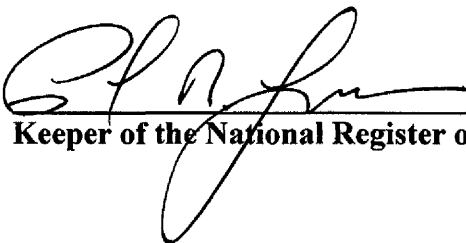




# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

The attached property, the Merwinsville Hotel, in Litchfield County, Connecticut, reference number 77001398, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper of the National Register on 08/29/1977, as evidenced by FEDERAL REGISTER/WEEKLY LIST notice of Tuesday, February 6, 1979, Part II, Vol. 44, No. 26, page 7441. The attached nomination form is a copy of the original documentation provided to the Keeper at the time of listing.

  
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

2/12/2009  
Date

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
Merwinsville Hotel  
AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
Brown's Forge Road

CITY, TOWN  
w Milford, Gaylordsville  
STATE  
Connecticut  
VICINITY OF  
Sixth  
COUNTY  
Litchfield  
CODE  
09  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
005

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: vacant

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Merwinsville Hotel Restoration, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER  
Post Office Box 159

CITY, TOWN  
Gaylordsville  
STATE  
Connecticut

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. New Milford Town Hall

STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN  
New Milford  
STATE  
Connecticut

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
Connecticut Statewide Inventory of Historic Resources

DATE  
1975  
FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS  
Connecticut Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN  
Hartford  
STATE  
Connecticut

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Merwinsville Hotel, a late Greek Revival railroad station-hotel of vernacular architectural quality, has a rural setting. A line of railroad track passes just west of the building. Originally there were two lines of track, but the line closest to the building has been removed. A narrow, winding road passes near the east side of the building.

The timber-framed structure has a 3-story main block with gable roof and two, 2-story end wings with shed roofs. The 7-bay wide main block which is rectangular in plan was surrounded by a 2-story open porch when it was erected in 1842-43. Probably around 1860 the side sections of the porch were removed and replaced by the existing wings which extend eastward to the location of the east edge of the original porch. The porches extending the lengths of the east and west facades of the main block have disappeared. Late 19th century photographs clearly show them and the current owners of the building plan to reconstruct them.

Rehabilitation of the building has been in progress since August 1971 with an emphasis on the preservation and repair of existing fabric and on structural stabilization of the building. The building's deteriorated condition in 1971 necessitated the rebuilding of the collapsed south wing, the removal of plaster, the jacking-up of the building, replacement of the east foundation wall, and considerable rebuilding in the basement. Fortunately the upper floors are in better condition and much of the original woodwork is in place.

The exterior is covered with weatherboards except for a small section where their restoration is incomplete. Most windows of the main block have 6 over 6, double-hung sash. The windows of the third story are smaller than those of the first and second stories. A tripartite window with a 6 over 6 window flanked by sidelights is found in the center by of the third story of the north and south gable-ended facades. Most exterior doors are partially glazed.

On the east facade emphasis is given the entrance by close spacing of the windows flanking the center doorways on both the first and second stories. The west facade has three second-story doors which opened on to the now-gone porch. This facade has a rather crowded arrangement due to its numerous windows and doors. Four first-story doors lead from the interior to the deck of the now-gone porch. This deck served as the station's loading platform. The building currently has two brick interior end chimneys. It earlier had four chimneys.

Most windows of the end wings are 6 over 6, double-hung sash, but the former ticket lobby located on the first floor of the south wing has 15 light windows which are horizontal in emphasis. All window trim is plain and even the boxed cornice is very simple.

The 1st floor plan of the building is flexible and functional producing easy circulation from one part to another. On either side of the central entrance halls and stairs are pairs of large rooms and rooms in the side wings. The paired rooms due to their connecting doorways can be joined to create even larger spaces. A door off each of large room communicates with a flight of stairs.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET 1

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

Merwinsville Hotel, Gaylordsville, New Milford  
7. Description

The four flights of stairs ascend to a large landing from which two flights lead to the second floor. This open well staircase surrounded by a railing and dominated by two sturdy structural columns which support the third floor above is one of the two most interesting spaces in the building. The other is the ballroom with coved ceiling. This room extends the entire length of the building on the third floor and is flanked by small rooms along its east and west sides.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1842- 43

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Merwinsvill Hotel, an unpretentious frame Greek Revival structure of vernacular quality, may be the oldest surviving station-hotel in the United States. It is a fine example of this type of railroad building which was popular before sleeping and dining cars came into general use. The building also exemplifies Yankee shrewdness since it was built privately in 1842- 43 by Sylvanus Merwin in anticipation of the construction of the railroad line. Until 1915 it served as a station for the Housatanic line.

Sylvanus Merwin on learning that a rail line was going to pass through the rural community of Gaylordsville, purchased land along the route and in 1842- 43 erected a 3-story frame hotel building. When representatives of the railroad arrived to negotiate purchase of the railroad right-of-way, Merwin refused to yield his property rights unless his hotel became a meal stop for the trains and the stop called Merwinsville. The hotel also served as the train station and Merwin as the ticket agent.

The prosperity of this venture lessened after 1877 when faster trains and pullman dining cars resulted in the railroad's termination of its meal contract. Business declined and eventually the hotel operation was terminated by Ed Hurd, Merwin's successor and son-in-law. The building continued to function as the train station until 1915 when Hurd was replaced as ticket agent and a new station erected. The stop was renamed, Gaylordsville.

In 1916 the hotel building was purchased by the Hasting family who used it as a residence for thirty years. Eventually during the ownership of Edward Dolan it was used for storage of lumber and carpentry supplies.

When Merwinsville Hotel Restoration, Inc., a local restoration group, purchased the building in 1971 it was in deteriorated condition due to neglect and to a small fire in 1970. This group is painstakingly rehabilitating the structure for use as a museum and community center.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

John D. Flynn, Gaylordsville, Connecticut, New Milford: Litch-Fair Press, 1974, pp. 62-66.

Interview with George Haase and Barbara Thorland, Oct. 14, 1976, noted in file of T. Robins Brown, Bear Mountain, NY.

"Merwinsville Hotel Restoration, Gaylordsville, Conn." pamphlet published by Merwinsville Hotel Restoration, Inc. No date or place of publication.  
See Continuation Sheet 2

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY c. 1/2 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 626880 4611480

ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

B

ZONE

EASTING

NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

T. Robins Brown Consultant in Architectural History

ORGANIZATION

Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE

November 1976

STREET & NUMBER

59 South Prospect Street

TELEPHONE

203-566-3005

CITY OR TOWN

Hartford

STATE

Connecticut

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer  
and Director, Conn. Historical Commission

DATE

March 30, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET 2

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 4

Merwinsville Hotel, Gaylordsville, Sherman, CT.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Society for Industrial Archeology Newsletter, Vol 4:1:1; 4:2:8.  
Barbara D. Thorland, "The Merwinsville Project," Lure of the Litchfield Hills, Winter 1973/ 74, p. 38.