, the Savannah Volunteer Guards had nearly 38,000 square feet on three stories. Preston's choice of red brick and red mortar made a definite statement for the corner of Bull and Charlton Streets. His decorative touches included turrets, corner towers, decorative terra cotta, and wrought iron. The main entrance was flanked with massive cannon barrels, weapons that, legend has, were hidden from Gen. William T. Sherman during his incendiary march through the South. Sherman spared Savannah from the torch. The fact and fiction of his stay in the city remain an important part of local history and legend.

Inside the new armory, the Volunteer Guards had space for military equipment and functions in addition to a lounge, library, billiard room, wine cellar, card room, reception room, rifle range, and bowling alley. At 5,147 square feet, the rear hall permitted all-weather close-order drill, plus a setting for military balls and other social events. Commercial and rental space accommodated a drug store, a bar, various retailers, the city's Commercial High School during the 1930s, and a U.S.O. chapter during World War II when the mobilized National Guard unit was overseas fighting in the European theater.

Before and after photos (left and right respectively) show the transition of the National Guard armory drill hall from a combination military training space and community room to the college's library. When the Savannah College of Art and Design opened, it started its library with a donation of 10,000 volumes from a New York college. During the school's first years in operation, the collection grew rapidly. Eventually the drill hall became filled with books. In 1999, the library moved to Savannah's main commercial street to a former department store that now provides 85,000 square feet of book and media storage space.

SCAD's Awards

1980 Historic Savannah Foundation Award for renovation of the Armory

1983 Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation"Outstanding Restoration Project – Adaptive Reuse"

1990 Deco Defender Award from the Art Deco Societies of America

1994 Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation

1991 Oglethorpe Award, Savannah's highest tribute

1998 National Honor Award in Urban Design from the American Institute of Architects

1999 Downtown Achievement Award for Physical Improvements from the International Downtown Association

When the Savannah unit returned from World War II, it reorganized and had to move from its downtown regimental home. The men relocated first to quarters at nearby Hunter Air Force Base, then to warehouses west of the metropolitan area, and eventually to the city's "new" armory that was finished in 1961, south of the city on the second highest piece of ground in Savannah. Until the opening of Savannah's downtown civic center in 1969, the new armory's drill hall was the city's largest indoor space for high school basketball games and other large civic events. This armory continues in service as both military complex and community center. Ironically, however, the now 40-year-old building is a candidate for replacement. The National Guard is contemplating a move to nearby Hunter Army Airfield. Potential use for the plain-featured brick and concrete rectangle include purchase by a film production company that would use the drill hall as a sound stage.

SCAD Anticipates Continued Growth

SCAD's future plans call for continued growth of the student body and of its holdings in historic Savannah. Sue Ellen Clinard, one of SCAD's early graduates, worked as director of Oklahoma's Main Street Project until returning to the college where she serves as vice president of human resources. She talks of how the Rowans' choice of locating the college in the heart of the Historic District has been good for everyone. The presence of the 4,000 students and 800 faculty and staff members give vibrancy to the core of the city that it didn't have before the early 1980s. SCAD includes adequate outdoor lighting in all of its reutilization projects and maintains 24-hour security for its 52 buildings, factors that contribute to the real estate and citizen-friendly values of the city.

Ms. Clinard also points out that SCAD's limited class size policy (no more than 20 pupils) has created a preservation-friendly benefit. When SCAD looks to purchase additional historic buildings for instructional purposes, few major alterations are required to accommodate these small groups of students.

"If you are a university looking to expand arts space," Ms. Clinard further recommends, "you should look to downtown, whether it is in a National Guard armory or some other

Re-named Poetter Hall in 1997 to honor Richard and May Poetter who helped found the Savannah College of Art and Design, the armory was used by the college for all of its classes and activities until 1983, when the college purchased and renovated a second building in Savannah's historic district. Enrollment had grown from 71 during its opening year in 1979, to more than 500 when the college's real estate expansion program began. Today the armory houses SCAD's admissions department along with two student art galleries.

Before and after photos (top and bottom respectively) of the main hallway area show the impact of moving a college of art and design into a building that had lost much of its late 19th century luster. When the Georgia National Guard moved out of the building upon its return from World War II duty, members of the regimental association continued to operate the facility. Income to maintain the building came from commercial tenants, while veterans maintained a small military museum in several first-floor rooms.

building." In 1990, SCAD purchased the art moderne Weis Theater, built on Savannah's main commercial street in 1946. SCAD's professional construction crews and contractors overhauled the 28,296 square feet of interior space that can seat more than 1,000 for concerts, drama, lectures, or films.

In any city, Ms. Clinard asserts that residents should value the "connections that cross generations" when a building is reutilized. As SCAD has done with the Savannah Volunteer Guards armory, the former Weis Theater and many other structures, reutilization—even if a building's new mission is dramatically different from the former—helps to develop lasting support from the old to the new.

New Name, New Mission for the Old Armory

SCAD first named the former armory Preston Hall in recognition of its architect whose career milestones include the design of more than 600 buildings in the Boston area, including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's School of Architecture. In 1997, as the college conducted its first Founders' Day celebration, the name was changed to Poetter Hall in recognition of Paul and May Poetter. In 1978 the Atlanta couple had just retired from long professional careers, Paul in federal government service and May from public school teaching and administrative assignments. They joined their daughter and son-in-law in Savannah, where Dr. Rowan credits them for their on-the-scene hard work, which was critical to the college's success.

STILL SERVING

The mission of Poetter Hall is changing again as SCAD enters the new century. The college is anticipating expanded academic programs and enrollment, and the purchase and rehabilitation of more historic buildings. The library that filled the former National Guard drill hall has been moved seven blocks downtown to the former Levy's department store building, which now provides three floors of storage, classroom, and study space. In the library's place and elsewhere in the armory, SCAD will relocate its admissions department.

In its own way, the Savannah Volunteer Guards armory continued to serve after reutilization efforts began. In the late summer of 1979, when Hurricane David pounded the Chatham County region with wind and water, the National Guard's relief efforts were headquartered in the "new" armory south of the city. Although relieved from its military duties for more than a quarter century by the time the Rowans and other founders of the college were getting ready to begin their first term, the building continued to protect some of Savannah's newest residents. The Rowans and their baby daughter were living on nearby coastal property that was in danger from the pending storm. The family fled the lowland and lived in the armory for several days until the danger passed. Ms. Rowan clearly remembers how safe they felt inside the former armory. That experience, she says, further reinforced their belief they had made the right choice in opening the college inside a building that continues to prove its worth to the community.

This undated, pre World War I photo of the Savannah Volunteer Guards armory illustrates some of its commercial applications. Like many National Guard armories of its era, this building was owned by its regiment, not the state of Georgia, and derived income to support its upkeep by renting space to commercial tenants. Among its retail occupants were a drug store, bar, bowling alley, second-hand store, and commercial high school.

This contemporary picture of the Savannah Guards armory depicts how it is used today as an administration building and art gallery for the Savannah College of Art and Design. Architect William G. Preston designed the armory in Richardsonian-Romanesque Revival style, and called for red-colored mortar to be used on the brickwork.

CASE STUDY

High School Arts Center

Trinity High School
Louisville (St. Matthews), Kentucky

Durability.

That's just one feature Trinity High School received in 1985, when it purchased the former headquarters armory of the Kentucky National Guard's 149th *Infantry Regiment*.

Today, 1,100 young men enrolled in this suburban Louisville Catholic high school fill the art deco structure to study journalism and creative arts. Teenage boys can be vigorous, but the 24-inch-thick reinforced concrete walls of this armory show little impact from their enthusiasm, or that of their citizen-soldier predecessors. Along with durability, the 47-year-old school bought space, nearly 20,000-square feet on two stories, and a piece of their community's history.

The 12-acre campus of Trinity High School, located five miles east of downtown Louisville in the suburb of St. Matthews, is a study in practical real estate reutilization. Trinity's administrative building and student cafeteria occupy a former automobile dealership. The rotunda-like front of this structure once displayed Cadillacs and other cars. Today, the school's many academic and sports trophies grace that same space. Where mechanics changed mufflers and tuned V-8 engines, crisp white walls and a shiny tile floor make the garage-turned-cafeteria an inviting space to spend some time. Adjacent to the former National Guard armory, Trinity's drama students practice their craft inside the former Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1170 home. This post-World War II, architecturally simple rectangle has been remodeled into a 320-seat performing arts theater.

Trinity High School opened its doors to fewer than 100 students in the fall of 1953, in a building that remains in school service one block west of the former armory. Four teachers joined Archbishop John Floersh and Monsignor Alfred Steinhauser to begin educating teenage boys who where growing up in Louisville's expanding East End suburbs. Proud of the academic accomplishments of its 10,500 graduates, the school has also earned recognition as a Kentucky football powerhouse. When the varsity suits up to challenge cross-town rival St. Xavier, more than 30,000 fans take seats in Papa John's Cardinal Stadium to witness the contest.

Land Trade Provides Answer

The school was outgrowing its academic space in the early 1980s when Father Al Moore met with others to plan the armory purchase project. By that time the Kentucky National Guard had transferred ownership of the armory to the city of Louisville. Trinity had secured $350,000 to cover renovation costs, but the school did not have enough money to buy the building from the city. The answer to this dilemma became land owned by the archdiocese elsewhere in the city. The city agreed to trade the church's land for the aging armory. John Grenough, then Trinity's development director, orchestrated the exchange with representatives of the archdiocese and the city of Louisville. According the Rob Mullen, a current member of Trinity's administrative team, negotiations with the city were "amicable and smooth."

Louisville Armory Statistics

- Constructed 1941-1942
- Exterior size: 82 feet by 131 feet
- Total interior area: 19,449 square feet; two stories, plus basement
- Main drill hall finished in maple, now carpeted
- Walls and barrel roof drill hall supports built of reinforced concrete
- Designed by Edd R. Gregg of Louisville, in the art deco style
- Built by Works Progress Administration
- Original construction cost: $81,541
- 1985 purchase price: Land trade for church properly elsewhere in the city
- $350,000 spent on initial renovations

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The entry of Trinity High School's Art and Communications Complex still reflects the art deco style of its late 1930s design. The building originally featured a *bas-relief* eagle on the horizontal, concrete entryway.

Once the transfer was accomplished, Trinity proceeded with the renovation project, creating its Art and Communications Complex to house classes in art, journalism, photography, and music. Bright classrooms occupy former military offices, supply rooms, and training areas. The adjoining drill hall can host a celebratory mass one day or a school dance the next.

"It was a perfect fit for the high school," recalls Louisville architect Larry Melillo, who prepared the reutilization plans for the armory and was an early participant in the rebirth of several buildings in the northern Kentucky city's downtown. Remembering that the armory literally was, "built like a fort," Melillo says that Trinity High School received a property that was "in very good shape," structurally.

Melillo adds that Trinity's project was quite straightforward when compared with reutilization efforts on buildings that have been significantly changed over long periods of time. The building had been relatively well cared for and had a good roof, a key ingredient in the architect's professional judgment. "Once the roof goes," Melillo says of old structures that are candidates for reutilization, the building can be "headed for the dumpster," unless, of course, a developer has a great deal of money.

An Armory Like Several Others

The St. Matthews National Guard unit—the enlisted men and junior officers of the Headquarters Company of the 149th Infantry Regiment—operated from rented spaces above a grocery store and saloon prior to the outbreak of World War II. To provide them with a bigger and more secure training facility, the state of Kentucky approved blueprints for a utilitarian armory design that was built in St. Matthews and copied in seven additional Bluegrass State communities by the time World War II was under way. The tactic saved money on plans. Kentuckians were following the practice of many states in recycling a basic armory design to fit local building sites.

In addition to St. Matthews, armories in Carlisle, Harlan, Harrodsburg, Lexington, Richmond, Springfield, and Williamsburg bear striking resemblance to each other. Each featured a cast concrete "spread eagle" that decorated the front entrance. The eagle on the St. Matthews armory was removed as part of Trinity's reutilization plan.

Command Sgt. Maj. Marion Williams, retired from long service with the Kentucky National Guard, was a junior enlisted member of the 149th Regiment's Headquarters Company when the unit was called to federal service in 1940. When the unit shipped out for Camp Shelby, Miss., on Jan. 17, 1941, the men loaded on

National Guard armories typically feature a front-facing "headshed" or office/classroom area, with a large drill hall in the rear of the building. Formerly a regimental headquarters for the Kentucky National Guard, this structure now belongs to Louisville's Trinity High School, an all-boys Catholic institution with 1,100 students. Two rooms on the main floor housed the Beargrass St. Matthews Historical Society archives from 1989 to 1991, and continue as archival storage for the school's photos, publications, and other memorabilia.

trains not far from what was to become Trinity's campus. Capt. Jasper L. Cummings, commander of the company, directed the Guardsmen to look across the field to where the contractor was pouring the foundation of their new armory home. Sgt. Maj. Williams remembers the commander telling everyone that when they returned to civilian life one year later, their armory would be finished and they could get on with their lives.

One year of active duty stretched to five for the members of the 149th and the more than 240,000 Guardsmen from units across the nation. During the war years, the armory was home to the Kentucky State Guard while the 149th was fighting in the South Pacific. This volunteer military organization of mostly older men was created in Kentucky and other states to carry on the National Guard's traditional local emergency response duties while the units were in federal service. Five years also established the armory's utility as a community center. When the 149th demobilized and returned the armory in 1946, Sgt. Maj. Williams recalls that Col. Arthur C. Bonnycastle had to change all the locks. "Every social organization in the city had keys to the place."

Sgt. Maj. Williams, who had left the 149th early in the war for duty with Army Air Corps, was invited by Col. Bonnycastle and Capt. Langford to help rebuild the unit. A full 110-man complement was recruited, and senior staff officers of the regiment who had trained in a downtown armory prior to the War, moved into the facility.

With art classes planned inside, the architect for the remodeling project called for large windows to be added to the building's north side. Installation of the modern windows required the contractor to slice through several inches of reinforced concrete.

The drill hall of Trinity High School's Art and Communications Complex provides 5,264 square feet of open space for a wide range of student and alumni activities. The room's original wood floor has been covered with carpet; however, a portable dance floor supports activities that require a hard surface.

STILL SERVING

The St. Matthews armory also continued to expand its wartime stature as a community center. Enough community organizations in the Louisville metropolitan area rented the armory drill hall that all operating expenses "except the winter coal" were covered, according to Sgt. Maj. Williams. Guardsmen learned just how stout the walls of their home had become. A small contractor hired in 1957 to cut through an interior wall to expand a food service area, "nearly went broke," in Sgt. Maj. Williams' words, sawing through the well-cured concrete and "so much steel."

The Kentucky National Guard decided to close the armory in 1962 and move the 149th to Bowling Green. "When we left," the career Guardsman states, "a number of groups started to discuss who was going to get the building." The city of Louisville eventually received the deed, hosting tenants that included the city's Civil Defense organization, the Civil Air Patrol, and even a commercial roller skating rink before trading the property with the Trinity Foundation.

Art classrooms inside the high school's Art and Communications Complex have large north-facing windows. The National Guard has used this ground floor area of the former armory as storage and maintenance space.

Works Progress Administration Armories, State of Oklahoma

In the midst of the Great Depression, creation of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1935 brought significant help for some of the nation's millions who were out of work. For the National Guard in the years between 1935 and 1943, the WPA funded the creation of 400 new armories and the reconstruction of an additional 500.

As an example, the Depression stung the citizens of Oklahoma as hard as anywhere. Early New Deal programs brought relief to some parts of the country, but they had little impact on the Sooners, whose statewide unemployment reached 23 percent by 1935. In some counties, four out of every 10 breadwinners were out of work. Officials in Oklahoma pressed hard to get their share of relief funds for armory construction. In just three years, 58 new armories were built for units that largely had been operating from rented and often inadequate quarters.

How did Oklahoma, with its small and mostly rural population, capture such a large share of WPA funds for armory construction? By the time the program concluded, 14.5 percent of all new WPA National Guard armories in the nation were constructed in the Sooner State. Critical to the National Guard's good fortune, and that of the communities where the armories were eventually built, was W.S. Key, a former prison warden and major general in the National Guard who resigned his post as commander of the 45th Division to become director of the state's WPA efforts.

WPA armories across Oklahoma share similar design characteristics thanks to architect Bryan F. Nolen's adaptable plans. Today this former armory in Tahlequah, built from Nolen's "one unit" blueprints, is the home of the Cornerstone Fellowship Church. The 14,950-square-foot sandstone structure was finished in 1936 at a cost of $47,667. Built for Company M of the 180th Infantry, the armory remained in service until 1984, as the home of Company D 120th Engineer Battalion. The church purchased the structure in 1993 for $90,000. Approximately $325,000 was spent on initial renovations.

During the Great Depression, unemployed Americans were offered jobs by the Works Progress Administration to build public structures like this all-brick National Guard armory in Watonga, Okla. Designed by architect Bryan F. Nolen, the adaptable plans for this building were reused across the Sooner State to construct more than 50 armories. The WPA sponsored 400 armory building projects across the nation, mostly in southern and western states. To save money, many states reused their architect's blueprints.

While Key encouraged communities to apply for all types of WPA projects, he was especially enthusiastic about the construction of National Guard armories in cities and towns where none had existed. The local National Guard unit got a new home, and residents soon had access to a large, well-constructed public building. The federal government paid for labor and most materials, with locals responsible for land costs. Often, property was donated or purchased from civic organizations for $1, with a reversionary clause in the Warranty Deeds.

The state's businesses and formerly unemployed also benefited. The robust armory building program paid out $1.5 million for materials, most of them purchased locally, and put $800,000 in wages into the pockets of hundreds of workers, many who finished their employment with the WPA with newly acquired construction skills.

Sixty Oklahoma communities requested a WPA armory project, with 58 armories built between 1935 and 1937. Key hired fellow officer and architect Maj. Bryan F. Nolen to develop artistically conservative but flexible plans for structures that could house one to five National Guard artillery or infantry units. Of the 58 that were built, 54 survive. Currently, 37 are on the National Register of Historic Places, thanks in large part to the efforts of Sally Ferrell, wife of Maj. Gen. Donald Ferrell, a former adjutant general of the Oklahoma National Guard who has been involved in historical efforts of the 45th Infantry Division Association.

The Oklahoma Army National Guard continues to use 30 of the WPA armories. Follow-on use for the former armories ranges from the town hall in Beggs to an automobile repair shop in Hugo. At least four are vacant or significantly underutilized.

Capt. Warren Higginbotham, Real Property Manager for the Oklahoma National Guard, says that reutilization of the former WPA armories presents its challenges. Some are located in very small communities such as the two-unit armory in Pawnee, population 2,200. These armories are large and prominent buildings, making it difficult to find a small town buyer who can assume the financial responsibility for renovation and sustaining maintenance. As an example, Higginbotham states it currently costs approximately $150,000 to replace the 80-foot by 125-foot rectangular barrel roofs that cover the drill halls. Many of the WPA armories constructed in eastern Oklahoma were built of locally quarried sandstone that if not properly treated, absorbs moisture, which makes the interiors damp and musty.

Like other states, the Oklahoma National Guard now replaces its armories with one-of-a-kind designs that meet military and community needs. State regulations require that the Oklahoma National Guard sell its vacant armories for no less than 10 percent of their fair market value as established by three independent appraisers. When it vacates one of its old armories, federal law requires an environmental baseline study be conducted so that a potential buyer understands what will be required to meet current health and safety standards. Higginbotham recommends that any potential buyer move as quickly as possible to occupy a former armory, as the National Guard cannot continue to maintain the vacant buildings.

One-half of the former drill hall is a multi-purpose room as shown by this view. The "head shed," or administrative part of the armory, now houses church offices and classrooms. Art deco styling is visible on the exterior of all Oklahoma WPA armories, with fortress-like features such as portals, parapets, narrow windows, and brick or stonework along the roofline that suggest battlements. The majority of Oklahoma's WPA armories were built of locally quarried limestone or sandstone. Eighteen were constructed of bricks that had been fired at the state penitentiary at McAlester.

One-half of the drill hall of the Tahlequah, Okla., armory now is used as the Cornerstone Fellowship Church sanctuary. The construction site for the Tahlequah armory was donated with a "reversionary clause" to the National Guard by the Ladies Auxiliary of Rhodes-Pritchet American Legion Post 50. Several WPA armories in Oklahoma were protected by similar warranty deed restrictions that returned the property to donors once the National Guard no longer needed the facility. Church officials negotiated the purchase of this armory with the Legion Auxiliary.

CASE STUDY

Apartment/Library Complex

Dawson, Minnesota

Think "base closure" and it's easy to imagine the last parade at a sprawling Army fort in California or the shut down of a sun-baked Air Force installation somewhere in Texas.

Consider Dawson, Minn., and that image becomes more difficult to sustain. The numbers and human impact are smaller, by a considerable magnitude. Yet, the 1,700 citizens of this durable farm community along the western border of the state reacted the same way as their metropolitan neighbors when they learned in 1992 that the Minnesota National Guard would close the Dawson armory.

Community officials, local Guardsmen, and their supporters rallied at hearing the news. "We fought it just like other places across the nation," remembers David Bovee, city manager, as he recollects the effort to convince National Guard officials in St. Paul to reconsider their decision. Dawson was proud of its unit and armory, appreciated the presence of the members and equipment during emergencies, and had long supported its rolls with recruits. The town would miss the unit and its yearly $150,000 payroll from five full-time staff members plus the salaries earned by approximately 80 traditional members who trained there one weekend per month.

The Dawson delegation did not prevail. Closure of the Dawson National Guard armory became part of the massive early 1990s cutback felt by the nation's entire military establishment.

Quick Refocus

Taking a lesson from Department of Defense economic development experts who advise any community involved in base closure to maintain momentum from a "save the base" campaign, the residents of Dawson quickly refocused their efforts toward an alternative use for the armory. That meant a return to St. Paul and close coordination with the state legislature to secure passage of a bill in 1992 that helped Dawson and 11 other Minnesota communities that faced similar situations. Initially, the Minnesota National Guard hoped to recover some of its investment from the closed armories by selling them at market value to local government entities, or to private buyers if a city or county was not interested. But lawmakers were convinced that local governments had sacrificed enough by losing a unit, so they passed a bill offering the buildings back to the home cities for $1. If a city did not want the armory, the county would be next in line, followed by sale on the open market for bids.

Dawson Armory Statistics

- Constructed 1922-1923
- Exterior size: 100 feet by 80 feet
- Total usable interior area: 29,970 square feet; two stories
- Main drill hall floor finished in maple, now carpeted; a 3,500-square-foot mezzanine has been added
- Brick walls
- Designed by Lang, Raugland and Lewis, Inc., of Minneapolis, in the late Romanesque Revival style
- Built by J.W. Carson, Inc., of Dawson
- Original construction cost: $56,000 (estimated)
- 1992 purchase price: $1 (set by state legislature)
- $1 million spent on renovations
- National Register of Historic Places #95-000615
- Minnesota Register 96-0971

For more information, contact
City of Dawson
Box 552
Dawson, MN 56232
Telephone: 320-769-4615
E-mail: dawson1@frontiernet.net

Dawson, Minnesota's former National Guard armory now houses the town library and a 10-unit apartment complex. A community meeting room is located in the basement and a 3,500 square foot mezzanine above the library serves as a community center and art gallery. In 1998, the League of Minnesota Cities honored the community project with its City Achievement Award.

The city of Dawson could have the all-brick, two-story-plus-full-basement armory and its drill hall for $1. The politically trimmed selling price was paid, and the citizens of Dawson formed a committee to decide the community's next move. Five years and countless committee meetings later, Dawson's former armory has become an award-winning library/community center/ apartment complex, receiving a City Achievement Award from the League of Minnesota Cities.

Getting there presented significant challenges, Bovee admits. There was no shortage of different ideas, some voiced very forcefully and some still unspoken but strongly held.

Always a Community Center

"There was a lot of history and a lot of emotion connected to the building," Bovee explains about the infantry unit that called the Dawson armory its home. Equally important, the armory, built in 1923 in the Romanesque Revival style, was a community center. High school basketball players challenged their rivals on the maple court; square dancers paid $6 per night to rent the building; and just once, 2,500 people crowded into the drill hall to see and hear famed WCCO broadcaster Cedric Adams deliver his 10 p.m. broadcast live from downtown Dawson.

The armory was constructed during a post-World War I expansion of the National Guard in Minnesota. Although Dawson is not a county seat, residents campaigned hard to secure a Guard unit for their town. Mindful of the armory's dual purpose, town officials wanted to ensure that the armory would function equally well as a community center and thus approved $20,000 in local money to supplement the $25,000 appropriated by the state to construct the armory. Dawson's supplemental funds allowed for the construction of an elaborate foyer, balcony, and stage. Local builder J.W. Carson got caught up in the civic enthusiasm and used much of his calculated profit from the construction contract to ensure that everything was top quality. According to Dawson historian Janet Liebl, Carson's generosity was appreciated by the townspeople, but it likely created a permanent financial injury to his construction company.

Demolition Not an Option

Mindful of the emotional investment in the armory, city manager Bovee says that talk of demolition was never part of any proposal, the first of which involved remodeling the Guard unit's administrative area into apartments and keeping the drill hall open for school athletic programs. For years the Dawson armory had been the town's only basketball court and still was just one of two indoor courts in the city. School officials and sports enthusiasts were interested in preserving the drill hall for athletic practice and competitions. But an independent study assessed the idea as "incompatible." Potential renters of the apartments–likely to be senior citizens–would not want to live in the same building as a busy school athletic facility.

Library Too Small

As the city began its armory reutilization meetings, a parallel effort was under way to resolve a "what-do-we-do-with-the-old-library?" question. At 2,500 square feet, Dawson's 1917 Carnegie Library had become too small for its 4,000 patrons and status as one of the busiest small town libraries in Minnesota. A group of library supporters proposed constructing a 5,000 square-foot facility, an idea that eventually was referred to voters and defeated by a slim margin.

Following the library referendum, Bovee started talks with armory reutilization committee members about an apartment-library combination. The drill hall had 5,300 square feet of space, a bit more than the minimum recommended by an outside library consultant. Potential tenants of the apartments would have indoor access to the features of the library and the company of its much quieter patrons. The apartment-library proposal was launched, but not fully embraced by the city's sports-minded residents who continued to press for retention of the drill hall as a school athletic facility. In the end, school officials decided they could not afford to participate in the rehabilitation costs, even with the favorable starting point of the $1 purchase price.

The Dawson City Library more than doubled its floor space when it moved its 22,000-piece collection into the former drill hall of the National Guard armory. With more than 4,000 registered patrons, the facility has the highest per capita circulation rate in the Pioneerland Library System, a regional network of 31 libraries covering nine counties in west-central Minnesota.

Mid-Course Changes

Along the way, the development committee struggled with more meetings, and the mid-course changes required by a new developer and consultants. Still everyone maintained an attitude of perseverance, according to the city manager. The group formed an Economic Development Authority that would own the former armory and protect the financing package from additional challenges by voters. Mindful that the first library proposal had been stopped at the polls, Bovee says the group "had to become creative" to ensure that financial support for the new proposal would remain on track. They also were careful to conduct ample public meetings and to host open houses during the construction phase so townspeople could observe the process.

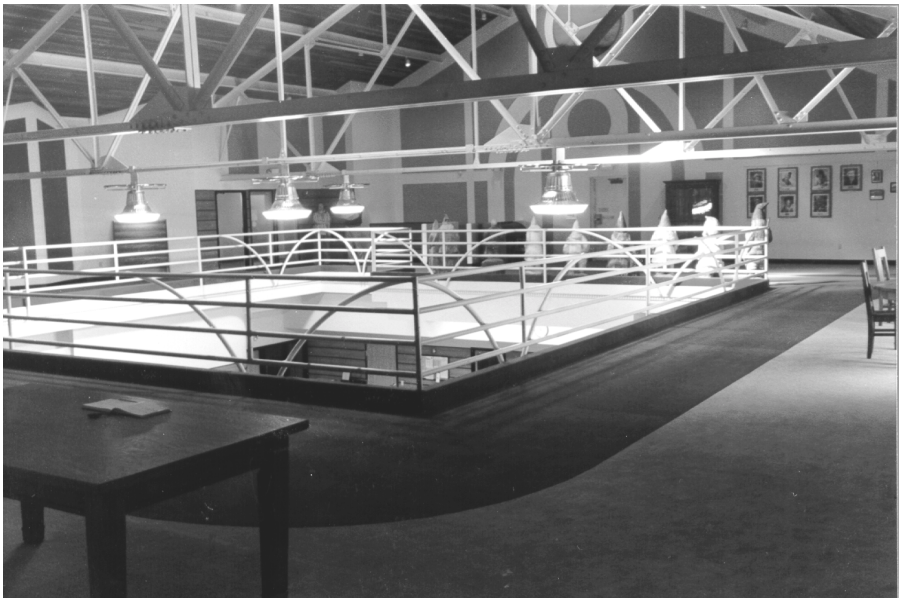
Sports fans gained something from the armory project, too. The school district is constructing an athletic building with space for three basketball courts. When that work is finished, the current school gymnasium will be remodeled into a fine arts center. The former library continues in service as the office of a law firm.

Financial Plan

Dawson is paying the final tab on the armory project with a combination of bonds and grants. Rents, averaging $500 per month for each of the 10 apartments, will pay back the $500,000 housing bond, while an annual appropriation from the city will pay off the slightly larger amount in bonds sold to finance the library portion of the complex. The city also received a $150,000 grant from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning to help pay for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. A $25,000 grant from the state was used early on to conduct preliminary studies when the National Guard moved out of the building.

Financial assistance received by the city to fund the apartment complex requires that for the first three years after opening, all tenants must be 55 years or older. Following that period, the apartments can be rented on the open market. City manager Bovee says the 10 apartments, some as large as 1,300 square feet and one designed for a handicapped tenant, were quickly filled. He adds that many prospective younger residents are waiting for an opportunity to move in.

Construction began June 26, 1997, following one of the toughest winters on record and serious flooding of the Lac qui Parle River that flows through the town. Work was finished in March of 1998, and Bovee says that the city dealt with a few small "construction surprises" as tenants and the library staff settled in. The city purchased the former Masonic Lodge across the street from the armory and took down the frame building in 1999 to build an eight-car garage for tenants, an important plus for residential property during Minnesota's winters.



Library staff members and city officials are still experimenting with ways to utilize the mezzanine space above the main floor of the library. The area is used as an art gallery and display space for historic artifacts. A donated grand piano is also available for use on the mezzanine.

Status of Minnesota's Former Armories Closed in 1993

Aitkin – City-owned community center

Benson – City-owned, rented for various uses

Dawson – Library/apartment complex/community center

Eveleth – City-owned community center

Milaca – Purchased by city, recently sold to commercial design business

Park Rapids – City-owned storage space

Tracy – City-owned community center

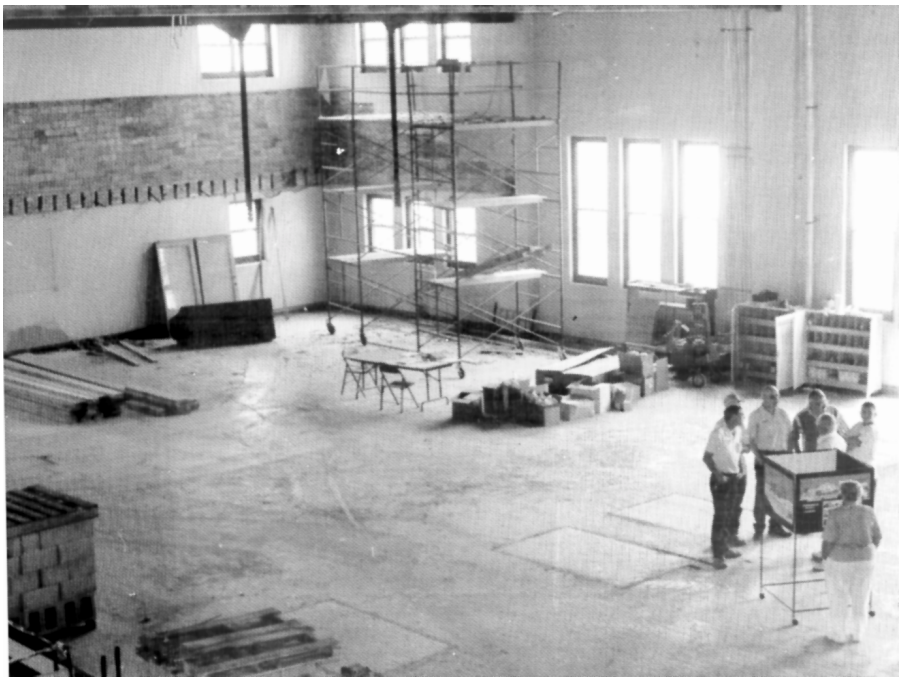
Virginia – Purchased by city, resold to private owner

White Bear Lake – City-owned community center

Windom – City-owned, subsequently demolished

Worthington – Commercial office and business space

Zumbrota – Commercial apartment complex



Dawson officials held open house weekends during the construction phase of the library-apartment project so that residents of the Lac qui Parle County farming community could inspect the progress. Community involvement continued with a contest to select the name of the library/apartment house complex. After purchasing the armory from the state for $1, the town spent more than $1 million raised from the sale of bonds and receipt of grants to complete the remodeling.

Lodge members moved their furnishings into the basement of the former armory and conduct meetings in the community room, which Bovee says is available for other groups. Future ideas include installation of commercial kitchen equipment in the basement to support other public events and a senior meals program.

National Register Nomination

"It was important for us to retain the look of the armory," Bovee says of the design and construction process. Early on, the city nominated the building to the National Register of Historic Places to assure long-time residents that the character of the structure would be retained. Architect Milton Bruflodt traveled to the Minnesota National Guard's facilities office at Camp Ripley to inspect old photos and drawings. Among his preservation efforts were retention of foyer woodwork and faithful restoration of the shape and size of former garage door openings in the front of the building.

Inside the building, second story apartments now have cathedral ceilings that rise 14 feet to expose the dark, solid-wood car siding that makes up the underside of the roof. In the library, a false ceiling was removed from the drill hall to show off the full expanse of the same wood. Outside near the flagpole that still displays the nation's colors, a low brick wall carries metal letters that proclaim the building's new mission: Dawson Library – Heritage Court Apartments. In the center of the front entrance sidewalk, workers carefully set a slab saved from the original walk. Its inscription modestly carries the year 1923 and the name of the civic-minded contractor who, like his modern community counterparts, gave so much to the project.

CASE STUDY

Museum

Deming, New Mexico

It started with a washing machine.

In 1976, prominent Deming, N.M., businessman Hubert Ruebush wanted to donate his mother's old electric washer, "the first one in town," to the community's already cramped museum, which operated from a small rented house. A few blocks away, the Army National Guard had recently moved from its old brick armory to a new facility on the south side of town.

Several months, thousands of dollars, and countless hours of volunteer time later, the Deming Luna Mimbres Museum was on its way toward becoming a showpiece for this community of 16,000 just 30 miles from the Mexican border. Mrs. Ruebush's galvanized tub, with its black electric motor, found a home. The laundry room relic is in good company along with thousands of artifacts that tell the story of how Native Americans and generations of much newer residents have lived in this region that bills itself as the Chili Capital of the World.

The transition from armory to museum started with Ruebush's donation first of the family's laundry room showpiece—and soon after—cash. When he learned the museum could not display something the size of his mother's prized home appliance, the campaign to secure the armory from the state was launched. Others in the city had thought about alternative uses for the vacant armory, and a salvage company had its eye on demolition rights in exchange for an estimated 18 railcar loads of valuable red bricks. Ruebush tipped the scales away from the salvager with his promised donation of $6,000 if others in the community could match the amount in order to meet the state's asking price for the 1916 structure.

"Well, we raised the other $6,000 pretty fast," recalls Ruth Brown, a retired sixth grade teacher and the museum's current director. With help from a state legislator, a delegation of citizens went to Santa Fe to negotiate the eventual $11,500 selling price with the State Armory Board. New Mexico is one of several states that maintain an Armory Board to oversee the construction, operation, and disposition of National Guard properties. It functions as a "body corporate," with the adjutant general as its chairman.

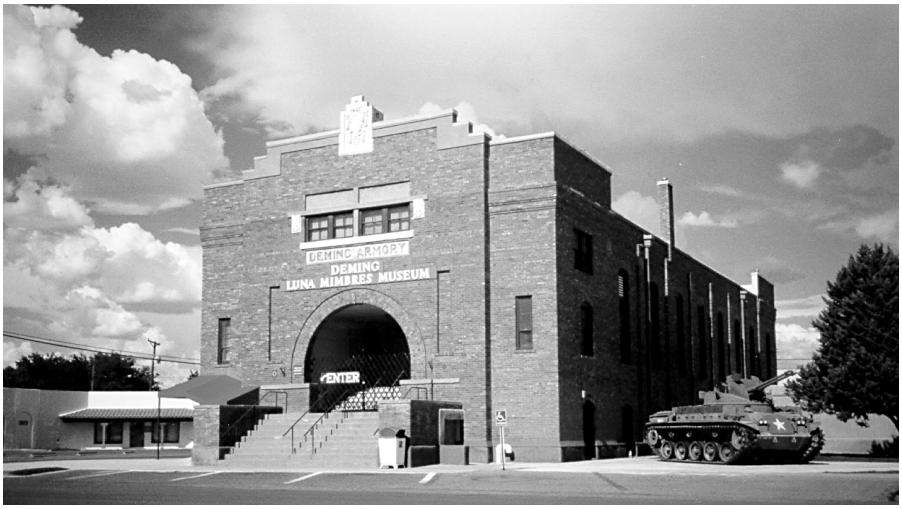
Like A Real Museum

With title to the property, volunteers from the Luna County Historical Society set to work in January 1978. They cleaned up the old armory and prepared the 1,728-square-foot ground floor room to accept the contents of the cramped Cottage Museum that had been in business in two different locations since 1963. The Historical Society's original plan called for museum space on the ground floor, reserving the upper 4,608 square foot drill hall for dances, concerts, and other community events. "We started to run things like a real museum," Brown states.

Deming Armory Statistics

- Constructed 1915-1916
- Exterior size: 132 feet by 50 feet
- Total interior area: 14,000 square feet; two stories
- Main drill hall floor finished in maple
- Poured concrete foundation, brick walls, pitched roof
- Designed by H.C. Trost of El Paso, Texas, in the popular "castellated" style
- Built by W.W. Barracks of Deming
- Original construction cost: $17,500
- 1977 purchase price: $11,500 (one-half of the purchase price was contributed by one local donor, the remainder was raised by additional local contributions)
- Initial renovation costs contributed largely through donations of labor and materials
- National Register of Historic Places #83001624
- New Mexico Register of Cultural Properties #584

For more information, contact the
Luna County Historical Society
P.O. Box 1617
Deming, NM 88030
Telephone: 505-546-2382
E-mail: dlm-museum@zianet.com



At 301 S. Silver Ave., the Deming Armory opened its doors in 1916 while the National Guard unit was on federal duty helping to keep Pancho Villa on his side of the Mexican border. The New Mexico National Guard maintained a unit in the building for 60 years. During World War II, when all National Guard units were in federal service, the building housed an active USO chapter that supported thousands of men training at the nearby Deming Army Airfield. As a community center, the armory served the citizens of Deming from its opening months as a location for dances, basketball games, boxing matches, and other public events.

In addition to the leadership and financial contributions from Ruebush and his wife, Pauline, retirees Ted and Louise Southerland figured prominently in the early years of the expanded museum. A former school administrator, Southerland and his wife were among the thousands who move to New Mexico to enjoy the favorable winter climate. As Brown explains, the Southerlands and other seasonal residents bring their energy, ideas, diverse points of view, and capability to donate time to many civic projects.

The Southerland family brought something else that, like Ruebush's washing machine, helped propel the museum toward its current annual visitor count of 24,000 and growing core of 70 to 80 volunteer staff members. Mrs. Southerland's doll collection—300 strong—needed a home. The Historical Society accepted the collection, and the Southerland family set to work transforming the armory's 81-foot indoor target range into a carpeted display space that has since increased by at least 100 dolls donated by other residents.

"People saw what had been done with the dolls and just started giving things," recalls Brown. Display-by-display, the museum grew out of the ground floor room across the entire drill floor. It since has spread to an adjoining building that is currently being enlarged with a second construction project that will become a transportation wing for the museum. Main spaces in the armory are filled with displays, while volunteer staff members use small classrooms and the combination running track/balcony on the upper level for offices and archive storage.

Highlights of the collection include hundreds of ceramic pieces and other artifacts representing life from the Mogollon and Mimbreno cultures that occupied the region before explorers and settlers arrived. There's a Military Room that recounts the story of Deming's role in national defense.

National Guard Bureau's Former Chief Issues Caution—When Armories Become 'Landlocked'

Retired Lt. Gen. Edward Baca was a rising staff officer in the New Mexico National Guard when the Deming armory changed hands. Gen. Baca later served for 11 years as the state's adjutant general and was selected to be chief of the National Guard Bureau from 1994 to 1998. He firmly believes that any armory reutilization project must first evaluate the needs of the local community. Because armories typically serve both as military buildings and community centers, the National Guard and local residents must give careful thought to continuing that mission after a unit moves to a new facility.

"Community center first," the veteran of 42 years of National Guard service recommends, especially in smaller towns. Then other uses can be considered, including sale to the private sector.

"Mobilization and training are first considerations," Gen. Baca continues in explaining the complex and often-difficult decision the National Guard must make when it is time to close an armory. Old armories also get "landlocked," in Gen. Baca's word, and cannot support the modern training requirements for a unit that operates big equipment and is staffed by men and women who nearly all commute to training in their cars. "No matter how beautiful it is, or how historic it is," Gen. Baca advises, "when old armories are landlocked, then it's time to find an alternative use for the building. The armory can live on, it just won't be with a National Guard unit inside."

Photos and artifacts from the early years when the town's National Guard unit was called to federal service in the campaign against Poncho Villa are on display. A Norden bombsight reminds visitors that countless bombardiers learned how to use the top-secret device inside aircraft based at the nearby Deming Army Airfield. Other displays tell of city life, commercial establishments, health care, entertainment, and the impact of farming and ranching on Deming and Luna County.

Green Tea Raises Funds

Donated labor, money, materials, and business savvy form the backbone of the Historical Society's efforts. For example, a holiday event formerly called the Silver Tea became the "Green Tea" to better reflect its money-raising purpose. The museum's gift shop started when two people each gave $200 to stock the shelves that now are filled with souvenirs and artwork reflecting Deming's history and Native American culture. Today the shop is the museum's largest source of supplemental income. With two shifts per day nearly every day of the year, volunteers staff the gift shop and serve as docents for the exhibits. Native

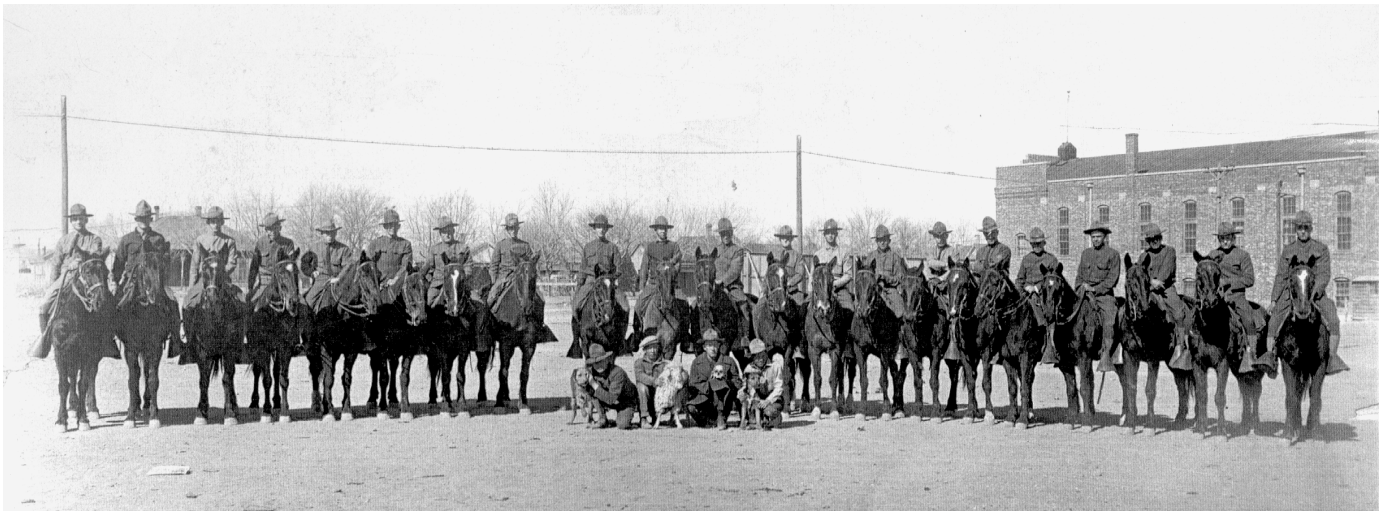
Wartime Tragedy Remembered

Master Sgt. Howard G. Craig was 51 years old in early 1941, when this photo was taken as the Deming National Guard unit shipped out for World War II service in the Philippines. Sgt. Craig survived the Bataan Death March, but was killed late in the war when a U.S. Navy aircraft bombed the Japanese ship that was taking him and other POWs to Japan to serve as laborers.

Master Sgt. Howard G. Craig

Sgt. Craig, who received a battlefield commission while he was a prisoner, served as the pre-war, full-time administrator of the Deming Guard unit. His daughter, Betty Craig Wood, lived in the armory's basement apartment with her family that included five other siblings. She recalls the Deming armory as a busy place, often noisy with high school basketball games and dances. "There was lots of excitement," she remembers of her years from ages 10-17 in the armory, "we were close to town, but a long way from school."

Today, Deming's National Guard unit is Battery A, 1st Battalion, 202nd Artillery, an organization of 60 men who operate the Army's self-propelled 155-millimeter artillery system called Paladin. The city's first National Guard unit was Company I of the 1st New Mexico Infantry. Just prior to World War II, the unit was reorganized as the headquarters of the 200th Coast Artillery Regiment. The 200th served in the Philippine Islands and was surrendered to Japanese forces in April 1942. The men endured the Bataan Death March; survivors spent 42 months in prisoner of war camps.



In 1921 when this picture was taken, Deming's National Guard unit was Troop C of the 111th Cavalry. It remained a cavalry outfit until conversion to coastal artillery prior to World War II. Mascots in this photo include two dogs and a long-haired goat. The kneeling soldier, second from right, is holding a human skull of unidentified origin.

STILL SERVING

Deming resident Art Roman serves as the volunteer archivist for the growing collection focused on artifacts from southwestern New Mexico.

The city and county pitch in to pay one-half of the museum's utility bills, and the city has donated the labor of its work crews to construct two additional display buildings that stretch from the south side of the armory to the end of the city block. In the future, Brown hopes that money can be raised to cover these new metal structures with brick veneer to match the armory. The landscaped outdoor space in front of the new additions displays memorials to service members from the area, including veterans of the 200th Coast Artillery Regiment who were involved in the Bataan Death March.

The bulk of visitors are the thousands who spend easy winters in the southwest. At peak season—between January and April—more than 2,000 people visit the museum each month. Brown and her volunteer staffers are working to expand the museum's visibility with tour group operators. During the 1999-2000 school year, every fourth grader in the community spent an entire day in the former armory, with hands-on learning about the history of their community.

Museum exhibits now fill the main drill hall. Volunteers from the local Historical Society initially planned to use the drill hall for public events, thinking the lower level of the armory would be large enough for display space.

The lower level of the Deming Museum displays furnishings from area homes and serves as a meeting space for school groups, musical performances, and other events. When the National Guard operated the armory, this area was used for social events.

CASE STUDY

Family Resource Center

Defiance, Ohio

Travel to Defiance, Ohio, in the northwest corner of the state, and you can't miss prominent signs that describe the community of 16,000 as "a great place to live."

Overstated? You might think so, if you were just passing through. However, a closer look at how the city's Goals 2000 program has helped to transform a vacant National Guard armory into the Defiance County Family Resource Center would quickly lead you to the opposite conclusion. Defiance's welcoming sign accurately reflects how citizens feel about the commitments they have made to maintaining their community.

In several ways, Defiance is like many other midwestern cities. Manufacturing and agriculture largely support the local economy. The city has weathered its share of buffeting that came to the nation's industrial heartland during the last two decades. Residents are clearly aware that slogans are not enough to ensure civic vitality. At the start of the 1990s when the community began to rebound from various industrial changes, residents agreed on 10 objectives designed to focus attention on excellence in education. Heading the Goals 2000 list was a call for increased partnership among families, the school system, and the community. By early 1995, a task force was formed to achieve these objectives. Task force volunteers were confident that establishment of a Family Resource Center could serve as a focal point of their efforts. They began to search for a location.

Ohio Closes 26 Facilities

Operating in a substantially different orbit, officials at the state headquarters of the Ohio National Guard in Columbus had a few years earlier coped with post-Cold War orders to trim the size of its force. This requirement, crafted in Washington, D.C., by the Congress and the Department of Defense, resulted in closing 26 National Guard facilities across the Buckeye State, including Defiance's three-story armory constructed in 1914 in the castellated style. Task force members, working under the leadership of energetic Mayor Rita Kissner, saw potential in transforming the former armory into a Family Resource Center.

Post-Cold War downsizing. . . meet a new initiative in Middle America.

Vacant long enough to have already attracted small incidents of vandalism, finding a suitable tenant for the armory also was important to the mayor and others in Defiance for practical reasons. David Williams, city law director, cautioned to a local newspaper following a May 1996 city council meeting that the armory could follow the fate of a downtown factory building that had been demolished a year earlier after becoming the community's "biggest eyesore." No one wanted to see the 1914 National Guard armory deteriorate or torn down.

The Family Resource Center task force gathered momentum. Sandy Herman was hired as the Family and Children First Council coordinator and began working with the Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission

Defiance Armory Statistics

- Constructed 1914
- Exterior size: 55 feet by 100 feet
- Total interior area: 11,594 square feet; two stories
- Main drill hall floor finished in maple (53 feet by 90 feet)
- Brick walls
- Designed by Karl I. Best, Dayton, Ohio, in the castellated style
- Built by Clemmer and Johnson, Inc., of Hicksville, Ohio
- Original construction cost: $18,849
- 1996 purchase price: $37,500 (state legislature set at one-half of its $75,000 appraied value)
- $500,000 spent on renovations

For more information, contact
City of Defiance
324 Perry Street
Defiance, OH 43512
Telephone: 419-784-2101
Web site: www.defianceweb.com

Defiance's former National Guard armory faces its main commercial street and shares a new parking lot with the neighboring American Legion Post home. Vacated by the Army National Guard in 1993, the completely renovated building opened in the spring of 1999 as the Defiance County Family Resource Center.

(NOCAC), a regional group that operates the Head Start program in Defiance. If the city would purchase the armory from the state, NOCAC would take the lead as the main lessee of the building. The Family and Children First Council would be a financially smaller partner in the deal. In Columbus, the National Guard and state legislature worked together on the project. Lawmakers set the purchase price of the former armory at one-half of its $75,000 appraised value.

As negotiations were under way to get the Defiance City Council to approve purchase of the building, NOCAC and the Family and Children First Council launched their campaign to raise approximately $75,000 for remodeling. NOCAC qualified for a $450,000 federal grant and a $250,000 state grant. NOCAC would use that money to support comprehensive remodeling of the armory's lower level into classrooms, a kitchen, and storage space for its Head Start pupils. NOCAC also agreed to a 20-year lease, making it the principal tenant and guaranteeing income for operating expenses. Local money, grants, and fund raisers generated monies to renovate the second and third floors.

Foot-in-the-Door Party

Before everything was finished, local money for the project came in small amounts (e.g., $203 from the "Run for the Kids"). A local theater owner donated profits from the premier showing of a motion picture that had been filmed in Defiance. Local residents even paid $51.39 each to attend a "Get Your Foot In the Door" party. The attention-getting price for this event was calculated by dividing the total renovation cost by the total square footage of the armory.

Donations of labor and materials also contributed to the project's viability, according to Mayor Kissner and Council Coordinator Herman. Volunteers helped with painting. A local business donated the heavy tools necessary to cut up the old boiler and heating system that students from Defiance College hauled to the dump. Members of a Michigan-based youth training group called ALERT (Air Land Emergency Resource Team) spent several days in the armory helping with drywall and finishing.

"It was hard to get started," Herman remembers, "but once people could see that it was going to happen, then momentum built." That momentum continued through the Resource Center's spring 1999 opening with donations of furniture, a computer, and a copy machine.

Renovations included new plumbing, heating, and wiring. All rooms except the large drill hall are air-conditioned, and a sprinkler system provides fire protection throughout. The building is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and new asphalt covers a parking lot that is shared by the neighboring American Legion Post home. The exterior remains largely

The Northwestern Ohio Community Action Commission serves as the major tenant of the building and operates its Head Start program from the lower level of the former armory. This photo illustrates a typical classroom layout.

unchanged; however, workers did perform tuck-pointing and installed new windows and doors. A mast for a military radio antenna that stood in front of the building for at least 20 years was dismantled.

In hindsight, Deb Gerken of NOCAC wishes the task force had more time to study its renovation plan and negotiate with contractors. The task force had a time limit on spending a significant amount of its money, putting the group at a disadvantage in holding out for more favorable prices. As an example, Gerken believes the lead paint on basement walls could have been encapsulated for far less than the $47,000 that was spent on removal, one of the relatively unstudied choices. One break did come from the surprising lack of asbestos in the building. "Like three feet" of pipe were covered with the hazardous material, according to Herman, holding total inspection and removal costs to less than $500.

The upper-level administrative area formerly occupied by the National Guard now serves as office and classroom space for a variety of youth activities and family programs managed by the Family and Children First Council. The drill hall has been painted and fitted with new lighting. The maple floor has been refinished, still serving as a venue for intramural basketball games and other activities. Just as the National Guard would make the drill hall available to civic organizations when it wasn't needed for military training, the Family and Children First Council also rents the hall to help supplement its operating costs.

Exterior Is Little-Changed

The exterior of the building looks very much as it did during its pre-World War I opening. Mayor Kissner says the city is very sensitive to preserving as much historical character of the community as possible. The city has designated a portion of its Holgate Avenue neighborhood as a historic district, and some Defiance homes are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Mayor Kissner, a 30-year resident of Defiance who will leave office after serving eight years, adds that the city government uses "Standards for Architecture for Historic Preservation" as a guide for local property owners and contractors. Defiance has no ordinances that mandate preservation. Kissner explains, "it is very hard to legislate to demand that people do things with private property so long as it is not dangerous or detrimental."

The entire project involved many participants and observers, among them Staff Sgt. Ralph Hutchinson, a retired local truck driver who served in the Defiance National Guard unit for more than 30 years. The brown brick building became his military home in 1948 when he joined the unit following World War II service as an Army draftee, until his retirement in 1986. Hutchinson is an old-fashioned Guardsman who good-naturedly grumbles that in a modern Guard unit, "you can't call it summer camp anymore. It's 'annual training'." He can recount the long list of contributions that the Defiance unit made to the nation, state, and community, including local duty in response to numerous floods and snowstorms, plus helping residents of downstate Xenia following the 1974 killer tornado.

During the renovations, Hutchinson kept his eye on a bronze plaque in the front foyer of the building, a tablet that serves as the military cornerstone. Workers removed the plaque early in the project so that it would not be damaged. Fearing something worse, Hutchinson assigned himself the mission of guarding the metal rectangle. He took it home, later arranged for a local machine shop to clean the letters, and assisted local officials with reinstalling the plaque so that all would know the National Guard was there in the beginning.

This small commercial kitchen was installed in the lower level of the armory to support the Head Start meals program.

Basketball has been a staple of National Guard armory drill halls since the invention of the game. Inside the renovated Defiance armory, children enrolled in various youth programs enjoy the safety and convenience of intramural play.

A summer months arts and craft program for Defiance youngsters is one of several family oriented activities now headquartered inside the former National Guard armory.

Of his nearly four decades of service, Hutchinson, who last performed duties as a squad leader, modestly says, "I just wanted to be there." Of the armory, he has a similar and direct assessment of its value to the community, first as National Guard property and now as a Family Resource Center. "It's one of the best buildings around . . . they took good care of it."

Former Adjutant General Advises: Strategic Approach First, Passion Second

Advice from someone who has been there: Set passion aside. Concentrate on taking a strategic or tactical approach when making plans to purchase and reutilize a former National Guard armory.

That is the recommendation from Maj. Gen. Richard C. Alexander, the retired former adjutant general of the Ohio National Guard who now serves as the executive director of the Washington, D.C. –based National Guard Association. Alexander was at the helm of the Buckeye State's National Guard in the early 1990s when he and his staff coped with closing more than 20 military properties.

Alexander understands the value of "passion" when generating support for an armory reutilization plan and why a new owner should retain as much of an armory's historical character as possible. However, he first advises that careful attention be paid to the difficulty and complexity of the process.

The maple floor of the Defiance, Ohio, drill hall was retained as part of the interior renovation. New walls, fresh paint and new lighting make the space useful for a variety of youth and civic functions.

"There's an insatiable need for community service," Alexander states, of the natural second life for a National Guard armory. He recommends that a local protocol be established to evaluate how best to use a former armory. In order, the needs of the city, county, state, and, finally, private interests, should be examined. With community needs identified, those interested in saving an old armory can tackle the challenge of raising the necessary money.

To further aid local groups planning an armory acquisition, Alexander advises them to explore all funding sources. "It takes lots of research to find funding from foundations and other sources," he acknowledges, further recommending that graduate students could be enlisted in the search and grant-writing process. State lawmakers also can help, especially if special legislation is necessary to establish a purchase price or other conditions of sale.

In each state, the National Guard typically carries a large backlog of construction or maintenance projects for its armories. Officials charged with managing these budgets anticipate that proceeds from the sale of an old armory can be used to offset their current needs, usually for fundamental expenditures like roof repair or heating upgrades for buildings that remain in daily military use. Solutions to these potential stalemates—the National Guard must sell the buildings for a fair price, but local groups lack the means to raise the money—may require legislative assistance. In Ohio, the state legislature authorized the creation of a rebate fund that struck a balance between the National Guard's need to recover equity and a community's inability to pay market value. Communities got state help in meeting a big portion of the purchase price. The Ohio National Guard, in turn, received money for its facilities repair budget.

Alexander, who served a wide series of unit assignments before becoming adjutant in 1987, reserves equal intensity for preserving structures and the spirit of their National Guard occupants once the details of finance and remodeling are under control. "Those who want the building should appreciate the fact that it should maintain a link to the past," he states. Symbolically, that might be something as obvious as "polishing the brass" or other careful stewardship of artifacts and architectural features that remain with a former armory. Less obvious, but equally important, Alexander emphasizes that new occupants must fully appreciate the role played by the National Guard in that community. By preserving the armory, they are sustaining a "continuous link to history."

Each Armory Project Presents Unique Challenges

To mark the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Concord, noted American sculptor Daniel Chester French created this statue of a minuteman in tribute to the citizen-soldiers who fought in the Revolutionary War.

These case studies, also drawn from geographically diverse regions of the country, briefly present examples of success, as well as stories about cities that face considerable challenges. Two of the summaries highlight the need for special efforts to preserve the National Guard's large regimental armories, including the 7th Regiment in New York City and the Cranston Street Armory in Providence, R.I. Because of their architectural grandeur, these armories represent some of the finest examples of armory architecture in the United States. Because of their size, they are far more difficult to maintain and consequently, far more difficult to convert into new, viable uses.

Office Condominium
Medford, Massachusetts

When Brig. Gen. Samuel Crocker Lawrence wanted an armory for the National Guard unit he organized and commanded, the eponymous Lawrence Light Guards, he was rich enough to build the $250,000 structure himself. Construction was completed in 1905 on the armory that included a 150-foot by 75-foot drill shed, with seating for 3,000.

Upon his death, Lawrence's will left the building to the Massachusetts National Guard, with the proviso that if the Guard moved out, the armory would revert to the Grand Masonic Lodge of Massachusetts. In 1973 the Guard left, and two years later the Masons moved in. The Masons put the armory on the National Register, but the building proved to be more than they needed or could afford.

In the early 1980s, a consultant advised them to tear down the drill shed and restore the decayed front offices.

The armory was facing demolition when Masonic lodge member Tony Sulfaro decided it was "too magnificent to tear down." Sulfaro wanted to turn the building into a medical and legal office condominium complex, but the $1.2 million price tag was daunting—until he realized that adding a second floor to the inside of the drill shed would net an additional 22,000 square feet of space. When the feasibility of his idea was confirmed by his architect, Bernard J. Goba, AIA, Sulfaro put up everything he owned to secure a loan, and then he purchased the building.

With no money left, his wife and children pitched in, and the family began to restore the interior of the building themselves. When prospective purchasers saw the first two rehabbed offices (one with a floor-to-ceiling fireplace carved with muskets, pikes, and other symbols of the building's military past), sales took off. Tony Sulfaro renamed the armory the Marcus Fonzi Professional Building after a nephew who died in a tragic accident, and in 1984 the new owners began to move in.

During the renovation, Sulfaro had contacted the State Historic Preservation Officer, who visited the building while work was in progress. With interior woodwork and granite columns intact, the building remained on the National Register after its restoration. Some of the individual

In the early 1900s, the commander of a Massachusetts National Guard unit used his own money to build this armory in Medford. Today, the former armory is a professional office building and holds a place on the National Register of Historic Places.

office purchasers got rehabilitation tax credits. Tony Sulfaro got a penthouse office for the A. J. Sulfaro Development Corporation (he kept the top floor of the drill shed for himself) and the satisfaction of saving a magnificent historic building.

Senior Citizen Apartment Complex
Washington, North Carolina

In 1976, when the National Guard moved out of its 1936 Works Progress Administration (WPA) armory in the old river port of Washington, N.C., the triple wall, hard-fired brick building reverted to the city. For 17 years the armory drill shed served as a garage for maintenance vehicles, as water leaked in from a badly repaired roof.

In 1993, developers Tom Howard and Larry Boyd bought the building for $35,000. "Nobody else wanted it," said Howard of the sealed-bid auction for the structure that he described as "constructed like a fortress." The men correctly guessed their Landmark Properties, Inc., had made the only bid. Before the purchase, Howard and Boyd had commissioned a feasibility study for turning the armory into apartments for senior citizens. After putting on a new roof and repairing the damage caused by the leaking of the old one, the job of turning the armory into 18 apartments began.

To take advantage of one side of the building's highly desirable view of the upper reaches of Pamlico Sound, Howard and Boyd's architectural plan had filled the armory's original door entrance with glass panels that provided windows for four apartments. Knowing that this would create a problem when applying for a rehabilitation tax credit, they hired a preservation consultant to help with the paperwork. In the end, despite such touches as reuse of the armory windows' original iron bars in a specially designed fence, the building was deemed ineligible for the tax credit.

Nevertheless, this adaptive reuse is a preservation success story for the long-time home of the North Carolina Army National Guard's 213th Military Police Company. Because Howard and Boyd found a new use for a WPA armory, a building that is itself a survivor of the Great Depression of the 1930s is now home to some of the very people who lived through that important era.

A building contractor and a real estate appraiser from Washington, N.C., bought the armory from the city with a sealed bid. They spent three years remodeling the interior of the structure into an 18-unit apartment complex. The 1- and 2-bedroom apartments range in size from 700 square feet to 1,050 square feet, some built on two levels.

7th Regiment's Showcase
New York, New York

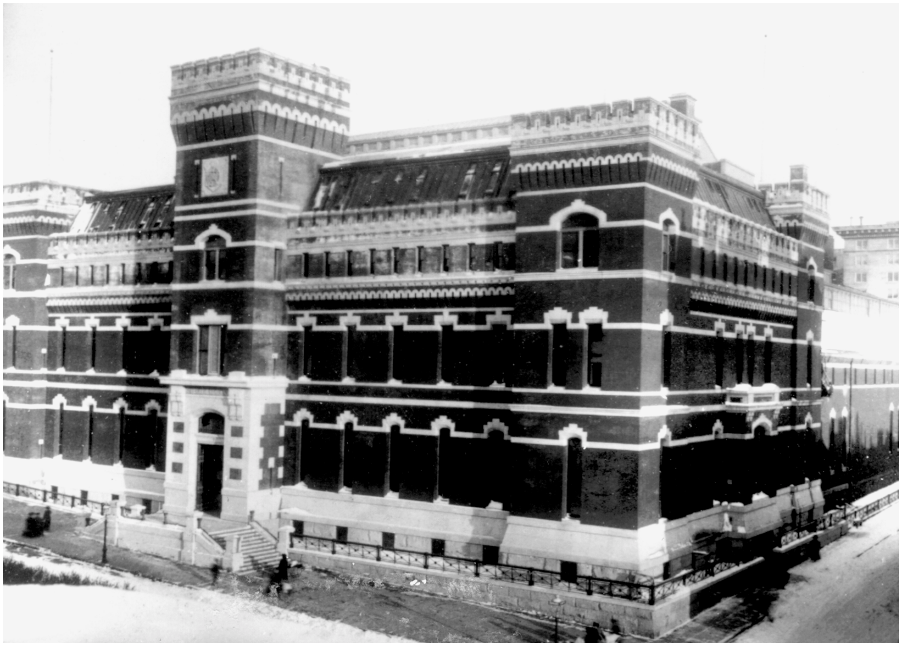
Any discussion of the history of National Guard armories must include the home of New York City's 7th Regiment, with its Park Avenue address and Central Park views. This lavish and ornate building, its interior designed by famed architect Stanford White to incorporate ceilings by Louis Comfort Tiffany, kicked off the first great wave of armory construction in the last quarter of the 19th century. The 7th Regiment's massive headquarters ensured the dominance of the castellated Gothic style in armory construction for decades to come.

In 1863, as thousands of Irish immigrants protested being drafted into the Union Army, the 7th Regiment found itself in the middle of the bloodiest urban rioting this country has ever seen. Members of the regiment vowed that if riots broke out again, they would have a defensive base from which to conduct operations. The states were not yet in the business of armory construction, so the 7th Regiment, which included the city's most socially prominent and wealthy men, commissioned their own fortress.

Architect Charles W. Clinton, himself a member of the Regiment, designed a stone building that filled a city block and cost $589,000, a staggering sum for the time. Money came from a complex tangle of personal donations, bonds, fund-raising events, and finally the state government.

Clinton's design incorporated turrets, towers, and impregnable stone walls. In addition to offices, storage areas, and firing ranges, the building contained elaborately decorated ceremonial rooms. The enormous drill shed with balconies for spectators was large enough for an entire regiment to parade, or for hundreds of New York's wealthy elite to waltz and promenade.

The armory created a sensation when it opened in 1879, and every unit and city wanted its own urban fortress in the new Gothic style. Some wealthy units built their own armories; states and cities passed bond issues to finance armory construction; and by 1910, the wealthy industrial states of the Northeast and Midwest were dotted with brick and stone castles of various sizes.



New York's 7th Regiment armory established a distinctive architecture standard in 1879, when it opened to house not only a National Guard unit, but social and civic events for the city's elite. This photo from 1910, shows the Park Avenue structure shortly after its original tower had been removed and two more floors of office space added to its immense size. The armory, listed on the National Register, remains in service for the National Guard and civic events.

Architect Charles Clinton, a member of the 7th Regiment, drew the plans for the unit's armory building that cost nearly $600,000 to construct. This photo, taken in the 1970s, shows the interior Veterans' Room, one of the ornate meeting places designed by architect Stanford White and furnished by Louis C. Tiffany, both members of the 7th Regiment.

STILL SERVING

Today, the 7th Regiment Armory has fallen on hard times. Its massive drill shed still shelters the wealthy and social elite during events such as the Winter Antiques Show, but a 1998 front-page article in the *New York Times* detailed the sad deterioration of the armory's spectacular interior. Recent state budgets for armory maintenance do not encompass the care and upkeep of Tiffany glass and gold leaf. To further complicate the picture, the armory's $10 million collection of original paintings and decorative art, which includes some of the nation's finest Civil War canvases, is caught up in a complex ownership dispute. The state and the group that claims to have inherited the art from the 7th Regiment's National Guard successor unit are a long way from resolving their differences.

Some state officials have suggested turning the building over to a private developer who would renovate and restore it for new uses. But before that can happen, the legal questions that are the heritage of the armory's tangle of original funding in the l870s must be resolved. The Municipal Art Society, the 7th Regiment Fund, Veterans of the 7th Regiment Armory, and the Friends of the 7th Regiment have joined forces to propose a consolidated effort to pool resources and put the armory on a solid maintenance and operational footing.

Cranston Street Armory
Providence, Rhode Island

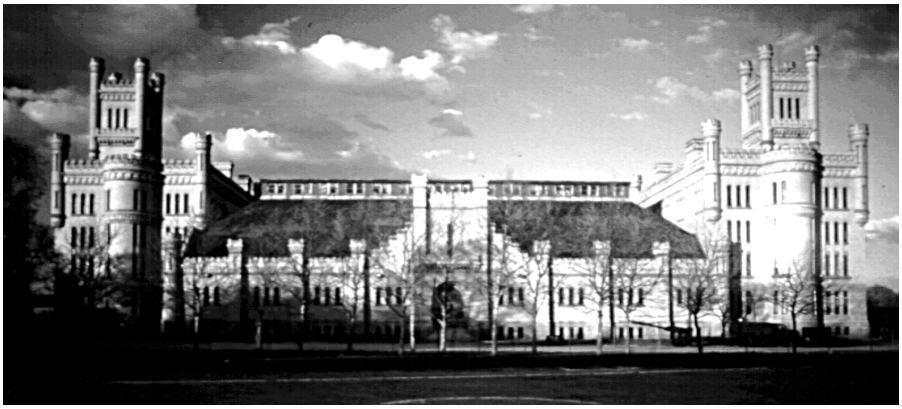
Inclusion in the National Trust's list of "America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places" in 1997, plus three consecutive years on a similar roster maintained by the Providence Preservation Society have helped raise interest in saving the Cranston Street Armory. Developing a suitable plan and raising enough money to save the building remain as formidable barriers to long term reuse of the 90-year-old landmark.

This telephoto view of Providence, Rhode Island's Cranston Street Armory emphasizes how it dominates the surrounding residential neighborhood. While architecturally grand, the immense size of this building makes it an especially challenging candidate for reutilization.

Currently, a Rhode Island native has been negotiating with state officials to turn the stone, brick, and frame structure into a massive sound stage and training facility for film and television productions. The filmmaker has received several lease extensions from the state Department of Administration, while he attempts to secure enough financial backing to execute an estimated $6 million to $10 million in repairs and renovations. In addition to the current lease tenant, two other film companies have leased space in the armory from the state to complete work on productions. Several other proposals to transition the facility from armory to movie soundstage have been presented. Still another developer has proposed using the drill hall floor as a "motorcar museum" to showcase antique cars. This venture includes using the remainder of the armory to house various civic and private organizations, among them the Providence Police Department.

The five-story, castle-like building was designed by the firm William R. Walker and Son in the late 19th century to house the Rhode Island National Guard's 103rd Field Artillery Brigade. Since its completion, the Cranston Street Armory has been the only home to Rhode Island National Guard artillery units. Their imprint on the building is pronounced, as two granite cannon barrels flank both major entrances. In the decades that followed, the 165,300-square-foot facility in the Westend section of Providence has been the site of countless political functions, sporting events, circuses, and inaugural balls.

Among the most impressive aspects of the structure are the roof battlements, turrets, and balconies that dominate the skyline. The roof battlements of the east and west towers are capped with copper parapet lining. Turrets are capped, roofed, and lined entirely with copper. In addition to five-story circular wooden stairways for the



STILL SERVING

Designed by the firm William R. Walker and Son, the Rhode Island National Guard's Cranston Street Armory provided a striking exterior vista, along with 165,300 square feet of space for the states artillery units. The National Guard moved from the building in 1996, and now the Providence structure awaits some type of suitable reutilization. It was included in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in 1997.

towers, the balconies that line the drill shed floor are the most dominating interior features. Constructed primarily of oak, these theater-like balconies feature intricately carved seats and ornate iron railings.

The Army National Guard withdrew from the building in the fall of 1996, primarily for safety and financial reasons. According to Maj. Gen. Reginald Centracchio, the adjutant general of the Rhode Island National Guard, parts of the facility "represented a serious hazard for our personnel. Additionally, our facilities maintenance budget could not support the $60,000 to $100,000 per year required to both repair and heat the armory."

Centracchio adds, however, that leaving the armory was not an easy decision. "The Cranston Street Armory has been the only home to our artillery units. At one point or another, all Rhode Island artillery officers and enlisted men labored in this building to prepare for war. The Cranston Street Armory's impact on the Rhode Island National Guard is impossible to quantify and will not diminish with its closing."

Meanwhile, the building remains vulnerable to faster decline. Windows have been broken, and a January 1999 flooding accident caused by roof deterioration resulted in minor interior damage. Citizens involved in the West Broadway Neighborhood Association are worried about the declining appearance of the exterior as well as the threat of a major incident such as a fire.

Deadwood Pavillion
Deadwood, South Dakota

In a small Black Hills community that now gives careful attention to preserving and promoting its history, an armory that last housed a detachment of National Guard engineers has become the Deadwood Pavilion.

The city government's share of profits from low-stakes casino gambling has fueled a massive overhaul of Deadwood's historic structures and formerly fragile infrastructure. In the years since 1989, when legalized gambling first started to revive the city's historic Main Street district, much attention was focused on rehabilitating commercial structures and municipal support systems. More than $40 million has been spent on a decade's worth of projects, such as repaving Main Street with brick and transforming the Fremont Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad station and later fire department into a Visitors' Center. City officials anticipate they will continue to receive money for historic preservation at a rate of $5 million to $6 million per year. An additional estimated $75 million in private money has been spent on commercial property that must conform to the city's robust preservation standards.

During the first decade of gambling's return to the county seat community of 1,850, the National Guard's former armory continued in service with little fanfare as a junior high school gymnasium. The South Dakota National Guard had transferred ownership of the armory to the Lead-Deadwood School District in the fall of 1987, when the Guard closed the Deadwood unit and moved its members and equipment to a nearby community.

By the late 1990s, with gambling revenue firmly part of the local economy and much work done throughout the community, attention turned to renovation of the armory. Deadwood Festivals, Inc., a local non-profit group that takes much of its membership from the rolls of the Chamber of Commerce, joined forces with the Lead-Deadwood School District and received a $150,000 loan from the Deadwood Historic Preservation Commission to remodel the armory. The funds, along with $23,000 from the Chamber and School District, have paid for upgrades to electrical, plumbing, and public address systems. Stackable chairs and bleachers were purchased, and the building was made compliant with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

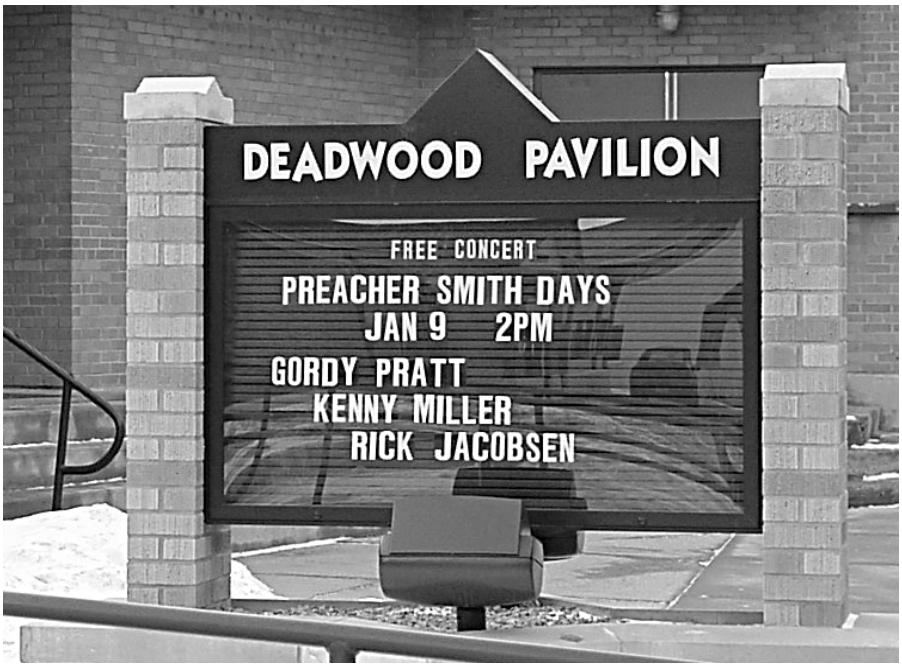
STILL SERVING

Today the re-named Deadwood Pavilion reflects the interest of local civic boosters who see the structure as home for theatrical productions, community concerts, and other civic events. During the Pavilion's 1998 inaugural holiday season, the Fabulous Christmas Follies played to big crowds with a comedy and musical review. In addition to management of the Deadwood Pavilion, the festival organization has sponsored other outdoor big-name concerts and plans to present historically relevant theatrical productions from the stage of the former military/school property.

Revenue from the events is channeled back to the Deadwood Historic Preservation Commission to repay the remodeling loan. In late 1999, Deadwood Festival officials and the Preservation Commission were still working on details of the repayment schedule.

The Deadwood armory was built in 1956 for $240,000. Under the formula established by federal law in 1948, the National Guard put up 75 percent of the construction costs using federal funds. The Guard joined forces with the school district, using local funds for the remaining 25 percent, to construct a 100-foot by 97-foot, gable-roofed, no-nonsense facility that was reflective of post World War II armory design. The building served first as home for an artillery battery and then small units of the 109th Engineer Battalion. In nearby Lead ("Leed"), a similar armory was built in 1959, for Company A of the 109th Battalion. The unit closed in 1991. The former Lead armory now houses a day care center.

In Deadwood, S.D., the school district and local non-profit civic organization share ownership of the former National Guard armory, renamed the Deadwood Pavilion. The 1956 brick armory is home to a range of theatrical productions, concerts, and civic events. Profits from the city's low-stakes casino gambling industry have supported more than $40 million in historic preservation and infrastructure projects throughout the community since 1989.



Citizens of Deadwood, S.D., have turned the city's former National Guard armory into a public pavilion that now hosts a range of musical performances and other events. The 1950's vintage armory is jointly owned and operated by the city and school district.

Appendices

The National Historic Preservation Act

|Appendix A

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 16 U.S.C. §§ 470a to 470w-6, (NHPA), amended in 1980, and again in 1992, is the key federal law that establishes a federal policy for the preservation of cultural and historic resources in the United States. The law creates a national preservation program and a system of procedural protections, which encourage both the identification and protection of historic resources at the federal level, and indirectly, at the state and local level.

The functions of the NHPA are threefold:

(1) It authorizes the expansion and maintenance of the National Register of Historic Places, the official listing of "districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture."

(2) It establishes a protective review process, known as the "Section 106 review process," to ensure that federal agencies consider the effects of federally licensed, assisted, regulated, or funded activities on historic properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register.

(3) It requires federal agencies to locate, inventory, and nominate properties to the National Register, assume responsibility for preserving historic properties, and use historic buildings to "the maximum extent possible."

The NHPA creates a specific role for state and local governments, Native American tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations in carrying out the Act's specific directives. Each state, pursuant to the NHPA, has established a "state historic preservation office" or SHPO that is responsible for identifying and nominating properties for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and working with federal agencies in implementing the Section 106 review process. SHPOs are also responsible for administering a federal assistance program for historic preservation projects and certifying local governments who wish to assume specific responsibilities under the NHPA, such as nominating properties for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

The NHPA establishes a Historic Preservation Fund in the U.S. Treasury. Money from this fund is made available to the states through annual appropriations by Congress. Up to 10 percent of a state's allocation may be transferred to "certified local governments."

The Section 106 review process is the regulatory heart of the NHPA. Codified at 16 U.S.C. § 470f, Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic resources before funding, licensing, or otherwise proceeding with projects that may affect historic resources listed in, or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The kinds of actions requiring Section 106 review are broad and inclusive and may affect historic resources directly or indirectly. For example, a federal agency may be required to perform a Section 106 review before approving funds to build a new convention center near a historic district. While a federal agency may delegate certain Section 106 responsibilities to a state or local government, the federal agency is ultimately responsible and may be held legally accountable for Section 106 compliance.

The statutory provision establishing the Section 106 review process is relatively succinct. It states:

> The head of any Federal agency having direct or indirect jurisdiction over a proposed Federal or federally assisted undertaking in any State and the head of any Federal department or independent agency having authority to license any undertaking shall, prior to the approval of the expenditure of any Federal funds on the undertaking or prior to the issuance of any license, as the case may be, take into account the effect of the undertaking on any district, site, building, structure, or object that is included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The head of such Federal agency shall afford the Advisory Council of Historic Preservation established under §§ 470i – 470v of this title a reasonable opportunity to comment with regard to such undertaking.

This provision, in effect, directs federal agencies to determine whether any properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register will be adversely affected by proposed "undertakings," and if so, provides the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, an independent federal agency, with an opportunity to comment. The Section 106 review process may encompass the identification of protected resources, determinations as to adverse effects, and consultation with the appropriate state historic preservation officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation about ways to avoid or reduce those effects. In the vast majority of cases, a legally binding Memorandum of Agreement is executed by the consulting parties, setting forth specific protective measures that must be taken.

Regulations implementing Section 106 have been promulgated by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. These regulations set forth the specific procedures that federal agencies must follow to satisfy the requirements of Section 106. The regulations are published at 36 C.F.R. Part 800 and are available on the Advisory Council's web site at www.achp.gov.

Pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act, the Army National Guard has designated a Federal Preservation Officer:

Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Army
(Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health)
110 Army Pentagon, Room 2E577
Washington, DC 20310-0110

Staff Contact:

Cultural Resources Program Manager
Army National Guard, National Guard Bureau
Attn: NGB-ARE-C
111 S. George Mason Drive
Arlington, VA 22204-1382

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Army National Guard Liaison:

Michelle Heller
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Old Post Office Building
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 809
Washington, DC 20004
Telephone: 202-606-8522

Other Federal Statutes Governing Historic Resources

In addition to the National Historic Preservation Act, two other statutes provide protection for historic resources against potentially harmful federal actions: the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347, and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, 49 U.S.C. § 303. NEPA governs federal agency actions affecting cultural as well as natural resources, including properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as those listed on state or local historic registers. While NEPA does not insist on preservation in every situation, it requires federal agencies to give full consideration to the potential impact of major actions on historic property. Each agency must prepare an "Environmental Impact Statement," or EIS, whenever major federal actions will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The EIS must identify the historic resources that may be affected by the proposed action and then discuss alternatives to the proposed action that would avoid or mitigate the adverse affects. Regulations implementing NEPA are set forth at 40 C.F.R. Part 1500.

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act provides substantive protection for historic properties against federal actions taken by the Department of Transportation. It prohibits the federal approval or funding of transportation projects that require the "use" of any historic site *unless* (1) there is "no feasible and prudent alternative to the project," and (2) the project includes "all possible planning to minimize harm to the project." The term "use" includes not only the direct physical taking of property, but also indirect effects that would "substantially impair" the value of protected sites. For example, the effect of a proposed highway on the economic vitality of a nearby historic neighborhood that would isolate the district from nearby commercial activity would require assessment under Section 4(f).

Section 4(f) applies to all transportation agencies within the U.S. Department of Transportation, including the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the U.S. Coast Guard. Implementing regulations are set forth at 23 C.F.R. § 771.135.

The National Register of Historic Places

|Appendix B

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of historic and cultural resources at the national level and serves as the primary resource for significant historical, architectural, and archaeological resources in the United States. Established under the Historic Sites Act of 1935, 16 U.S.C. §§ 461 *et seq*., and expanded by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, 16 U.S.C. §§ 470 *et seq*., the Register includes districts, sites, buildings, structures, and other objects important in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register includes more than 70,000 listings, including individual sites and historic districts.

Thus far, approximately 200 armories have been individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The list is not definitive and the fact that a property has not been included on the Register does not mean that it is not eligible for listing. Indeed, the number of armories included on the Register is likely to grow as historic preservation offices begin to focus on the inventory of historic armories within their jurisdictions. Several of the armories currently listed on the National Register, particularly from those from Pennsylvania and New York, are the result of efforts undertaken by state preservation offices to identify and nominate historic armories within their states.

The National Register is administered by the National Park Service under the U.S. Department of the Interior. Criteria and procedures governing the National Register are set forth at 36 C.F.R. Part 60. The Park Service's "Keeper of the National Register" is responsible for listings and determinations of eligibility for listing in the National Register, although the designation process usually begins at the state level with nominations by the State Historic Preservation Office.

The National Register's principal purpose is to identify historical and cultural resources of our nation. Indeed, listing on the National Register is essentially honorific, meaning that it does not impose substantive restraints on how a private property owner may use his or her property. National Register listings simply confer recognition that a property is significant to the country as a whole, a state, or a local community.

The National Register also serves as the primary planning tool for federal agencies in meeting their legal responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act. The National Register is used by agencies in meeting their stewardship responsibilities under Section 110 of the act, 16 U.S.C. § 470h, and can invoke the procedural safeguards of Section 106 for federal or federally approved projects, 16 U.S.C. § 470f. This provision directs federal agencies to consider the effects of their activities on properties that are listed or are eligible for listing on the National Register. Mitigation of potentially adverse effects is achieved through consultation with State Historic Preservation Officers and other affected parties.

Often the National Register is used by state and local governments as a tool for identifying historic resources within their own jurisdictions. In some localities, National Register listing may trigger review under state and local historic preservation laws. In most instances, however, the Register simply highlights properties for possible inclusion on state or local registers.

National Register listings may be beneficial to private property owners interested in obtaining favorable tax benefits, such as the 20 percent income tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic property. *See* I.R.C. § 48(g). It may also help property owners to qualify for a charitable tax deduction for the donation of a partial interest in historically important land areas or structures, known as a preservation or façade easement. *See* I.R.C. § 170(h). National Register listing may trigger benefits under state and local historic rehabilitation tax incentive programs as well.

For more information on the National Register of Historic Places, contact the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240. Telephone: 202-343-9536. The National Park Service maintains a web site on the National Register at www.cr.nps.gov/nr.

State and Local Registers Compared

Many states maintain their own registers of historic places, which may be more or less inclusive than the National Register of Historic Places. As with the National Register, listing on a state register tends to be honorific. In some states, however, inclusion on a state register may trigger regulatory protection or govern whether a property owner may qualify for favorable tax treatment.

Properties may also be designated as individual landmarks or as contributing structures within a historic district pursuant to a local historic preservation ordinance. Unlike listing on the National Register, designation under a local ordinance often affects a property owner's ability to change his or her property in ways that would harm the resource's historic or architectural character. Properties designated under local ordinances may be eligible for tax benefits including reductions in local property taxes.

Tax Incentives and Other Financial Assistance Programs | Appendix C

Tax incentive programs in effect at the federal, state, and sometimes, local level, provide an important source of financial support for historic rehabilitations, including those undertaken to adapt historic armories to new uses. These programs are generally structured so that a portion of rehabilitation expenditures may be recouped in the form of a dollar for dollar credit against income taxes. Rehabilitations undertaken pursuant to these programs generally must comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. *These standards appear at the end of this appendix.*

The donation of a preservation or conservation easement may also provide important tax savings that contribute to the viability of a particular project. Preservation easements are partial restrictions on property that typically are used to preserve the exterior facades of historic buildings.

While direct funding for historic rehabilitation is extremely limited, money may be available for feasibility planning or small projects. The State Historic Preservation Office is a good place to start to determine what programs are available.

Historic Rehabilitation

The most widely known incentive to preserve historic properties is the federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit. This incentive gives property owners either a 10 percent or 20 percent tax credit on rehabilitation expenses, depending upon the classification of the building at issue. "Certified historic structures" (residential investment and commercial property) are eligible for a 20 percent credit while noncertified, nonresidential property placed in service before 1936 may be eligible for a 10 percent credit. I.R.C. §§ 46(b); 48(g).

Several specific conditions must be satisfied to qualify for the credit. In addition to being historic, the building must be income producing and placed in service before the beginning of the rehabilitation. Most importantly, the building must be "substantially rehabilitated," and the rehabilitation must be a "qualified rehabilitation." In other words, rehabilitation costs must exceed the adjusted basis of the building or $5,000, and the work performed must meet certain preservation standards.

A rehabilitation tax credit may not be taken until the Secretary of the Interior has certified that the building at issue is historic and the rehabilitation has been performed in accordance with the Secretary's *Standards for Rehabilitation*. Certifications of historical significance and rehabilitation work are obtained from the National Park Service, upon review by the appropriate State Historic Preservation Office. Regulations governing the certification process are set forth at 36 C.F.R. Part 67.

Many state governments provide special incentives to encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic properties, typically in the form of property and/or income tax relief. As with federal income tax incentives, relief is generally available only to owners of qualified historic properties making qualified rehabilitations. Indeed, many of the state programs "piggy back" on the federal rehabilitation tax program. Property tax relief may be provided in the form of a property assessment freeze, a property tax abatement, or a property tax exemption.

Tax incentive programs are typically administered at the state level by the State Historic Preservation Office. Although infrequent, local incentives may be available in the form of property tax relief as a credit from local taxes.

Preservation Easements

Under Section 170(h) of the Internal Revenue Code, historic property owners may receive a charitable tax deduction for the appraised value of a conservation or preservation easement donated to a qualifying charitable organization. This benefit can be combined with the federal rehabilitation tax credit to make a marginal project viable.

Conservation easements are partial restrictions on land for conservation purposes which may include historic preservation, scenic preservation, archeology, and so forth. The term *preservation easement* is commonly used to refer to easements on historic property. This type of easement may be used to protect the exterior facade of a building, or the entire structure and surrounding land.

The donation of a preservation easement must be documented in the form of an easement agreement that spells out the rights of the "holding organization" and must be recorded on the deed of record. To qualify for federal tax benefits, the easement must also be in perpetuity. Lists of historic preservation organizations operating easement programs are generally available from the State Historic Preservation Office.

Other Sources of Financial Support

Limited funding for rehabilitation projects may be available through the State Historic Preservation Office, certified local governments, or state or local preservation organizations. Money may also be available for historic armory projects that can qualify as a transportation "enhancement" under the Transportation Enhancement Act of the 21st Century (TEA 21).

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior defines "rehabilitation" as "the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values." Consistent with this definition, the Secretary has adopted the following standards for the rehabilitation of historic properties:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Americans with Disabilities Act

|Appendix D

The Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101-12213 (ADA), requires that all state and local government entities, as well as all commercial facilities and private businesses and nonprofit organizations providing goods and services to the public (known as public accommodations), ensure that newly constructed buildings and facilities and all altered portions of existing buildings and facilities, are readily accessible to individuals with disabilities. In addition, state and local governments must ensure that existing facilities comply with the law's mandated accessibility requirements and private property owners with buildings serving the public are required to remove barriers to access from existing buildings and facilities when it is "readily achievable" to do so. [*Note that federal buildings and federally funded facilities covered by the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 must satisfy the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards as well as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.*]

Owners of qualified historic buildings and facilities, such as historic armories, are not exempt from ADA requirements. However, ADA responsibilities may be accomplished by alternative means where compliance would threaten or destroy the historic nature of the building or facility. Qualified buildings include those that are listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as those designated under state and local law. Decisions to pursue alternative methods to meet ADA requirements must be done in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office.

With respect to historic armories, owners are advised to, first, review the historical significance of their property and identify the materials, features, and spaces that should be preserved. For most armories, the construction materials, the form and style of the property, the principal elevations, the major architectural features, and the principal public spaces should be viewed as important elements that contribute to the property's overall historical significance. Thus, when making modifications to meet accessibility requirements, efforts should be made to minimize impacts on these particular elements.

After familiarizing oneself with the property's important features, owners of historic armories will then need to assess the property's existing level of accessibility, identify where potential barriers lie, and determine what level of accessibility is required. The rules, for example, vary depending upon whether the owner is a governmental entity or not. Moreover, some states and localities have adopted additional accessibility requirements and codes.

Finally, the owner should identify and evaluate the various accessibility options, keeping in mind the armory's historical and architectural significance and that alternative solutions may be possible. The optimal solution is one that provides the greatest amount of accessibility without destroying the materials or features of the property that makes it significant. Owners are required to consult with the State Historic Preservation Office if they believe that compliance will threaten or destroy the significance of the property.

Regulations governing ADA accessibility requirements are set forth at 28 C.F.R. §§ 5.149-151 (state and local governments) and 28 C.F.R. §§ 36.401-406 (public accommodations). ADA Standards for Accessible Design are published as an Appendix to the regulations. Basic accessibility standards are set forth at § 4.1.6. Special standards applicable to historic properties are set forth at § 4.1.7. The regulations and standards can be found at the U.S. Department of Justice's web site at www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada. The National Park Service has also published two Preservation Briefs that may be helpful in meeting ADA requirements. *See Preservation Brief No. 17*, "Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character," and *Preservation Brief No. 32*, "Making Historic Buildings or Facilities Accessible." These are located on the National Park's web site at www2.cr.nps.gov/TPS/briefs.

Architectural Styles of Historic Armories

|Appendix E

Pre-Civil War

No single architectural style can be associated with pre-Civil War armories. While a few armory buildings assumed the appearance of a medieval castle or fortress, many were designed with classical Greek elements found on commercial structures of the day. The Romanesque, Italianate, and French Second Empire styles were also popular during this period.

Post-Civil War

Gradually the architectural style of armories became more uniform. From approximately 1880 to 1910, many armories were built in a "castellated" Gothic Revival style suggestive of the building's military function. Armories of this period often donned castle-like features such as towers, turrets, and crenellated parapets or battlements. The walls were typically thick, constructed of heavy stone or brick, reminiscent of European architecture during the Middle Ages. A variation of this style, known as "Richardsonian Romanesque," also became popular during this period. Armories built in this style typically have roughly finished or rusticated lower levels, with large, round arches and accentuated doorways.

Throughout this period, armories became a source of pride for communities, particularly in the wealthier cities of the East and Midwest. Armories serving an entire regiment, known as "regimental armories," could readily be called the gems of the day. These exceptionally grand, imposing edifices were designed by architectural firms such as Holabird and Roche, and well known state architects, such as Isaac G. Perry, who also designed New York's state capitol building.

20th Century

In the early years of the 20th century, the architectural styles of armories once again became more varied. Armories designed in the castellated style were far more restrained in appearance, and a number were built in the popular Beaux Arts style. In the West, where armory construction generally lagged behind, National Guard units were housed in commercial facilities or modest, functional buildings with architectural detailing borrowed from styles ranging from Medieval Gothic to Italianate to Spanish or Mission Revival.

After World War I, modernistic designs began to replace the elaborate styles favored during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Armories of this period were typically built in the art deco style of the 1920s or the popular art moderne style of the 1930s and 1940s, giving the buildings a decidedly less military appearance. In stark contrast to the castellated armories, these buildings were more modest in design, embellished with simple cast concrete details such as squares, crosses or an eagle. While the art deco armories continued to emphasize height over width, often through the use of a stepped parapet and vertical fluting, the art moderne buildings were decidedly horizontal, with simple banding and rounded corners. Many of these armories were built in the South and the West by the PWA (Public Works Administration) and the WPA (Works Progress Administration) under President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal program.

The Adjutants General of the National Guard

|Appendix F

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|Appendix G

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www.state.me.us

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Fax: 410-514-7678
www.ari.net/mdshpo

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Fax: 617-727-5128
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www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc

Michigan
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Lansing, MI 48918
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www.sos.state.mi.us/history/
preserve/preserve.html

Micronesia, Federal States of

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FSM includes four states, whose HPOs are listed below:

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www.commerce.state.wy.us/cr/shpo

Suggested Reading/References

|Appendix H

Beaumont, Constance A. *Smart States, Better Communities: How State Governments Can Help Citizens Preserve Their Communities*. Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1996.

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Fogelson, Robert M. *America's Armories: Architecture, Society, and Public Order*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Hill, Jim Dan. *The Minute Man in Peace and War: A History of the National Guard*. Harrisburg, Pa., 1963.

Miller, Julia H. *A Layperson's Guide to Historic Preservation Law. Washington, D.C.:* National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1998.

National Park Service Publications. The National Park Service issues a wide range of publications relating to the identification and rehabilitation of historic properties, including *National Register Bulletins*, *Preservation Briefs*, *Technical Reports*, and *Preservation Tech Notes*. The Park Service's bookstore may be accessed on line at www2.cr.nps.gov/bookstore.htm.

Rypkema, Donovan D. *The Economics of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader's Guide*. Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1994.

Tyler, Norman. *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to its History, Principles, and Practice*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2000.

Helpful Contacts

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Phone: 706-542-4731

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Web site: www.ncptt.nps.gov

National Guard Bureau Historical Services

1411 Jefferson Davis Highway,
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Arlington, VA 22202-3259
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National Conference of State Legislatures

(State Historic Preservation Offices)
444 North Capitol Street, NW
Suite 515
Washington, DC 20001
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Web site: www.ncsl.org

Click on Policy Issues, then choose Art and Culture from the drop-down menu to reach the Arts and Historic Preservation section.

National Conference of State Historic Preservation Offices

444 N. Capitol St., NW
Suite 342
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Website: www.sso.org/ncshpo

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Room NC400
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
Phone: 202-343-9536
Web site: www.cr.nps.gov/nr

Heritage Preservation Services
Room NC200
800 N. Capitol Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
Phone: 202- 343-9573
Web site: www2.cr.nps.gov/

National Trust for Historic Preservation

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Washington, DC 20036
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U.S. Army Center of Military History

103 Third Avenue
Fort McNair, DC 20319-5058
http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/default.htm

U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division
Disability Rights Section
Americans With Disabilities Act
P.O. Box 66738
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