

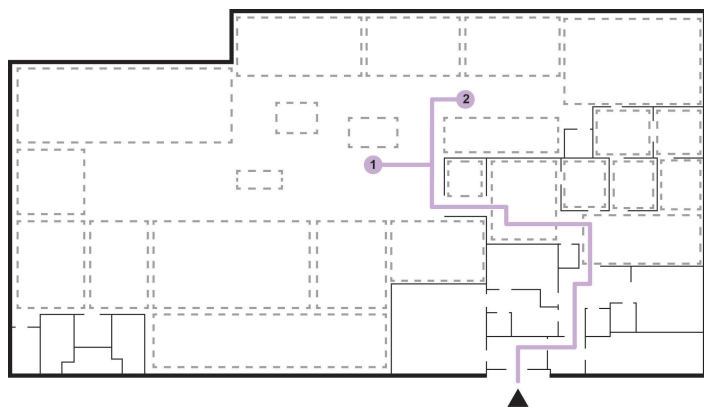


MEMORY PRACTICES OF NEW HAVEN

Lost in New Haven: from hamburgers to time capsules.

Through a recapturing of the narratives archived in these two, distinct displays at the museum, visitors of Lost in New Haven will be guided towards a discovery of how each of these stories—while seemingly disconnected at first glance—share common ground: both recount a unique method of collective memory practice aimed at celebrating and protecting the heritage stories of New Haven, Connecticut.

EXPLORE THE EXHIBIT

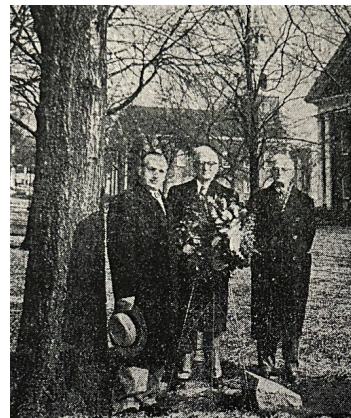
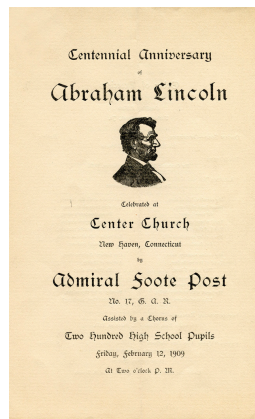


1. *Lincoln Oak Tree*
2. *Louis' Lunch*

THE LINCOLN OAK TREE

A time capsule discovery...

The story of the Lincoln Oak Tree dates back to the national celebration of the late President Abraham Lincoln's centennial in 1909. A major historical observance devoted to preserving the memory of one of the most significant presidents in the history of the United States, cities across the nation hosted memorial events in his honor on President's Day of that year. For the City of New Haven, this event took the



Left: Original program from Lincoln Oak Tree planting ceremony, c. 1909

Right: Visitors placing a wreath at monument, c. 1955

form of a citywide tree planting ceremony on April 10, 1909, coinciding with the local observance of Arbor Day. Residents of New Haven took to the Green to witness the planting of what would come to be known as the Lincoln Oak Tree, along with the installation of a new monument, a plaque commemorating Civil War Admiral Andrew Hull Foote. Also included in the

program of that day was the embedding of two time capsules in the base of the Admiral Foote Monument and speeches by the local chaplain and representatives from the committee representing Admiral Foote Post #17 of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Fast forwarding more than one hundred years, the Lincoln Oak Tree met its demise when it was violently uprooted by the winds of Hurricane Sandy that swept through the city on the evening of October 29, 2012. It was during this dramatic event that the Admiral Foote memorial plaque at the base of the tree was also ejected from the earth, revealing its nearly six foot long concrete barrel base that contained two time capsules from the tree's inaugural ceremony.

By recapturing the history of the Lincoln Oak Tree, we can begin to notice the layers of memory practices that intersect in this story. The time capsules are an example of a public memory practice. The objects selected to be featured in the time capsule's copper

encasement included memorabilia from the Civil War, artifacts relating to the memory and legacy of Admiral Foote, and other items, such as coins from that year and documentation of the program of the planting ceremony. The decision to include these specific artifacts suggest the collective values held by the public at that time. The intention was that these items would not be uncovered until centuries later and would need to provide insight into what New Haven considered worthy and significant of remembering from that era. .



Lost in New Haven's Rob Greenberg holding one of the copper time capsules, c. 2012



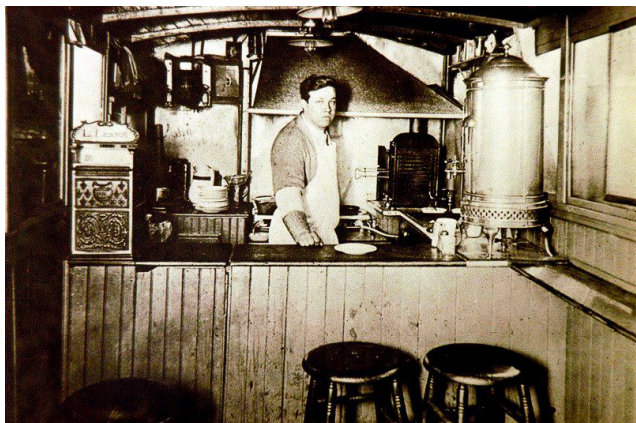
Fallen Lincoln Oak Tree, c. 2012

LOUIS' LUNCH

A hamburger is born

This field guide will discuss both of these unique New Haven histories with the ultimate aim of bringing visitors to the Lost in New Haven Museum on a journey that will highlight the fascinating ways in which collective memory preservation practices are embedded in so many of the stories behind the artifacts on display.

While the Lincoln Oak Tree story showcases these practices as safeguarding legacies of public individuals and events, the story of Louis' Lunch points to ways in which these collective memory practices can function to save entire buildings and commercial entities.



Louis Lassen in original Louis' Lunch wagon, c. 1890s

Louis' Lunch. A New Haven staple, origin of the American hamburger—a claim rooted in local legend and further solidified according to an official report by the Library of Congress in 2000 in which Louis' Lunch was named a “Connecticut Legacy.” As the story goes, Louis Lassen, a Danish immigrant who arrived to New Haven in the 1880s, was the first person to serve a ground beef hamburger in the form of a sandwich—a broiled beef patty between two toasted slices of white bread—to a customer in a hurry who had requested a lunch that could be eaten on the go.



*Left: Original facade of Louis' Lunch at original location (date of photograph unknown)
Right: Relocation of Louis' Lunch, c. 1974*

Much like the history of the Lincoln Oak Tree, the relocation story of Louis' Lunch and the donations of reclaimed brick used to reconstruct it serve as two different examples of memory practices exercised by the New Haven community. The public outcry and protest efforts to save it from an almost certain demise speak to the significance and popularity that Louis' Lunch had successfully garnered throughout New Haven. Louis' Lunch is unique in that while it operates as a privately owned entity, the significance that it holds in the minds of New Haveners as a heritage business is what ultimately saved it from an otherwise typical urban renewal era fate.



Louis' Lunch today

EXPLORE NEW HAVEN

To visit where these artifacts were once produced or sold, visit these sites.



Historic Addresses

Louis' Lunch

261 Crown Street

Lincoln Oak Tree

250 Temple Street



80 Hamilton St, New Haven, CT 06511
(203) 507-2436