**Property Information**

**Address:** 62 Chestnut Hill Road, Litchfield CT 06759

**Owner(s):** William Davenport, 62 Chestnut Hill Road, Litchfield CT 06759

**Style of Building:** English-gambrel hybrid barns, Vernacular style

**Date of Construction:** c.1840-1940s

**Material(s):**
- Fieldstone
- Cobblestone
- Vertical wood siding
- Metal panels

**Structural System:**
- Wood Frame
- Post & Beam
- Load bearing masonry
- Square rule framing

**Roof:**
- Gambrel
- Shed
- Other (Photo-voltaic panels)

**Number of Stories:** 1 1/2

**Approximate Dimensions:** Barn I: 30' x 90', 26' x 55' wing; Barn II: 30' x 48'

**Historic Use:** Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling

**Present Use:**
- Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding
- Domestic: single dwelling

**Accessibility to Public:**
- Exterior visible from public road: Yes
- Interior accessible: No

**Alterations:**
- Yes: Barn I enlarged, roof structure altered to gambrel, shed additions

**Location Integrity:**
- On original site

**For Office Use:**
- Town: Litchfield
- Site: 62 Chestnut Hill Road
- UTM: 254010

*Note:* Please attach any additional or expanded information on a separate sheet.
PROPERTY INFORMATION (CONT’D)

Related outbuildings or landscape features:
- ✔ Barn
- ☐ Shed
- ☐ Garage
- ☐ Carriage House
- ☐ Shop
- ✔ Garden
- ✔ Other landscape features or buildings: Stone walls

Surrounding Environment:
- ✔ Open land
- ✔ Woodland
- ✔ Residential
- ☐ Commercial
- ☐ Industrial
- ✔ Rural
- ☐ High building density
- ✔ Scattered buildings visible from site

- • Interrelationship of building and surroundings:
  See continuation sheet.

- • Other notable features of building or site (Interior and/or Exterior)
  See continuation sheet.

Architect _______________________________ Builder _______________________________

- • Historical or Architectural importance:
  See continuation sheet.

- • Sources:

See continuation sheet.

Photographer ___________________________ Date 8/22/2012

View Multiple Views _________________________ Negative on File CTHP

Name Charlotte Hitchcock ___________________________ Date 8/23/2012

Organization Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation

Address 940 Whitney Avenue, Hamden CT 06517

- • Subsequent field evaluations:
  Latitude, Longitude: 41.738482, -73.172531

Threats to the building or site:
- ✔ None known
- ☐ Highways
- ☐ Vandalism
- ☐ Developers
- ☐ Renewal
- ☐ Private
- ☐ Deterioration
- ☐ Zoning
- ☐ Other _________________________
- ☐ Explanation _________________________
• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

Chestnut Hill is located southeast of the center of Litchfield and northwest of the village of Northfield. Chestnut Hill Road runs southward from East Street (Route 118), and traverses the hill along the ridge-top. The Bantam River runs southward in the valley to the west of the hill. Chestnut Hill has a broad nearly flat top large enough to accommodate entire farms. Views to the west and east are expansive. The Davenport family’s Toll Gate Farms at one time extended from today’s 62 Chestnut Hill Road south to 132 Chestnut Hill Road, both still home to members of the Davenport family.

Two Local and National Register Historic Districts are located in Litchfield as are several other individually-listed sites. The Milton Center Historic District is in the northwest corner of the town and includes the village center of Milton with its common, a bridge crossing the Shepaug River, a historic water power site, and approximately 150 surrounding 18th- and 19th-century buildings (the LHD boundary is more inclusive than the NR district). The Borough of Litchfield Historic District, the first historic district established in Connecticut (in 1959) is a mile to the west of the site, and focuses on the town green and approximately 475 surrounding structures dating from the 18th century onward. It is a Local and National Historic Landmark district. Other farmstead sites included in the current State Register of Historic Places thematic nomination represent the agricultural areas surrounding the Borough of Litchfield: Kar-Mic Dairy at 68 Prospect Mountain Road in Bantam; Bunnell Farm at 498 Maple Street in Milton; these two sites at 62 and 111 Chestnut Hill Road; the Iffland Farmstead at 374 East Litchfield Road and Echo Farm at 43 East Litchfield Road, both in East Litchfield; and the Curtiss-Goodwin Farmstead at 34 Goodwin Hill Road in the village of Northfield.

The c. 1840 Greek Revival-style house at No. 111, on the east side of the road, was a farmhouse for Toll Gate Farms. To the east of the house stood the main barn, an early 20th-century dairy barn with its ridge-line oriented north-south. This barn was demolished in the early 1980s, leaving a flat area of lawn and several remaining outbuildings (see nomination for 111 Chestnut Hill Road). 132 Chestnut Hill Road is another c. 1840 home, with a 1 1/2-story south ell that appears possibly to be an older cape-style structure. Historic photographs show barns to the north of the house; these are gone. Likewise, a Victorian-period porch wrapping around the front and south corner has disappeared.

At 62 Chestnut Hill Road, a c. 1842 2 1/2-story Greek Revival-style Farmhouse sits on the west side of the road with its ridge-line oriented east-west and its main entry in the east gable-end. The house has a three-bay side-hall layout with the entry door and sidelights in the left (south) bay, slightly recessed and surrounded by pilasters and architrave with a projecting cornice. The six-over-six double-hung windows at both floor levels are irregularly grouped, with the center and right openings clustered off-center toward the right (north). The attic has a full pediment with wide trim boards outlining a flush-boarded central area that has no openings. The main block is three bays deep, and a 2-story addition is attached at the west gable-end, with a 1-story addition attached on its west side. A 1-story hip-roofed porch runs along the south side of the house. Siding is wood clapboards painted white, roofing is asphalt shingles.

An unpaved driveway enters the side to the north of the Farmhouse, widens at the southeast of the main barn, and curves southward around the rear of the house, returning to the road south of the house. A fieldstone wall lines the roadside across the property. The current 6-acre parcel is a remnant of the larger acreage of Toll Gate Farms in the 1940s.

Residential subdivision on large lots has taken place in the late 20th century along Chestnut Hill Road, as the Davenport family sold off land incrementally, somewhat altering the agricultural landscape, but several properties retain open pastures and hay fields.
• Other notable features of building or site (Interior and/or Exterior):

Architectural description:

Inventory of structures (C – contributing, NC – non-contributing):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>c. 1842</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn I</td>
<td>c. 1840, 20th c.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn II</td>
<td>20th c.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Barn I:

This is a seven-bay gambrel-roofed 1 ½-story structure with its ridge-line oriented east-west, approximately 30’ x 90’. There is a shorter gambrel-roofed wing extending south, 26’ x 55’, attached at the east corner of the south eave-side and a shed-roofed addition attached to the central portion of the south eave-side.

Exterior:

The present main entrance is a wide and tall overhead garage door in the east gable-end. Above in the attic is a nine-pane window with trim. The east eave-side of the south wing is flush with the east gable-end, and has a series of irregularly-space stable windows in groups of one, two, or three. Above these are two window openings below the eave-line.

The north eave-side reveals by some deflection in the eave-line, that the east and west bays are of different construction. The center portion is a three-bay English barn with a pair of full-height sliding barn doors in the center bay. This is flanked by additional bays with no openings. A 1-story shed-roofed lean-to is attached near the east corner. Grade slopes down gently toward the west, exposing the partial basement wall and fieldstone foundation near the west end and across the west gable-end. The west gable-end has a six-over-six double-hung attic window and no other openings.

The south eave-side has an attached shed-roofed shelter for livestock. This has two doorway openings to paddock areas south of the barn. The projecting south wing has its west eave-side containing two stable windows, off-center toward the north. The south gable-end of the wing has a pair of garage door openings at the ground level and an attic window opening near the peak. A basketball backboard and hoop are installed above the doors.

The barn is sided with vertical wood siding except for an area of the southwest corner that has been re-sided with metal panels; all is painted red with some white trim. The roof is asphalt shingles. The south-facing roof has been repaired, re-roofed, and has photo-voltaic panels installed on the upper pitch.

Interior:

The interior reveals that the center portion of the main block is a three-bay hand-hewn square rule post-and-beam framed English barn structure. The four bents have two interior posts and dropped tie girts. The barn was remodeled by the addition of tall queen posts, which appear to be recycled from old purlin plates, as evidenced by sloped notches which serve no current purpose. A major re-working of the barn, apparently in the early 20th century, included new sawn purlin plates, added bays on both ends for a total of seven bays, and gambrel roof framing of dimension lumber with some truss-like bracing at the change in roof pitch. Iron tie rods in the west end and steel cables in the east have been added to stabilize the added bays which otherwise are inadequately braced. The entire interior is used for hay storage, except for an area at the west end which has been a seasonal basketball court. A hay track is suspended below the ridge-line.

The south wing has hand-hewn heavy timber framing for its ground and loft floor levels, while the roof framing is gambrel similar to the main barn.

Barn II:

This is a 1 ½-story gambrel-roofed structure, approximately 30’ x 48’ with its ridge-line oriented east-west. It sits in an open field area to the northwest of Barn I and is raised on a three-foot high mortared cobble-stone foundation.
The east gable-end has a door opening in the center at the ground level, and a pair of large diagonal-sliding hay doors in the attic under a projecting hay hood. The north eave-side has a pair of sliding exterior doors off-center toward the east. The sill of these is above the foundation wall, thus not accessible to driving inside. The west gable-end is similar to the east, with the projecting hay hood, although the doors have been removed. The south eave-side has no openings. Siding is vertical wood boards painted red; roofing is asphalt shingles. There is one metal ventilator at the center of the ridge.

The interior is a sawn heavy timber structure with a mix of post-and-beam construction and stick-framed roof rafters. Tie girts are stacked dimension lumber rather than solid timbers, and are joined to the plates at the plate level. Diagonal bracing is by dimension lumber planks nailed to the face of posts and tie members. As in Barn I, the roof construction incorporates a combination of queen posts with purlin plates and also some truss-like braces across the change in roof pitch. A hay track is suspended below the ridge on small collar ties. The east bay contains enclosed grain bin areas against the north and south walls, with a corridor at the center.

- Historical or Architectural importance:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criterion:

2. Embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

This complex and its barns are significant as remnants, along with 111 Chestnut Hill Road, of a major dairy operation that was an important local business during the peak years of dairy farming in Litchfield. The landscape retains much of the openness of the agricultural setting and the remaining structures are intact examples of their types — the main barn preserves a particularly interesting record of the evolution of farm buildings, with its English barn core likely contemporary with the house. Its additions and roof-line were apparently later altered to adapt to 20th-century functions. This property remains in the ownership of the third generation of Davenports.

Historical background:

Toll Gate Farm operated as a dairy farm from the late 1930s until the early 1970s, beginning with 111 Chestnut Hill Road and later incorporating No. 132 and No. 62.

The town’s geological underpinnings consist primarily of moraine, an accumulation of boulders, rock, clay deposits and debris deposited during the last glacial retreat about 11,000 years ago… A number of the elongated, ovoid hills known as drumlins, rounded piles of glacial till, are scattered through town, and a rocky ledge looms by the Naugatuck River near the northeast corner. Otherwise, the topography is notable for a series of parallel north/south ridges that traverse the town to create a repeating corduroy pattern of upland ridges and the alluvial flatlands that the colonists called intervales. Litchfield founders focused the initial settlement on three ridges they immediately named: Town Hill in the center, and the two Chestnut Hills to the east (originally known as the first and second Chestnut Hills)….

The prevailing ridge-and-intervale landscape offered a combination of agricultural resources to 18th-century farmers. On the ridges settlers found a heavy, fine-textured clay-based soil suitable to a broad range of grain crops. In the intervales, periodic flooding of the river tracts prevented tree growth naturally to create lush meadows. The flooded lands were generally less fit for the plow than the uplands, but adapted well to hay mowing and cattle grazing (Carley, 2007).

Litchfield was laid out and settled by residents from the River Towns of Hartford and Windsor. Chestnut Hill was settled as early as the central village area, with home lots distributed to several of the proprietors in the first land division in 1718 (Carley, 2011).

By the mid-19th century, after the three houses at 62, 111, and 132 Chestnut Hill Road were constructed, they appeared on the Hopkins Map of 1859 (H. Morse, C.E. Morse, and Chas. Bishop) and on the 1874 Beers Atlas (H.O. Morse, M. Dewyer, and Mrs. M. Bishop). In the early 1900s, 132 Chestnut Hill Road was the Webster Cottage — historic photographs show Clara Atwood Webster and her son Irving Abott Webster. 62 Chestnut Hill Road was
known then as Long View Farm – the name is painted on the south wall of the central portion of Barn I, now covered by a leanto shed roof.

Around the mid-1930s, Preston Davenport migrated to Connecticut. He had worked in Warren, CT, and subsequently was manager of the High Brook Farm in Torrington, and rented a farm there named Toll Gate. In the late 1930s, Preston and his wife Selma purchased 111 Chestnut Hill Road from Curtis Hatheway, and expanded what had been a small dairy farm into the commercial operation known as Toll Gate Farms.

At the time of their purchase, a large cow barn with two intersecting gambrel-roofed sections stood a few hundred yards to the north of the house. There were two wood-stave silos, one for corn and one for chopped hay, and a one-story hip-roofed garage. The barn is thought to have been moved from Barkhamsted Hollow, CT, before that area was flooded in 1940 in the process of creating the Barkhamsted Reservoir (see nomination for 99 Wright Road, Torrington, for another family affected by the reservoir construction). Indeed, the 1934 aerial photograph of the site shows no large barn. The Davenports added a milk room at the northwest corner of the barn, and built a manure shed and a bull barn behind the house.

In 1944 the Davenports bought the Webster Cottage on the west side of the road at No. 132 to provide housing for their farmhands. In 1946 the farm gained a third property, at No. 62 Chestnut Hill Road where the barns were used for heifers, dry cows, and for hay storage. The family moved into that house and turned No. 111 over to their herdsman.

The Davenports raised Ayrshire dairy cows, which produce milk with a high butter fat content. At its height, Toll Gate Farms kept 100 head of Ayrshires. These prized dairy cows produced grade A and Vitamin D milk for delivery to customers in Litchfield, Torrington, Bantam, New Preston, Cornwall Bridge, Winsted, New Milford and Morris.

During its peak period of activity, Toll Gate Farms occupied a substantial part of the upland ridge of Chestnut Hill. In the mid-20th-century decades, Toll Gate was one of only a few farms with its own creamery or processing facility, residential milk delivery route, and their own retail store, Toll Gate Farms Dairy Bar, on the Torrington-Litchfield Road (now US Route 202). The dairy, and retail store operated until 1957. The 111 Chestnut Hill Road portion of Toll Gate Farms was sold in 1973; a number of home lots were subdivided out of the farmland over the years as well.

Preston Davenport was the father of Ed (deceased, 2005) and Lowell “Bud” Davenport who with his wife Susan still lives at 132 Chestnut Hill Road. Lowell and Susan have four sons ranging in age from 39 to 52, of whom one, Jimmy, owns a dairy farm in New York State. William (Bill) lives at 62 Chestnut Hill Road and teaches agri-science at Nonnewaug High School in Woodbury while keeping some livestock at the property and at his brother Jimmy’s farm.

**Architectural significance:**

This complex and its barns are significant as remnants of a major dairy operation that was an important local family business during the peak years of dairy farming in Litchfield. The landscape retains much of the openness of the agricultural setting and the remaining structures are intact examples of their types – the main barn preserves a particularly interesting record of the evolution of farm buildings, with its English barn core likely contemporary with the house. Its additions and roof-line were apparently later altered to adapt to 20th-century functions. The house illustrates the conservation of resources whereby agricultural buildings were constructed to modern standards and functions while the older dwelling continued in use. The property remains a working farm, although secondary to its sister farm in New York State, and its owner continues the family tradition through teaching agri-science.
• Sources (continuation):

Photographs and field notes by Charlotte Hitchcock 8/22/2012.
Interviews with Bill Davenport and Lowell Davenport 8/22/2012, at the site.

Map resources:
Litchfield Tax Assessor Records.
Aerial views from:

Historical aerial photography and maps accessed at UConn MAGIC:
http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/mash_up/1934.html
http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/historical_maps_connecticut_towns.html
Beers, F.W., Atlas of Litchfield County, F.W. Beers & Co., 1874
Hopkins, G.M., Jr., Clark’s Map of Litchfield County, Richard Clark, Philadelphia PA, 1859.


Print and internet resources:
Carley, Rachel, Litchfield Farms Parts I and II: A Historic and Architectural Survey of Farm Buildings in Litchfield
Connecticut, A Project of the Litchfield Historical Society, Litchfield CT, 2006-7;


Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010,

Sexton, James, PhD; Survey Narrative of the Connecticut Barn, Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation,


1997, 213 pages.

3. Site plan detail showing contributing resources; base image from http://maps.google.com/.

4. East view of Farmhouse, camera facing west.
5. North view of Farmhouse, camera facing southwest; south wing of Barn I is at right.

6. East view of Barn I, camera facing west.
7. Northeast view of Barn I, camera facing southwest. Barn II is at right rear.

8. North view of Barn I, camera facing southwest. Barn doors are in the center of the three-bay earliest structure, flanked by additions.
9. Northwest view of Barn I, camera facing southeast; rear of Farmhouse at right beyond.

10. South view of Barn I, camera facing north. Note solar photo-voltaic array on the roof, fieldstone silo foundation to left of the shed addition.

12. Interior view of Barn I, camera facing east, showing square rule frame with recycled timber queen posts supporting purlin plates for 20th-century gambrel roof framing.
13. Interior view of Barn I southwest bays, camera facing southeast. Note the end bent of the hewn English barn frame with dropped girt, sawn timber added bays with metal tie rods, trussed rafters.

14. Interior view of Barn I north wall at the northeast bays, camera facing north. Note double post at interface between older hewn frame and added east bays.
15. Interior view of south wing, ground level ceiling and loft framing, camera facing northwest.

16. Interior view of south wing, roof framing, camera facing south.
17. Northeast view of Barn II, camera facing southwest.

18. South view of Barn II, camera facing north. Barn I is at right.
19. Interior view of Barn II, camera facing west.

20. Northeast aerial view of the dairy barn at 111 Chestnut Hill Road, camera facing southeast, courtesy of Bill and Lowell Davenport.
21. Southeast view of 132 Chestnut Hill Road, camera facing northwest.

22. Southeast view of the Webster Cottage (132 Chestnut Hill Road) c. 1905, with Clara Atwood Webster and Irving Abbot Webster, courtesy of Lowell Davenport. Note barns (now gone) to north of the house.
23. South aerial view of Toll Gate Farms, camera facing north, courtesy of Bill and Lowell Davenport. 132 Chestnut Hill Road is at the lower left, No. 111 with the main dairy barn at center right, and No. 62 at the top.