

Plainville Campgrounds

150th Anniversary Celebration



The Plainville Campgrounds, a grouping of summer cottages, is a good example of the organized religious campgrounds of the 19th century. Every summer, from 1865 to 1957, Methodist camp meetings were held at the Campgrounds. Camp meetings were an outgrowth of 19th century evangelism and provided a morally acceptable form of recreation. Presently run by a non-denominational association of cottage owners, the Campgrounds are no longer used strictly for religious purposes. Though once a religious property, the Plainville Campgrounds derives its primary significance as a substantially intact, architecturally distinctive complex of summer cottages, grouped in a circular fashion unique to religious campgrounds.

The Campgrounds follows the traditional circular configuration of camp meetings, which originated as a circle of tents ringing a roughly-constructed preaching platform. In the Campgrounds earliest days, just after its founding in 1865, tents were pitched around a central platform which stood where the Auditorium now stands. The Auditorium constructed in 1902, is now surrounded by 19 large, 2-story cottages, built by the New Haven District churches to house their members attending the summer meetings. Along six avenues radiating from the Circle to the north are numerous, smaller, 1- and 2-story cottages. Simple frame structures, the cottages all have gable roofs and 1- or 2-story porches and are decorated with fanciful lathe-turned and jig sawn woodwork; most are sided either with vertical boards or tongue and-groove paneling.

Cottage Open House Tour

Please keep in mind that many of the historic landmarks on this tour are privately owned homes and not open to the public. Please respect the privacy of the cottage owners as you admire their homes.

No Cameras Please

Most of the cottages date from the 1880s through 1910, with a handful of structures (26 Clinton and 37 Bristol and 27 Meriden) which may date as late as 1925. Intended for summer use only, the cottages were not built to a high standard of structural integrity. Very few have been altered in any significant way, either through the removal of original fabric or the addition of incompatible modern elements.

 = Cottage Open House

1 Circle Ave

Administration Bldg



- 1903 Administration Bldg - New Haven District Camp Meeting Assn (Bedrooms & Showers)
- 1964 Plainville Camp Grounds Assn (Bedrooms & Showers)
- 1981 Rollie & Helen Austin
- 1987 John & Florence Bunt
- 1992 Bob & Pat Steinbeiser
- 2010 Dick Nadeau

9 Circle Ave

First Church
Hartford



- c. 1893-99 First Methodist Church Hartford
- 1929 East Berlin Methodist Church
- 1953 New Haven District Camp Ground Assn
- 1964 Plainville Camp Grounds Assn
- 1992 Andy & Betty Antonelle
- 2013 Ed & Dee Tousey

We purchased the cottage at the end of the 2013 season and did not move in until May at the start of the 2014 season. We love our cottage, the campgrounds and being a half hour ride from our four children, their spouses, eleven grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

11 Circle Ave

Chautauqua



- c 1893-1899 Plainville Methodist Church
- 1921 Connecticut Chautauqua Inc
- 1970 Plainville Camp Ground Assn - Arts & Crafts Bldg
- 1979 Chautauqua Bldg - Plainville Camp Ground Assn
- 1992 Fred Rich
- 1993 John Gallagher
- 1999 Robert & Karen Reed
- 2002 Ed & Norma Bacco
- 2011 Bob & Sandra Utterback

This cottage was originally named "Plainville" and served as an ice cream parlor in the 1910's. Chautauqua was an adult education movement in the US, highly popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Christian instruction, preaching and worship were a strong part of the Chautauqua experience. The lower porch railing was recently returned to the original style.

13 Circle Ave

Southington



- c. 1893 - 1899 Southington Methodist Church
- 1929 St Paul Epworth League
- 1938 New Haven District Camp Grounds Assn - Henderson Guild Store
- 1964 Epworth League
- 1974 Plainville Camp Grounds Assn - Boys Arts & Crafts Bldg
- 1992 Julie Gagliano

This cottage had previously been a carpentry shop. When we purchased the cottage it was being used as a storage shed, full of old tool, wood benches, cans of nails, old glass, etc. The transformation can be seen on the slide show in the Dining Hall today.

14 Circle Ave

Granby



- c. 1893 - 1899 Granby Methodist Church
- 1961 John & Beatrice Capen
- 1968 Plainville Camp Grounds Assn
- 1973 Henderson Guild
- 1982 Al Vincent
- 2009 Larry & Judy Gaggero
- 2014 Yvan & Joan Denoncourt

We love the environment of the Campgrounds. The friendships and friendly atmosphere. Everyone is kind and supportive and helpful. Our White House is a lovely place and was put together and built by two caring people who we feel around us every day. We feel safe and happy here and find our neighbors loving and friendly, like people we have known forever. We have joy in our hearts knowing that friendship is just outside our door. The Wednesday nite suppers and the Friday golf outings are things we intend to partake this season. There is much to do or as little as you wish without feeling guilty.

19 Circle Ave

St. Paul's Waterbury

21 Circle Ave

Bristol



- c. 1893 - 1899 St Paul's Methodist Church, Waterbury, CT
- 1960 Kenneth, Ruth, & William Clark
- 1988 Charles & Lyrel Cellar
- 1994 John & Joan Baker
- 2008 Tom & Alison O'Brien

Since 2008, we have remodeled the street side of the cottage and screened in the downstairs front porch. The cottage has three bedrooms and a large living room, and seems even more spacious and comfortable because it was *feng shui*-ed in 2014.

- c. 1893 - 1899 Bristol Methodist Church
- 1958 Ed Tassinari
- 1964 Margaret Colton & Wallace Ashe (son)
- 1966 Reverend E John & Lois Boone
- 1974 Ruth Clark & William Clark (son)
- 1986 Helen Camp & Frances Hurlburt
- 2001 Lynne Scott

The whole upstairs was gutted in ?????. We used flour on the floor to determine where the new walls should go and rebuilt the upstairs in two visits of 3 weeks each!

23 Circle Ave

Simsbury



- 1897 Simsbury Methodist Church
- 1938 New Haven District Camp Ground Assn
- 1957 Oscar & Elsie Rausch
- 1989 Art & Esther (Rausch) Pope

This cottage is one of few remaining that has not been altered (exterior and interior) since it was built in 1897. The builders left their fingerprints and autographs on the walls which can still be seen. It still has its inviting double front doors and its original tin roof. A kitchen was added to the rear in the early part of the 20th Century. Oscar Rausch, the first private owner, served for a time as President of the PCGA, and other Rausch family members were active for many years in the Forestville Bible Conference, an integral component of the grounds. Esther Rausch Pope has been spending summers at this cottage and others for over 60 years! Can we say, we love it here.

27 Circle Ave

Chapel



- c. 1893 - 1899 East Pearl St. Methodist Church, New Haven
- 1957 Plainville Camp Grounds Assn
- 1960 John M. Parker Memorial Chapel

In 1957, renovations began on the cottage formally owned by East Pearl Street Methodist Church of New Haven and on Aug 15, 1960 was dedicated as the John M. Parker Memorial Chapel. John M. Parker was a founding member of the Camp Meeting Association in 1866 and served for 40 years. The Chapel serves as the spiritual center for the Campgrounds and contains numerous memorials to past camp members. Services are held each Sunday in July & August. In 1966, Lena Taylor was designated Camp Chaplain and served until 1981. Gail Hilliard, the current Camp Chaplain, has served since 1989. The second floor serves as a meeting room.

31 Circle Ave

Middletown



- c. 1893 - 1899 Middletown Methodist Church
- 1937 Methodist Episcopal Church Corp
- 1953 New Haven District Camp Grounds Assn
- 1957 The Epworth League - First Methodist Church, Wallingford, CT
- 1966 Martha Bierer
- 1980 Rollie & Helen Austin
- 1981 Alonzo & Florence Orr
- 1992 Miles Oakley
- 2002 Mac & Millie McWaid
- 2004 Robert & Joan Barry
- 2010 Bob & Joanne Grady

33 Circle Ave

Forestville



- c. 1893 - 1899 Forestville Methodist Church
- 1937 New Haven District Camp Ground Assn Library
- 1979 Forestville Library Assn
- 1991 Charles & Shirley Cellar
- 2006 Guy & Diane Gunther

It took us three years to renovate the cottage, but it was all worth it. We are so lucky. We have the best life ever! Six months in Florida and six months in Plainville. We can't say enough about the campground!! The people here are special. The activities are many. You may find yourself too busy!! What else

2 Clinton Ave



- 1911 Ella Jorey
- ??? Isabelle Gladding
- ??? Mrs F L Chapman
- 1950 Attilio & Alice Betti
- 1964 Bertha Colburn & Olive Westberg
- 1971 S. Muriel Budd
- 1987 Howard & Margaret Lobdell
- 2012 Tom & Pat Angels

16 Clinton Ave

Cathedral



- 1911 Althea Allen
- ??? Rev James R Lewis
- 1946 Reverend A Rawson Holgate
- 1980 William Barrett & Dennis Mason
- 1986 Andy & Betty Antonelle
- 1988 Mary Allen
- 1992 Pat & Marion Melito
- 2009 John & Maryann Greenwood
- 2011 Bill & Olga Coffey
- 2014 Ted & Donna Kornasiewicz

Totally renovated in 2009, the Cottage's arch shaped doors and windows are original along with the arch shape wood porch frames and lacy ornamentation. The inside has all the modern comforts while still retaining a rustic charm.

6 Hartford Ave



- 1953 Walter Gillette
- 1966 Plainville Camp Grounds Assn
- 1972 Clara Austin
- 1977 Stewart & Greta Fabrizio
- 1984 Hugh & Doris Ewing
- 1987 Margaret McMahon
- 1993 John & Fran McCormick
- 2000 Donald & Trudy Smith
- 2003 Evelyn Watson
- 2012 Harry & Elaine Sherwin

20 Hartford Ave

The Gables



- 1910 L G Sheldon (builder)
- ??? Eva Sheldon
- 1950 Harriet Barrett
- 1965 Harriet Eaton (daughter of Harriet Barrett)
- 1988 George Barrett
- 2013 Alan & Marsha Sherman

We are Connecticut natives who moved to Florida in 2012. Spending summers in our Plainville cottage are enjoyable. The kitchen has the original cast iron stove from 1900. The previous owner installed four electric burners on the stove top. We enjoy sitting in the front porch and back patio.

13 New Haven Ave



1911	E Burns
1923	Fannie Chambers
1925	Burton & Jennie Morey
1936	Ruth W Richards
????	Robert Hotchkiss
1954	Cara Beale Scranton
1957	Eda Beale
1959	James & Fern Cline
1971	James & Eleanor Hannafin
1980	Ruth Abare
1987	Robert & Gail Hilliard

Dining Hall



1903 Original Construction

In 1918 Table board in the spacious Dining Hall costs \$5 per week or \$1 per day.

Today the Dining Hall is used for the Annual Tag Sale, Men's & Women's Breakfasts, the Sanitary Engineers Appreciation Breakfast, Ladies Guild Meetings, exercises classes, and weekly Military Bridge and Wii Bowling Competitions. The Dining Hall also is available to members for family gatherings, and group celebrations.





Dining Hall 2014



Fowler Memorial Chapel



11 Circle Ave c. 1920



Auditorium 2015