

CT Trust Resource ID: 3018

HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY – BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

State Historic Preservation Office, DECD, One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford, CT 06103

*Note: Please attach any additional or expanded information on a separate sheet.

Inventory form modified for the Creative Places - Arts & Letters Project

GENERAL INFORMATION

Building Name (Common): Mitchell, John, Farmstead

Other Name(s) (Historic): Mitchell, John, Farmstead; Pfeiffer, Alberta & Homer, House/ Pfeiffer, Alberta & Homer, House

Street Address or Location: 64 Mitchell Hill Road, Lyme

Town/City: Lyme

Village: Hadlyme

County: New London

Designation(s):

Owner(s): Andreas, Robert & Deborah

Public/Private: Private

Latitude: 41.4058 Longitude: -72.3859

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Present Use: Domestic: single dwelling; Secondary outbuilding

Historic Use: Domestic: single dwelling; Agriculture/subsistence: Agricultural outbuilding

Accessibility to public: No Exterior visible from public road? Yes

Interior accessible? If yes, explain: NA

Style of building: Cape cod cottage, Colonial revival additions Date of Construction: 1789

Material(s) (Indicate use or location when appropriate) Clapboard

Structural Systems(s): Post & Beam, Wood Frame

Roof(Type): Gable (Material): Wood Shingle

Number of Stories: 1 1/2 Approximate Dimensions:

Structural Condition: Excellent

Exterior Condition: Excellent

Locational Integrity: On original site Moved, When: NA

Alterations?: Yes If yes, explain: Mid-20th century additions

Related outbuildings or landscape features: Barn

Surrounding Environment: Rural

Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

The farmstead consisting of a house and barn, is located on the west side of Mitchell Hill Road, in the Hadlyme section of Lyme. The site slopes up toward the west; the house sits on a raised terrace with a fieldstone retaining wall parallel to the road. An open field bordered by stone walls stretches to the west. The site is surrounded by woodlands.

Other notable features of building or site:

A Cape-style house which was the 18th-century Mitchell Farmstead. In c. 1930 it was acquired by architects Alberta and Homer Pfeiffer as their home. Alberta added on the 'summer kitchen' wing (left end as seen from the road) and other renovations.

The original 1789 Cape-style house, a 1 1/2-story center chimney side-gable-roofed building, is oriented parallel to the road. The east front is a five-bay façade with a center doorway flanked by two six-over-nine double-hung sash windows on each side. Additional wings have been added, extending south, west and northward. These incorporate Colonial Revival-style features such as grouped panels of window and projecting bays. Siding is wood clapboards and roofing is wood shingles. To the northwest of the house is an English barn with a wagon shed addition.

Architect: Alberta Pfeiffer (20th c. renovation) Builder/Maker: Alberta Pfeiffer (20th c. renovation)

Historical or Architectural importance:

This property is significant as the home and office of one of the early successful women architects of the twentieth century in Connecticut. It exemplifies Alberta Pfeiffer's respect for historic buildings and her ability to rehabilitate them using a modern Colonial Revival vocabulary.

Alberta Raffi Pfeiffer (1899-1994) designed over 200 architectural projects in Connecticut during the mid-twentieth century, mainly in the area of Lyme and Old Lyme, but also as far away as Arizona. Her work included the homes of Connecticut artists Thomas Willoughby Nason and

Mary Tarleton Knollenberg and several projects for the Town of Lyme. Her own home illustrates her re-use of historic structures and their adaptation to modern living. She was also involved in crafts and was a member and director of the Connecticut Society of Craftsmen, editing the society magazine as well.

Alberta Raffl Pfeiffer (1899-1994) was born and educated in Illinois, studying architecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She graduated with a Masters degree in 1925. She worked in Chicago and New York before marrying Homer Pfeiffer and moving to Connecticut. The Pfeiffers purchased the run-down Mitchell Farm in Lyme and rehabilitated it. The two practiced architecture in the area while Homer taught at Yale, until he entered the Navy and Alberta Pfeiffer opened a solo practice. She was a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in the 1950s and 1960s, and served on the Lyme school board, and planning and zoning board.

Sources:

Interview with Deborah Andreas, 8/13/2015 at the site.

Alberta Pfeiffer Architectural Collection, 1929-1976. MS 1988-017. Virginia Polytechnic Institute Special Collections. Blacksburg, Virginia.

Allaback, Sarah. 2008. *The First American Women Architects*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Historic Barns of Connecticut Historic Resource Inventory. 2010. Accessed at: <http://connecticutbarns.org/find/details/id-10078>

Pfeiffer, Alberta (1899-1994). AIA Historical Directory of American Architects. Accessed 8/26/2015 at

<http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/ahd1034961.aspx> .

Pfeiffer, Alberta. A.I.A. American Architects Directory. 1956, 1962. New York: Bowker, R.R. for American Institute of Architects. Accessed 6/23/2015 at <http://public.aia.org/sites/hdoaa/wiki/Wiki%20Pages/Find%20Names.aspx> .

Pfeiffer, Alberta. Obituary. 1994. Hartford Courant. Accessed at: http://articles.courant.com/1994-08-10/news/9408100277_1_lyme-architecture-vanderbilts .

Pfeiffer, Alberta, biography. Wikipedia. Accessed 4/26/2016 at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberta_Pfeiffer .

Sexton, James. 2010. Historical and Architectural Survey of Lyme. Lyme Historic District Commission & State Historic Preservation Office. Historic Resource Inventory Form 51-647.

Photographer: Charlotte Hitchcock Date: 8/13/2015

View: Southeast view

Form completed by: Charlotte Hitchcock Printed On: April 25, 2016

Organization: Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address: 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517-4002

Threats: None known

Subsequent field evaluations:



64 Mitchell Hill Road, Lyme - southeast view

FOR OFFICE USE:

Town # _____ Site# _____ UTM _____

District ☐ S ☐ NR If NR, specify: ☐ Actual ☐ Potential