**Agricultural Heritage Multiple Property Submission - State Register**

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### HISTORIC RESOURCES / BUILDING AND STRUCTURES

Please send completed form to: Stacey Vairo, National Register and State Register Coordinator, State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Economic and Community Development, One Constitution Plaza, 2nd Floor, Hartford CT 06103

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

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#### GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Building Name (Common):** Shelton History Center
- **Record No.:** 2493
- **Building Name (Historic):** Wilson, Wisner and Dorothy, Farmstead / Marks-Brownson House (relocated)
- **Street Address or Location:** 70 Ripton Road
- **Town/City:** Shelton
- **Village:** 
- **County:** Litchfield
- **Owner(s):** Shelton Historical Society, Inc., P.O. Box 2155, Shelton CT 06484

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>☑</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### PROPERTY INFORMATION

- **Present Use:** Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling
- **Historic Use:** Agriculture/Subsistence: agricultural outbuilding; Domestic: single dwelling
- **Accessibility to public:** Exterior visible from public road? ☐ Yes ☑ No
- **Interior accessible?** ☑ Yes ☐ No If yes, explain: During events open to the public
- **Style of building:** English bank barn, Vernacular style
- **Date of Construction:** 19th c.

#### Material(s)

- **(Indicate use or location when appropriate):**
  - ☑ Wood Frame
  - ☑ Post & Beam
  - ☐ Balloon
  - ☐ Load bearing masonry
  - ☐ Structural iron or steel
  - ☐ Other

#### Structural System

- **Structural System**
  - ☑ Wood Frame
  - ☑ Post & Beam
  - ☐ Balloon
  - ☐ Load bearing masonry
  - ☐ Structural iron or steel
  - ☐ Other

#### Roof

- **(Type)**
  - ☑ Gable
  - ☐ Flat
  - ☐ Mansard
  - ☐ Monitor
  - ☐ Sawtooth

- **(Material)**
  - ☑ Wood Shingle
  - ☐ Roll Asphalt
  - ☐ Tin
  - ☐ Slate
  - ☐ Asphalt Shingle

#### Number of Stories

- **Number of Stories:** 1 1/2, B
- **Approximate Dimensions:** Barn: 24’ x 30’ with additions

#### Structural Condition

- **Excellent** ☑ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated

#### Exterior Condition

- **Excellent** ☑ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Deteriorated

#### Location Integrity

- **On original site** ☐ Moved When? ☑ ☐ ☐ ☐

#### Alterations

- **Yes** ☐ No ☑ If yes, explain: Rehabilitation as museum display, gift shop; house relocated

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### FOR OFFICE USE:

- **Town #:** 
- **Site #:** 
- **UTM:** 

- **District:** ☐ S ☐ NR If NR, Specify: ☐ Actual ☐ Potential

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-1-
**PROPERTY INFORMATION (CONT’D)**

Related outbuildings or landscape features:
- [ ] Barn
- [ ] Shed
- [ ] Garage
- [ ] Carriage House
- [ ] Shop
- [ ] Garden
- [✓] Other landscape features or buildings: *c. 1803 house, 19th c. corn crib, 1872 school - all relocated to site.*

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 1/23/2013

View ________________________________  Negative on File CTHP

Name ________________________________  Date 2/02/2013

Organization ________________________________

Address ________________________________

• Subsequent field evaluations:

  Latitude, Longitude:
  41.297211, -73.154142

Threats to the building or site:
- [✓] None known
- [ ] Highways
- [ ] Vandalism
- [ ] Developers
- [ ] Renewal
- [ ] Private
- [ ] Deterioration
- [ ] Zoning
- [ ] Other

Explanation ________________________________
• Interrelationship of building and surroundings:

This site is located on the south side of Ripton Road, a historic route running northwest from the Huntington Green. A 20th-century subdivision road, Cloverdale Avenue, runs south from Ripton Road. 70 Ripton Road occupies the parcel at the southwest corner of the intersection. The site, home of the Shelton History Center and Shelton Historical Society, is a 1-acre parcel. Buildings on the site include the Wilson Barn, original to the property, the Marks-Brownson Farmhouse, relocated to the site, the Trap Falls School and Outhouse, relocated to the site, a Corn crib relocated to the site, and a shed-roofed carriage shed built in 2007 in a period-inspired style.

Adjacent to the west is a similar-sized parcel on which sits the Wilson Farmhouse with which the Barn was originally associated. The Wilson Farm, a much larger site, was subdivided and developed with residential streets and suburban homes during the late 20th century. The neighborhood is called Wilson Gardens.

The Marks-Brownson House is a 2½-story eave-entry gable-roofed house of Federal-Greek Revival style with its ridge-line oriented east-west parallel to the road. The house was built c. 1803 and originally stood at 506 Shelton Avenue where Webster Bank (formerly Derby Savings) is now located. The house has an asymmetrical three-bay north eave-entry façade facing the road, with the main entry door in the right (west) bay under a later gable-roofed porch. The entry doorway has twin sidelights with Federal pilaster surrounds. Windows are twelve-over-twelve double-hung sash with tall corniced lintels. The gable-ends have pedimented attics with dentil moldings along the rakes and eaves. In the gable attics there are fanlight windows with radial muntins. A rear ell extends southward. Siding is wood shingles painted ivory with brown trim. Roofing is wood shingles. The foundation is new fieldstone masonry dating from the 1971 relocation to this site.

The Wilson Farmhouse is a c. 1832 2½-story gable-to-street house with three bays on the gable-end façade. The main entry is in the left (east) bay, windows are six-over-six double-hung (replacement) sash with simple corniced heads. A Federal-style fanlight is in the attic. The eaves have short cornice returns with classical molding. A late 19th-century wrap-around porch extends around three sides and a 1-story ell extends south off the rear. Siding is composition shingles and roofing is asphalt shingles. A garage sits southeast of the house, facing toward the barn.

The Trap Falls School is a 1-story gable-roofed structure with its ridge-line oriented east-west. It has a recessed entry in the east gable-end, an ocular window above, and a hip-roofed cupola near the east end. Each side has two six-over-six double-hung windows with shutters. Siding is vertical flush-boards painted white; roofing is wood shingles. Its Outhouse stands to the west.

The Corn crib is a traditional structure typical of its type, with walls canted outward from bottom to top and a gable roof. The slatted wood wall surfaces are painted white and the roof is wood shingles. The foundation is a series of stone piers.

Ripton Road runs northwest along the crest of a ridge with the land sloping down to the east to Means Brook and to the west toward Farmill River. The two streams join and drain southeast to the Housatonic River. The Huntington Center National Register Historic District is located to the southeast of the site and includes the Huntington Green. The Warren Hubbell Farmstead at 136 Maple Avenue is listed on the State Register of Historic Places. Other Agricultural Heritage sites included in the current thematic nomination to the State Register are: the Hubbell-French Farm at 61 East Village Road; the Philip Jones Farmstead at 606 Walnut Tree Hill Road; and the Tomlinson Farmstead at 181 Meadow Street. The upland areas were formerly farming communities, and developed during the 20th century into predominantly single-family residential neighborhoods, while the section of Shelton along the Housatonic River across from Derby, developed in the 19th century as an industrial city.
• 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>Structure</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wilson Barn</td>
<td>c. 1860</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marks-Brownson Farmhouse</td>
<td>c. 1803</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn crib</td>
<td>19th c.</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trap Falls School &amp; Outhouse</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New construction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carriage shed</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>NC</td>
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Wilson Farmhouse at 80 Ripton Road c. 1832 on adjacent parcel, is under separate private ownership.

**Wilson Barn:**

This is a 1 ½-story 24’ x 30’ eave-entry two-bay English bank barn with its ridge-line oriented east-west. The barn has a shed-roofed addition across the east end and a gable-roofed addition attached at the west end. The exterior is vertical board-and-batten wood siding with fieldstone foundation walls.

**Exterior:**

The main entry doors are a pair of hinged x-braced doors in the east bay of the south eave-side. A pair of similarly-made hay doors is above at the loft level. To the left in the west bay there is one six-pane window high under the eaves. A 1-story shed-roofed wing encompasses the width of the east gable-end and extends east 12’. The grade slopes down toward the east and north. A fieldstone foundation wall is exposed along the south side of the shed-roofed wing. The east eave-side of the wing has an exposed basement level with two six-pane stable windows with trim in the basement level and two more at the main level above. The east gable-end is blank above the shed roof.

The north eave-side has an exposed mortared fieldstone foundation wall across the basement level of the main block. The east wing has a pair of barn doors for access to the basement and a single six-pane stable window with trim at the main level. To the right (west) in the main block, there are two four-pane windows, possibly added when the barn was adapted as an exhibit space.

A 1-story gable-roofed addition extends 20’ to the west. It has partially exposed fieldstone foundation walls as the grade slopes up toward the west and south. There are two six-pane stable windows in the north eave-side. The west gable-end of the addition has one six-pane stable window off-center to the left (north). The main block has a six-pane attic window near the peak. The south eave-side of this addition has an overhanging roof forming a porch. To the left (west) are two six-pane stable-type windows and to the right is a pair of doors. Under the porch roof the main block has a pass-through door in the west gable-end near the south corner.

**Interior:**

The interior has been rehabilitated and adapted as a seasonal exhibit space on the main level. The basement of the east wing is a small gift shop. The barn was in deteriorated condition prior to a major rehabilitation effort in the mid-1990s. The remaining elements of the original structure are post and beam framing of circular-sawn timbers with pegged mortise and tenon joints. Some replacement framing replicates the timber frame with nailed connections. Rafters are sawn dimension lumber. The floor joists visible in the basement include logs hewn on only the upper surface. The basement incorporates bedrock ledge protruding into the space at the west end and some massive stones along with conventional fieldstone masonry.
Historical or Architectural importance:

Applicable Connecticut State Register Criterion:
2. Embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.

The barn is significant as an extant agricultural building in its original location relationship to its original farmhouse. The site gains additional significance from its use as an interpretive history center where the story of Shelton is on exhibit through the example of a period house and outbuildings, along with a schoolhouse of the late 19th century.

Historical background:

Wisner (b. 1898) and Dorothy Wilson (b. 1900) farmed a large acreage until their deaths in the 1980s. In 1920, Wisner lived with his mother, Elizabeth. By the 1930 census Wisner was listed as a general farmer while his wife Dorothy was a school teacher. The Wilsons sold vegetables in the Bridgeport markets. They made available the one-acre site now owned by the Shelton Historical Society so that the Marks-Brownson Farmhouse could be relocated in 1971. Subsequently, the farm was subdivided, resulting in the loss of the landscape context. However, the Barn, Corn crib, and two farmhouses still form a farmstead grouping that recalls the historical landscape. The Wilson Barn was rehabilitated in the late 1990s for use as a seasonal exhibit space. A photograph taken in 1993 shows that regrading at the east and north sides has created a basement level entrance; the basement fieldstone walls and exposed bedrock indicate that the basement apparently existed in the earlier use.

Architectural significance:

The barn is significant as an extant agricultural building in its original location and relationship to its original farmhouse, although the latter is now under separate ownership. The site gains additional significance from its use as an interpretive history center where the story of Shelton is on exhibit through the example of a period house and barn, along with a schoolhouse of the late 19th century.

Sources (continuation):

Photographs and field notes by Charlotte Hitchcock 1/23/2013.
Interview with Tracey Tate, Shelton Historical Society, 1/23/2013, at the site.

Map resources:

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.


Print and internet resources:

Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, Historic Barns of Connecticut Resource Inventory, 2010,
http://www.connecticutbarns.org/2493.


Shelton History Center/Historical Society, Visitor information brochure and timeline, no date;


3. Detail Site Plan Sketch showing contributing resources – base image from Google Maps.
   A. Wilson Barn   D. Corn crib
   B. Marks-Brownson Farmhouse   E. New carriage shed
   C. Trap Falls Schoolhouse   F. Wilson Farmhouse

4. Northwest view of the Marks-Brownson Farmhouse, camera facing southeast. The Trapp Falls School is at right rear.
5. Northeast view of Marks-Browson Farmhouse, camera facing southwest. The Wilson Barn and the Wilson Farmhouse (under different ownership) are at right rear.

6. Southwest view of Corn crib, camera facing northeast. The Wilson Barn is at left rear.
7. East view of Corn crib, camera facing west. The Wilson Farmhouse garage (under different ownership) is at right rear.

8. Southeast view of Trapp Falls School, camera facing northwest. The Wilson Barn is at right rear, school outhouse is at left rear.
9. Southwest view of Trapp Falls School and Outhouse, camera facing northeast. The Marks-Brownson Farmhouse is at left rear.

10. Northwest view (left to right) of Trapp Falls School, Outhouse, and 2007 Carriage shed, camera facing southeast.
11. North context view of Wilson Farmhouse (on adjacent property at 80 Ripton Road, under separate ownership), camera facing southeast. Wilson Barn and rear ell of Marks-Brownson Farmhouse are at far left rear.

12. Southeast view of Wilson Barn, camera facing northwest. Corn crib is at left. Note east shed-roofed wing and lower basement level at east side.
13. Northwest view of Wilson Barn, camera facing southeast. West addition was repaired with a steeper roof pitch than the original, in 1990s rehabilitation.

15. Interior view of Wilson Barn main level, camera facing northwest. The main level framing replicates the timber framed appearance with some nailed joints and a mix of old and new material.

16. Interior view of Wilson Barn loft level, camera facing south. Note circular-sawn mortise and tenon framing with pegged joinery and dropped tie-girt.
17. Interior view of Wilson Barn west addition, camera facing east. Note the original exterior siding of the main block’s west wall, and the preserved indication of the change of roof pitch in the rebuilt portion.

18. Interior view of Wilson Barn, camera facing northeast in the main level, showing barn model exhibit.

20. Photograph of Wilson Barn in 1993 prior to rehabilitation. Photograph by Kemp Batchelor, courtesy of Shelton History Center.