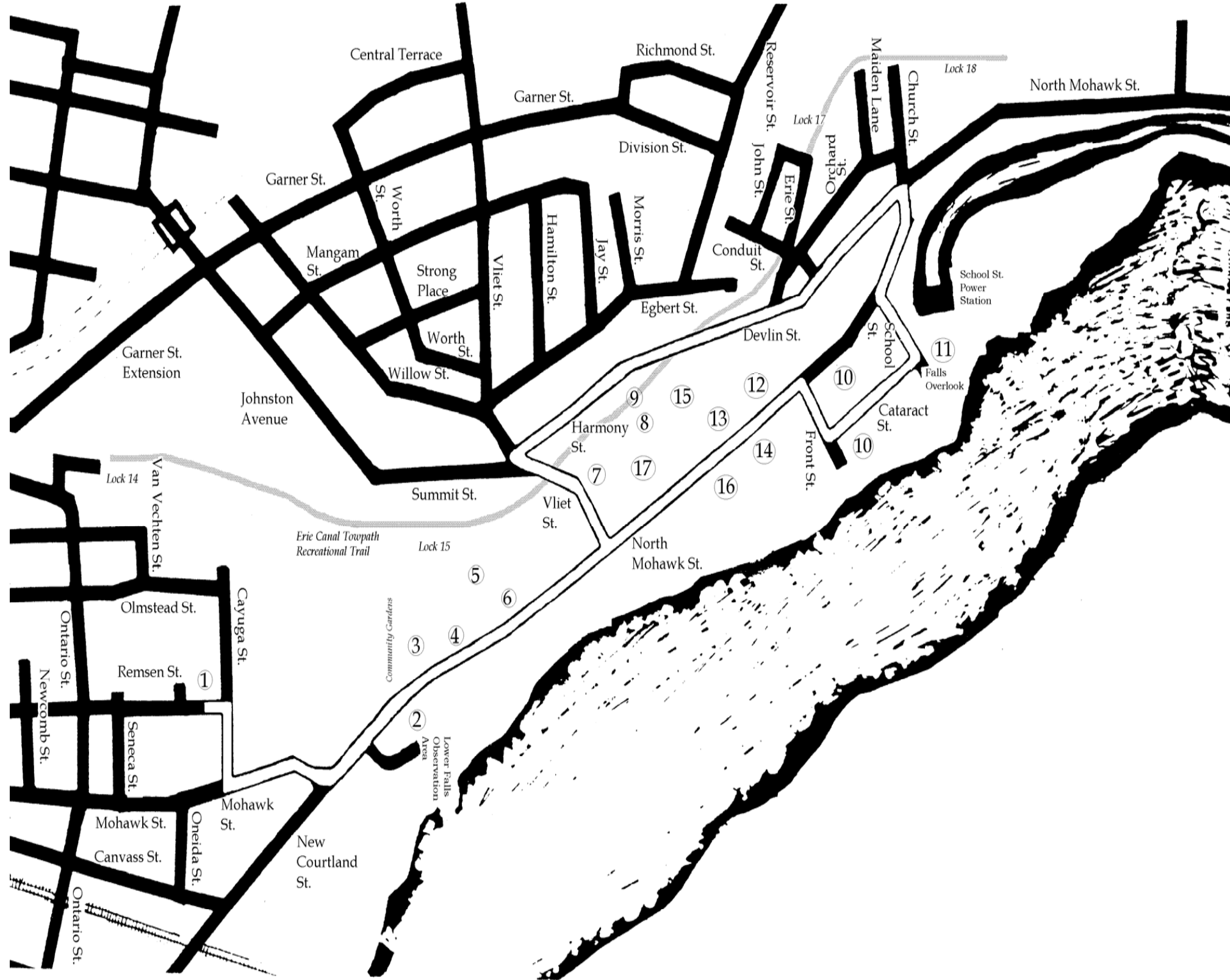
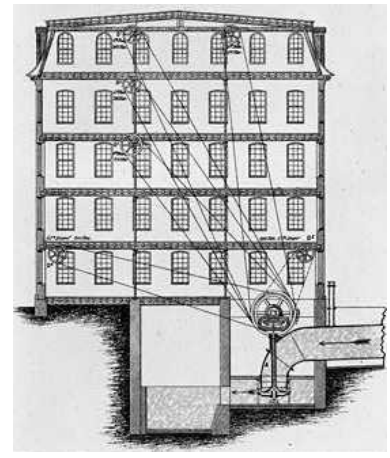


SELF GUIDED TOUR

HARMONY MILLS HISTORIC DISTRICT



Spindle City Historic
Society

237-7999
www.spindlecite.net

1. Visitor's Center/Cohoes Music Hall. The Music Hall was constructed in 1874, and during its history featured many luminaries of the day, including Buffalo Bill Cody, John Philip Sousa, Col. Tom Thumb and his wife, and Cohoes' own Eva Tanguay. After many years of neglect during the 20th century, the hall was carefully restored and re-opened in 1975. It has since been a venue for many dramatic and musical performances, and today is the home to the Eighth Step. The first floor is the Cohoes Visitor's Center, home of the Spindle City Historic Society.

2. These buildings, constructed alongside the power canal, were probably built as worker housing, storage, and workshop space for the Cohoes Company.

3. Fountain Place was probably built as housing for mill supervisory level workers and their families.

4. This building was originally the **Van Benthuyzen paper mill**. After its purchase by the Harmony Mills Company, it was referred to as the "Bag Mill" or "Jute Mill".

5. The northern end of **Harmony Mill #2** was completed in 1857. The southern section was completed in 1866. The foundation stones for the mill appear to be lock stones taken from the remains of a single chamber lock on the



original Erie Canal, which ran along the eastern side of Mill #2. The mill was damaged by fire in 1995 and subsequently demolished.

6. The Erie Canal, completed in 1825, first brought Cohoes to prominence as a canal town. After the canal was expanded and rerouted in the 1840s, this **remnant of the original Erie Canal** was used as a power canal for the Harmony Mills.

7. The **Harmony Mills Office and Sunday School** was constructed in 1854 soon after

the extension of the original Harmony Mill. Offices were located on the first floor, and the upper floor served as a meeting space for religious, social, and other company events.



8. The original Harmony Mill, built in 1837 by Peter Harmony, a New York City capitalist. It cost \$72,000 and contained 3,000



spindles. When the mill opened in 1837 it employed 250 – one out of every four Cohoes residents – who produced 1.5 million yards of print cloth that year. The business was sold in 1850 to Thomas Garner and Alfred Wild for \$1000. They installed Robert Johnston as

mill superintendent, beginning a 61-year period of success for the mills.

9. This is one of the double-chamber limestone **locks** (Lock #16) built in the 1840s as part of the expansion of the **Erie Canal**.

The single-chamber locks of the original 'Clinton's Ditch' were replaced and the canal rerouted and increased in



width to seventy feet and in depth to seven feet from its original width of forty feet and depth of four feet. There were once 10 locks in the area within Cohoes city limits, numbered 9 to 18; most of these still exist. Lock 18, north of Church St., is on the National Register of Historic Places.

10. The Harmony Mills textile industries built and owned these brick houses and rented them to employees and their families. This **worker housing** was built with double masonry construction during the 1860s, in

the heyday of mill productivity. These sturdy brick buildings are still used as residences. More mill worker housing can be found in the blocks bounded by Vliet, Garner and Willow Streets, and on Devlin St.



11. Cohoes Falls, with its 70 ft. drop, is the largest cataract east of Niagara Falls. The falls propelled Cohoes to a leading position in the textile industry during the mid 19th century. Water over the falls powered the machinery of the Industrial Revolution, and is still exploited for hydroelectric power. When water is diverted for power, the falls dry and reveal the shale formations beneath. During periods of snowmelt or heavy rain, the falls are restored to a raging torrent.

12. Beginning in 1857, the **Cohoes Waterworks Pump House** captured Mohawk River water, diverted by power canals, into a series of reservoirs used for drinking water and fighting fires. The Pump House, still in operation, has as its foundation a lock from the original Erie Canal.

13. In the **Harmony Mill #1 Picker Room and Storage House**, cotton bales were stored, then picked through to remove debris and sent on to the next stage in the manufacture of cotton print cloth. This structure was also probably built atop a remnant of the original Erie Canal.

14. Harmony Mill #3, constructed in 1866,



became the model cotton mill in the U.S., and was frequently visited by cotton goods manufacturers from across the

country and overseas. An addition was built on Mill #3 in 1872, making it the country's

largest complete cotton mill, at 1156 feet long, 75 feet wide, and five stories high. The building, as well as the other structures comprising the Harmony Mills complex, is a National Historic Landmark. While excavating to build the mill in 1866, the contractors dug into an ancient sinkhole that revealed the 11,000 year-old bones of a mastodon, which now stand at the entrance to the New York State Museum. The **marker** commemorating this



discovery is some 1,000 feet south of the actual site. A replica of the mastodon can also be seen in the Cohoes Library. This southern section also contains two of the original five **Boyden turbines** that powered this massive mill. The turbine room is

a National Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark.

15. Harmony Mill extension, completed in 1853, was, along with the original Harmony Mill, collectively known as Harmony Mill #1.



16. This **Statue of Thomas Garner** is in an alcove above the entrance to Harmony Mill #3. Thomas Garner, from New York City, and Alfred Wild, of Kinderhook, formed a partnership and purchased the Harmony

Manufacturing Company in 1850. Garner bought out Wild's share of the company in 1867.

17. Heating Plant for the mill complex, ca. 1911.

