

BRIDGEPORT

THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT ACT SUCCESS STORIES

No.
233



Photo courtesy of Eric D. Lehman, author of *Bridgeport: Tales from the Park City*

In June 2010 a major tornado hit **Bridgeport**. Among the buildings in its path was the **Barnum Museum**, P.T. Barnum's temple to the oddities and curiosities he collected all his life.

Immediately, teams of conservators arrived on scene to preserve the damaged artifacts and historic restoration architects and engineers gave free services to halt any further damage.

To support Phase II of the Tornado Recovery Effort, the Commission on Culture & Tourism and the Connecticut

Trust for Historic Preservation awarded a total of \$110,000 in **Community Investment Act** funds. **Ten jobs have been created so far.**

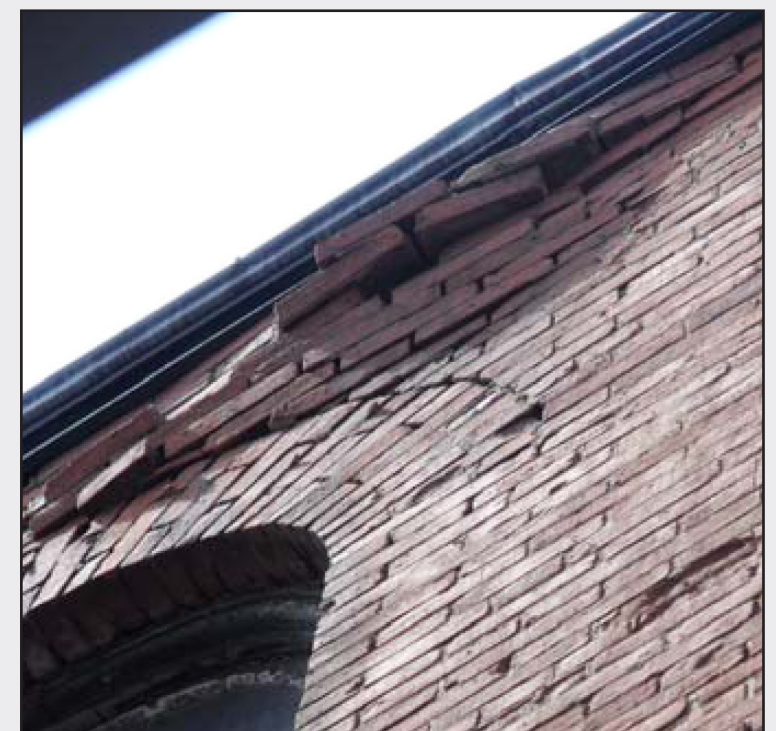
The Museum suffered major structural stabil-

ity damage to its complex timber-framed roof. The massive dome shifted and decorative elements are falling. Truss supports have been compromised causing structural failures and water penetration is evident throughout.

The City of Bridgeport and numerous community groups and citizens have worked with the Barnum board of directors and staff as they address these major issues.

The Barnum Museum has been serving the state of Connecticut since 1893. Though closed today, the Barnum Museum will reopen its

doors as an institution dedicated to community engagement and intellectual exchange, preserving and interpreting Barnum's genre in American history.



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The Community Investment Act, enacted in 2005, stimulates private investment to protect our natural, agricultural, and historic resources, and to assist affordable housing. CIA funds come from a surcharge on real estate document recording fees. They are then invested in agriculture viability, dairy farm support, historic preservation, open space, farmland, affordable housing, Local Capital Improvement Projects and Town Clerk records management.