

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in How to Complete the *Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Lustron Houses in New York

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Prefabricated Housing
Lustron Corporation 1946-1950
Lustron House
Lustron Dealerships
Lustron Development in NYS 1949-1950

C. Form Prepared by

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state	<u>New York</u>	zip code	<u>12208</u>

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR part 60 and the secretary of Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (See continuation sheet for additional comments)

_____ Commissioner	_____ Date
Signature and title of certifying official	
_____ New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation	
State or Federal agency and bureau	

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Lustron Houses of New York
Name of Multiple Property Listing

New York
State

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Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other:

Name of Repository:

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Prefabricated Housing

The Lustron House is one of the most recognized and successful of prefabricated homes developed in the first half of the 20th century, during a period of much exploration and experimentation in the manufacturing of domestic architecture. Trade and business publications of the time in fact, touted the Lustron as being culmination of this experimentation and the crowning achievement of the prefabricated housing industry in the late 1940s. Carl Strandlund, the visionary behind the Lustron Corporation, is closely linked to this success simply because he was an inventor who strived to develop efficient assembly of products and was capable of adapting his ideas & creations to meeting the needs of the domestic market. With the unique assembly-line production and distribution system, a streamlined and modern design with a full line of traditional and contemporary amenities, and a liberal infusion of federal funding, the goal of the Lustron all-steel house was to facilitate the end of the most severe housing crisis the United States had ever experienced.

The concept of prefabricated houses is not one unique to the Lustron House. In fact, prefabrication has its roots in the beginning of the Industrial Revolution with the concept of prefabricating building component parts in order to facilitate mass-production. In the middle of the 19th century, the use of cast-iron columns and wrought-iron elements became standard for the rapid construction of large market and assembly spaces. This technology was applied to residential construction shortly thereafter. A cast-iron house constructed of prefabricated parts was first built in Staffordshire, England in 1830 and by the 1840s the iron foundries of England were not only producing metal houses, but also shipping them throughout England as well as to America, Australia, and the British colonies in Africa. The shipping of housing parts to colonial settlements was not a new notion. In the 17th century, panelized wood houses were shipped from England to Cape Ann, in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, to provide housing for fishing fleets. This obviously expedited early settlement there by offering an economy in skills, materials, as well as time. The notched building-corner technique necessary for the construction of log homes was introduced soon after by the Swedes as another method to speed building construction. The first significant market created for prefab housing in the U.S. was the California Gold Rush in 1848 when house kits were shipped to prospectors there via railroad. This included the metal houses being shipped from England. Kit houses and ready-made buildings were the logical alternative to either the tents that had been previously popular or to building conventional homes. Due to shipping expenses, traditional building materials such as lumber and brick were only available at extremely high costs.

As mechanization took command, fully prefabricated homes became most popular following the industrial revolution of the 19th century. The introduction of the assembly line, improved mass-production methods and increased freight and transportation systems all contributed to this popularity. Architects and inventors were experimenting by the early part of the twentieth century, with all types of efficient systems for producing housing. Philosophically, prefabrication was seen as the ideal way to rationalize the building process, achieve economies of scale, and bring good design to the masses. Thomas Edison was a big proponent of prefab housing. In 1915 and 1917, Edison obtained several patents for a prefab fire proof concrete house constructed with iron formwork. This invention was likely in response to his witnessing the buildings of Edison Phonograph Works destroyed by fire in 1914. Several Edison concrete houses were built and still exist in Union, New Jersey. Unfortunately, although marketed as affordable homes, the \$30,000 price tag for the iron formwork necessary for the contractors/builders prevented these houses from being successful and mass-produced.

The prefab metal home was perceived as a cheap, temporary shelter, and never as a full replacement of the traditional wood-framed "stick built" house. Houses constructed of

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pre-cut lumber which included elaborate jig sawn and turned trim elements following the designs in widely circulated plan books remained the most popular form of pre-fabricated dwellings. The natural evolution was the pre-cut, traditionally-styled mail order kit homes. These were first marketed in 1889 by George F. Barber. The development and growth of this business coincided with the expansion of the railroad and the resulting ease in which to ship large parcels to distant locations. A mail-ordered home would have come in crates containing a thousand pieces delivered to the closest railroad station. Homeowners or purchasers would then assemble it piece by numbered piece. Many consumers chose to do this assembly themselves since it provided a significant cost savings. There were several other mail-order housing companies which followed the lead of the Barber and the Aladdin Company. The International Mill & Timber Company took it one step further offering as many as 57 different mail order kits by 1920. Patterned books or catalogues provided a variety of styles and floor plans to choose from. The most well-known mail-order kit homes were from Sears & Roebuck who sold 100,000 kit homes by mail between 1908 and 1940.

In England, a post-World War I housing shortage and a simultaneous steel surplus resulted in at least two successful factory-made houses - the "Weir" and the "Atholl" houses, both designed in 1924 and constructed with timber framing and clad in steel. The *Dorlonco* house of the 1920s eliminated wood in its construction and instead combined a steel frame with a skin of metal panels covered with cement. In America, Buckminster Fuller introduced his first Dymaxion House (1927). In Germany, the Muehe-Paulick steel house (1926) had a Bauhaus design with enameled steel wall panels with rubber gasket trim. Neither ever reached full production. In 1932, Charles Bacon Rowley & Associates of Cleveland, OH designed the first American prototype of a house with interlocking enameled steel panels as the exterior skin. That same year, the American Rolling Mills Co. (ARMCO) & Ferro Companies produced in a cooperative effort, the Armco-Ferro house, a frameless structure built of load-bearing enameled steel. Other corporations tried their own experiments with prefabricated steel houses in the early 1930s including General Houses, Inc. (Chicago), American Houses, Inc. (New York), and National Houses, Inc. (Lafayette, IN). Despite the number of prefabricated house designs making use of steel, or enameled modular panels, homebuyers still saw these metal houses as "out of the norm", too experimental, temporary and too expensive. Each company only built a few hundred houses because of these public conceptions and the fact that production and steel supplies came to an abrupt halt once the U.S. entered into World War II.

The 1933 Century of Progress World Exposition in Chicago was one of the first fairs to popularize the experimental demonstration house to the public. Much of the focus during this fair was centered on the use of steel for housing stock. More than a dozen firms exhibited prefab. steel houses at the 1933 Expo in Chicago, but only two thirds of these prefab. housing companies used steel as a major component in their products. Typically technical problems such as condensation, corrosion, and insulation hindered their experiments and the final products. In addition, the major investment needed for materials and equipment for mass-production as well as the critical lack of access to an organized distribution network drove the unit cost of each house too high to be attractive to potential buyers. At the same time, the experimental nature of these houses limited their corporate support. Other technological advances in the housing industry in general, such as the introduction of balloon framing and the standard 4-ft construction module may have had an impact on success of prefab steel houses.

Corporations such as U.S. Steel, Republic Steel, The Homosote Company, General Electric, and Westinghouse began looking at the success of the American automobile companies, specifically Ford and General Motors, and how they could adapt mass-production techniques to tap into the new housing market.

America suffered through some very trying times between World Wars and specifically after the Great Depression in the late 1920s. The resulting economic conditions and series of

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housing shortages in the United States had a profound impact on the housing industry forcing the reexamination of the role that prefabrication played in the production of affordable and available single-family houses. At the peak of the Depression, there were approximately 1,000 foreclosures a week and residential construction had dropped 90% from the number of units being produced in the mid 1920s. In the 1940s, although the housing industry was ready to accept mass-produced or prefabricated housing, the shortage, restriction or rationing of many consumer products and materials during the world wars stalled most production and further crippled most domestic industries. In addition, there was a moratorium on all new construction during the war. The only exception was that the U.S. army needed a way of providing instant shelter for military personnel and servicemen throughout the country and abroad. This was the first time that the military financially supported the production of prefabricated housing with as many as seventy companies contracted to produce 200,000 units for the government during World War II. The Quonset hut was among those mass-produced in large numbers since the all-metal hut could be quickly and inexpensively manufactured, shipped and assembled, as well as dismantled for deployment elsewhere. There were several other prefab building models that used steel and took advantage of standardized parts and modular designs. When World War II ended in 1945, approximately 12 million soldiers returned home looking for jobs, homes, and financial security. The fact that the building hiatus left a great shortage of houses for them to come home to created an unprecedented housing crisis and the government once again looked to the prefab industry for an immediate solution. Congress voted in 1946 to fund research and help subsidize production of prefabricated housing. The Veterans Emergency Housing Act of 1946 granted surplus war plants to prefab manufacturing companies, allocated scarce resources and promised government loans through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC). This essentially made prefabricated housing a peacetime priority.

Wilson Wyatt had been appointed by President Truman to head up the National Housing Agency. Wyatt's major plan to meet the challenge of housing the returning veterans called for extraordinary incentives to create 1.2 million new homes in the year 1946; this was a figure 6 times greater than the total housing production in 1944. The only real viable solution to this ambitious goal was through mass-production. During the same time, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was offering incentives to encourage homeownership for returning veterans with the *Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944* (otherwise known as the GI Bill) which guaranteed low-interest mortgages. With the abundance of land and the major need for homes, the federal government passed laws that encouraged suburban housing development while painting the picture of young couples as pioneers in these developing frontiers in pursuit of the American Dream.

Under the stimulus of government support, nearly three hundred companies entered the prefabricated housing industry in the late 1940s. Of these, three were chosen to receive direct federal loans. Two of the three—General Panel Corporation (1942-1951) and the Lustron Corporation (1946-1950)—were subsidized to produce steel houses. General Panel Corp. manufactured the "Package House" designed by Walter Gropius and Konrad Wachsmann, German émigrés. This house design used interchangeable standardized parts that led to a variety of floor plans and designs. Over six years, however, the companies built less than two hundred houses due to problems arising from design and production changes, and financial troubles. In 1951, the company was liquidated.

The Lustron Corporation was founded by Carl Strandlund, an engineer previously vice-president of the Chicago Vitreous Enamel Products Company. The Lustron Corp. won support for its assembly-line produced porcelain enameled steel houses and a commitment of Federal financing to cover the cost of the first 15,000 homes produced. The Lustron Corporation, working out of the Columbus, Ohio Curtiss-Wright aircraft plant, intended to manufacture 30,000 houses a year, but this goal was never reached. After four years, 1946-1950, the corporation folded with a final production of 2,680 houses. Although radical in its use

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of porcelain enameled steel, the Lustron house – a one-story, gabled-roof ranch with a bay window and side porch – looked much like any other postwar-era dwelling. The company was praised by the architectural press and hailed as a critical test of the viability of the factory-made house. Today, after nearly 60 years, an estimated 1850 houses exist (<http://home.earthlink.net/~lustronlocator/state.html>) and 94 in New York State alone.

Lustron Corporation 1946-1950

The Lustron Corporation was the most heavily subsidized and industrialized of the 280 companies involved in the prefabricated housing industry in 1947. Carl Strandlund, Lustron's founder and visionary, was considered an "industrialist" with training as an engineer coming from a long family line of inventors. He was born in Sweden in 1888 and came to the United States as a child and studied engineering through a correspondence school. By the 1920s, he had embarked on a successful career in industry. He was responsible for several innovations and patented inventions for the John Deere and Oliver Farm Machinery Companies. His contributions to the farming industry involved inventions to make work more efficient. In all, he held more than 150 patents. His dream was to eliminate piece-by-piece assembly by creating a less wasteful and less costly procedure known as "unit assembly." In the 1930s and during the second World War, Strandlund was an executive for the Chicago Vitreous Enamel Products Company. "Chicago Vit" produced steel enamelware for companies that manufactured refrigerators, stoves, washing machines, and other household appliances. Porcelain enameled steel produced by Chicago Vit was also used for architectural panels for store fronts. This product known as "Lustron" panels -- was trademarked in 1937 and referred to the luster produced by the glass-like finish of the porcelain fused on the steel. These porcelain-enamel panels were used to provide attractive and maintenance-free structures for commercial uses such as White Castle restaurants, and Standard Oil gas & service stations. Before the war, Standard Oil had erected some 600 modern sleek stations clad in sanitary white enameled panels.

With the ending of WWII, Strandlund, as vice president of Chicago Vit, traveled to Washington, D.C. in the summer of 1946 to meet with Wilson Wyatt, the housing expediter for the National Housing Agency to ask for a release of some of the government's steel supply in order to produce five hundred enameled steel gas stations. With Wyatt's main mission of creating housing and housing only, he was programmed to redirect any requests for building materials to meet his goal of building homes. Strandlund was essentially told that there was no steel available for gas stations, but that an unlimited supply was available for the housing market. After the meeting in DC, Strandlund and a team of designers worked for several months to plan, design and create the first Lustron house prototype. Strandlund returned to DC three months later to unveil the drawings and manufacturing process for building a porcelain-enameled steel house on an automobile-style assembly line. Originally designed to produce 100 houses a day, Strandlund's plan was well received by Wilson Wyatt who backed Strandlund's request for funding and materials. Wyatt also promised a wartime plant and a guarantee to cover the cost of the first 15,000 homes produced.

The company's goal for 1947 was to introduce the American Public to this new housing idea. Chicago Vit. immediately began working on the first prototype house. The "Esquire" was designed by architects Roy Blass and Morris H. Beckman from Illinois. They perceived it as a durable variation of the established bungalow house type, yet designed in a streamlined fashion out of metal and using traditional residential house components such as a simple gabled roof, bay & picture windows, sliding pocket doors, recessed porch, and built-in



Figure #1 - The "Esquire" prototype house

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cabinetry. The first Esquire was assembled at 7210 South Madison Street in Hinsdale, IL just outside Chicago (Fig. #1).

Because the Lustron House was envisioned to be constructed entirely of porcelain enameled steel, Strandlund felt that this full size, actual model was necessary to market the idea to politicians and government officials to get government help in securing scarce stocks of steel. Strandlund arranged for Wyatt to come to Chicago to see the model and assured him that with a government loan of \$52 million and an allotment of steel, he could produce 400 houses a day and would produce 30,000 houses in 1947. The prototype house featured porcelain enamel panels at the exterior walls, roof, gutters, and downspouts, while the window casements were aluminum. The house measured 31'x35' and contained a living room, a dinette with a built-in china cabinet forming the room divider, a kitchen with a door leading to the rear, a master bedroom, guest or child's bedroom, bathroom and a utility room. Despite having a compact footprint with approx. 990 square feet of floor space, there was much built-in storage with ample full height closets in the bedrooms, linen and storage closets in the hall, and full metal cabinetry in the kitchen. The house was designed to be built on a concrete slab, with structural steel support members that formed the wall sections, steel trusses that supported the roof, 1½ inches of fiberglass insulation within the exterior wall panels, and 4 inches of insulation above the ceiling panels. Radiant heat was supplied to the structure through the ceiling panels from a Williams Oil-O-Matic furnace. House came with a choice of six pastel colors for the interior - all intended to be natural and easy to decorate with. The wall panels both interior and exterior required no more maintenance than washing with soap and water to preserve the luster of the porcelain finish. The Esquire was officially opened for public inspection and visits on November 20, 1946.

By October 1947, Strandlund had not only obtained full support from the government, but he had been given the Columbus, Ohio Curtiss-Wright aircraft plant, and a loan for \$12.5 million from the Federal Reconstruction Finance Corp. This loan however, had the condition that Chicago Vit. accepted liability for the loan which unfortunately, they viewed as too risky. In the end, Chicago Vit. declined the loan, despite the investment and resources they had made to that point. Strandlund, who was the most vested in the project, resigned from Chicago Vit. and purchased the Lustron trademark, the machinery necessary to produce the pilot homes, and all interests that the company had in the Lustron house. He immediately set up a new company, The Lustron Corporation, and by the end of that month accepted the government loan. Even without the solid promise of work, most of Strandlund's young band of engineers left their jobs at Chicago Vit. and followed him. Strandlund successfully convinced the government to further subsidize his plan, and over the years received over \$40 million to set up the factory and get production going.

During the development of the prototype house, the company embarked on a major national advertising campaign to build interest and demand for their product. When first introduced, the Lustron House had 2 national advertising slogans - "The House America Has Been Waiting For," and "Lustron: A New Standard for Living." These slogans effectively articulated the nation's expectations for progress and for the idea of a house as the "just reward" for a successful fight to defend the "American way of life." These houses were designed to create suburban neighborhoods where not only the houses, but the homeowners and their families were homogeneous. The suburb was perceived as the child of the Lustron Corporation, just as the interstate was the offspring of the automobile industry. The June 1947 issue of *Architectural Forum* featured a cover photograph and feature story on the new Lustron house in Hinsdale. It praised the honest use of materials stating "Metal was used as metal in the Lustron and there was no attempt to disguise it as wood, brick or any other building material." The *Army Times* had featured the Lustron in its veteran's edition resulting in twice as many letter inquires as was normal. *Consumer Reports* compared it with another prefabricated house and stated that of the two, the "Lustron house is the better buy." It claimed that the materials and

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construction were excellent mechanically; it had a superior heating system and the steel construction with its porcelain enamel finish needed little in the way of maintenance or repair. The house was touted as being rust proof and fireproof. By January of 1948, there was a backlog of 6,000 orders for Lustron Houses generated by the energetic sales force of 30 people.

Strandlund's primary business goal for 1948 was to get 100 demonstration models fabricated and erected as quickly as possible. In March of 1948, the company was the object of interest for a number of real estate editors who toured the factory after a home builder's convention in Chicago. Bell Telephone was exploring the possibilities of building several hundred Lustron homes at a new plant in Summit, NJ. In April 1948, construction began on the first Lustron Model Home (Serial #1) to be set up for exhibit in New York City in collaboration with a promotion of the Society of Illustrators (Fig. #2). The objective of the promotion was to give away the home at an Artists & Models Ball at the Waldorf-Astoria at the end of that month. This model was the newest design - the "Westchester" 2-bedroom unit and had been furnished and decorated on the interior by McCall's magazine. It was erected on the northeast corner of 52nd street and the Avenue of the Americas in Manhattan. Tours began on Wednesday April, 14th with 1,500 people going thru the house and a capacity crowd arriving the next day (Fig. #3). Over 60,000 people toured the Lustron model in the 16 days it was open. A promotional brochure was passed out and many of the visitors were so impressed that they made checks out on the spot to place a down payment for their own house. Of course, all the checks were refused since the factory was not yet ready to begin producing its first unit for sale. The New York City model proved to be highly effective in gaining recognition for the company's efforts to produce a high-quality, mass-produced house. After the public demonstration of the Lustron house in NYC, the company announced three franchised dealers for the metropolitan area.



Fig. #2 - Construction of first model house in New York City.

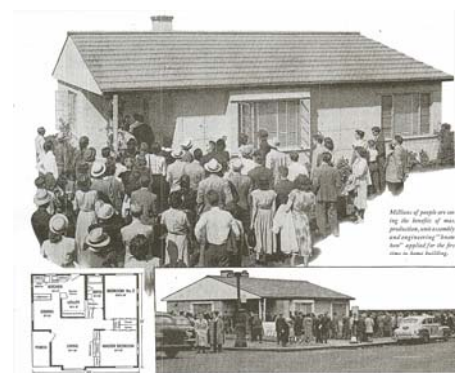


Figure #3 - Crowd of viewers outside NYC model home, April 1948.

Carl Strandlund gave a press conference to address the financial writers of the Wall Street Journal, Journal of Commerce, the New York Times and the Herald Tribune. Syndicators supplied some 500 papers across the country with pictures and feature stories on the new Lustron House. The *New York Times* wrote that the 2 bedroom house "is made on the principal of, a place for everything, and everything in its place." Emily Post said "intelligent planning has gone into this home" and a prominent New York radio announcer claimed it was the "greatest single development in housing since they first put one stone on top of another."

The April 19th issue of *Life Magazine* contained a 2-page Lustron Advertisement presenting the new home as "The House America has been waiting for." It promised a "new standard of living" to buyers, being convenient and efficient, and available in a variety of designer colors (Fig #4). The advertisement included a coupon that readers could submit for more information. This coupon from the 2-page advertisement alone brought in more than 150,000 inquiries - an all time record for any *Life Magazine* ad. Unfortunately, the Lustron Corp. had less than 15 employees in the front office which proved to be highly inadequate when

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suddenly the Post Office began delivering truckloads of mailbags stuffed with coupons, each requiring a reply.

Despite this workload, the publicity efforts did not let up. Ads were later run in *Time*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Foreign Service*, *Architectural Forum*, *Banking* and other trade journals and newspapers.

In addition to the print advertising efforts, Strandlund pushed to erect models in a number of major cities including Milwaukee, WI (3802 West Capitol Drive); Washington DC (corner of New Hampshire and E. Street in Foggy Bottom section); Chicago (North Marine Drive at Wilson Street); Des Moines, IA; Detroit, MI; Pittsburgh, PA; Anchorage & Fairbanks, AK; Boston, MA; Minneapolis, MN; St. Louis, MO; & Indianapolis, IN.



Figure #4 - Life Magazine, April 19, 1948, page 12-13.

The first Lustron for sale left the factory in the first week of January 1949 bound for a suburb of St. Louis. Despite the fact that the war had ended in 1945 and the Lustron Corporation was established in 1947, it wasn't until 1949 that most of the Lustron houses for private sale and use were manufactured and erected. The primary reason for this unexpected delay in full production was the underestimated amount of time it took to set up of the manufacturing plant in which they would be fabricated. In the end, it took a total of 19 months and \$37.5 million in federal government loans to develop and set up the equipment and the production plant on a total of 106 acres of land. By April 1948, Lustron had hired 500 men and planned to have 7,000 on the payroll by that September. Many men from the auto industry had been hired to run the plant since the assembly-line work was familiar. The manufacturing time of a house was estimated to be 400 man-hours from the time the raw material entered the plant until the structure was erected on its site.

Fortunately, these delays did not significantly curb interest in these homes; in fact it may have enhanced it. With the major marketing campaign and the built up anticipation, the Lustron plant became a showcase for manufacturing technology. There was the notion was that Strandlund and his Lustron home were on the verge of another industrial revolution and the feeling prevalent within the company was that they were going to be the General Motors of the housing industry (Fig. #5).

The manufacturing plant consisted of machinery that included several steel presses (161 in all) ranging from 25 to 1800 tons, and two 180-foot porcelain enameling furnaces with the capacity for enameling 12,000 square feet of panels hourly. There were 200 portable electric welders, 67 spray booths, 19 bit shears for cutting steel, 16 dust collectors and 40,000 linear feet of overhead conveyors. Each house required 12.5 tons of steel and one ton of enamel. Within the first six months, the Ceramics Division developed a new process for fusing enamel at 1,300 degrees F - much lower than conventional processes. The benefit of fusing at this temperature was that it was below the critical heating point of steel thus eliminating problems with distortion and maintaining the strength of the steel. For the Lustron Corp. this meant they could



Figure #5 - Lustron Corp. plant in Columbus, Ohio

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eliminate the use of supports for the panels in the oven while also allowing the use of thinner sheets of steel. However, this significant development had positive implications outside of the Lustron house production. It had a direct impact on the manufacturing of refrigerators, ovens, washers, and other porcelain-coated appliances made by other suppliers.

As they were produced, each individual house component was fitted onto a flatbed trailer in the order in which they would be taken off for assembly at the site (Fig. #6). These innovative trailers actually served three functions. They were used as rolling platforms that moved along the assembly line on the plant floor; then they carried the 30,000 pieces to dealers or house sites all over the Midwest, and up and down the Eastern Seaboard. Lastly, the truck would haul upward of \$20,000 worth of steel from the mills on its return trip back to the factory.



Figure #6 - Lustron flatbed trailer for transporting house to site.

Despite the overwhelming interest in the Lustron concept by the American public, Strandlund was facing increased doubts from the government and this created financial problems. Ultimately, retooling or reorganizing the former aircraft factory proved more difficult and expensive than originally estimated. Apparently the RFC (Reconstruction Finance Corp) had begun having second thoughts about the soundness of the loans. Although, the RFC reluctantly granted an additional loan of \$10Million to the Lustron Corp. on July 21, 1948, it required that this new loan be paid back in monthly installments of 1 and $\frac{1}{4}$ million dollars. Serious cost overruns and production problems added fuel to the fire. Finally, even with the additional loans, the company was unable to produce the promised 100 units a day. Back orders accumulated and buyers faced long delivery delays. The factory was producing only 26 houses a day, yet needed to produce 50 a day to break even based on its debt. The RFC had hired an outside firm to evaluate the problems with the Lustron sales. In February 1950, the RFC ordered foreclosure proceedings to be started against the Lustron Corporation and by May, an order was approved to sell the Columbus plant, its machinery, the land and the patent rights at auction to liquidate assets.

Faced with this, Strandlund filed bankruptcy in June of 1950 with a list of 236 creditors. The last house shipped out on June 6, 1950 and 6 cash orders were returned since they would not be filled. By that time, 2,680 homes had been built and a debt of \$37.5 millions had been racked up. This left thousands of disappointed customers who had orders which were left unfilled. Finally In April 1951, the Lustron Columbus plant was turned over to the U.S. Navy.

Initially, Strandlund's plans were to manufacture 30,000 houses a year, but this goal was never reached. After four years, 1946-1950, the corporation folded with a final production of 2,680 houses; less than 10% of the original goal. The Lustron Corporation made several business decisions that seriously undermined the company's potential success. First, the company underestimated the time and money needed to achieve mass-production. Secondly, it never established the proper distribution system to handle high-volume sales. These miscalculations were critical. *Architectural Forum* pointed out in its May 1950 issue that Lustron had two strikes against it: first, it had missed the peak of the housing shortage when there had been six customers competing for every house sold, and second, the units were not low-cost houses. By the time Lustron was producing homes on a regular basis, the housing crisis had largely passed and this unusual house was competing in a rebounded market. In addition, because productions levels were low, the cost of each

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house steadily escalated. Soon, the proposed \$6,000 house was selling for \$11,000 - a price greater than many traditional small houses. Completing in the arena of traditional housing, Lustron had little chance of real success. Conservative financial institutions were leery of granting mortgages for nontraditional houses, especially before the house arrived at the lot. Local building codes varied from city to city and often prohibited features of Lustron's innovative design. The construction industry viewed metal prefabrication as a threat to on-site craftsman and established suppliers of building materials. These battles were fought with each Lustron house sold. Even if the houses had been available and these issues overcome, the corporation's ad hoc approach to sales and distribution could not guarantee the enormous sales needed to sustain mass-production.

The collapse of the Lustron Corporation should not overshadow the company's substantial achievements. The popular acceptance of the design challenged the notion that the American Public would never live in factory-made housing or that prefabs could succeed only as temporary solutions in crisis situations. No other venture had so thoroughly applied the methods of the assembly-line in the construction of houses.

Lustron House

The first house produced for public sale left the Columbus plant on one of the Lustron trailers in early January 1949 bound for Missouri and this was the beginning of increasing regular production. The Westchester model was the most popular and biggest selling model for the company. It was very similar to the original prototype, the "Esquire" which had first been constructed in Hinsdale, Illinois. The overall appearance of the house was designed based on the general lines of the "modified" ranch style. It was available in both a two- and three-bedroom version. Matching garages, breezeways, patios, carports and screened porches were available as "accessories." The company promoted the houses as being permanent, lightning-safe, decay-proof, and termite and rodent proof.

The exterior of the 2-bedroom Westchester model (021) can be easily recognized due to its notched porch area clipped out the front corner (Fig. #7). There are two large picture windows on the front façade with the living room window in a projecting bay area. There are two additional large picture windows, one on the rear façade and the other on the dining room side façade. The windows are aluminum casement type hinged to open outward and screens came as a standard feature. The end bedroom (master bedroom) wall was modified over the two years of production and can be used to date the houses. The earliest houses featured pairs of small square windows set high in the wall. This later became a single small window in each bedroom and lastly changed to be a medium sized single casement window for each room. The house exterior panels were offered in four pastel shades - dove gray, maize yellow, surf blue, and desert tan. The model home which opened in Atlanta was the first departure in the original four color schemes when it was offered in a pale lime green. The Quantico Marine Corps base Lustrons also offered a "dusty pink" color. The interior colors were neutral gray, ivory, blue, yellow, and pink. The three bedroom version of the Westchester (031) had no notched porch since two bedrooms were aligned on the front façade along with the living room. The Westchester models were offered in a Deluxe version which had an identical floor plan as the standard version, but differed in

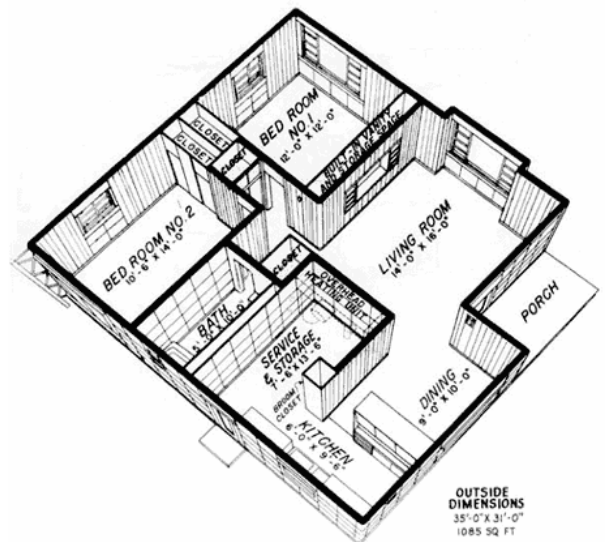


Figure #7 - Floor plan of 2-bdrm Westchester model

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that it included the built-in vanity/bookcase, the pass-through china cabinet, the ceiling radiant heat, the projecting bay window, the bathroom vanity, the asphalt tile floor covering and 2'x2' kitchen wall panels. The standard version did not include these features and instead had conventional heating systems, minimum built-in features and the floor covering was supplied by the builder. The two-bedroom Westchester Deluxe model (02) was the most popular and there are approximately 78 in New York State (Fig. #8). The Lustron directory in Thomas Fetter's 2002 book, notes that only 111 Westchester three-bedroom models (03) have been found in the U.S. At least 6 three-bedroom Westchester models are known to exist in New York State.



Figure #8 - Westchester model Lustron house in E. Greenbush, NY

Given the success of the Westchester model, the Lustron Corporation later introduced a second style, the "Newport," again offered in either a two- (023) or three-bedroom (033) version (Fig #9). The Newport had a much smaller footprint than the Westchester - measuring 31ft x 23ft and were marketed to buyers in more distant areas due to the decreased shipping charge. They first began production in late 1949 with the first house (serial # 2036) shipped to Birmingham, AL. Although downsized from the Westchester, it included many of the conventional parts used. The distinctive characteristic was that the roof was set at 90 degrees of the norm with the gable end

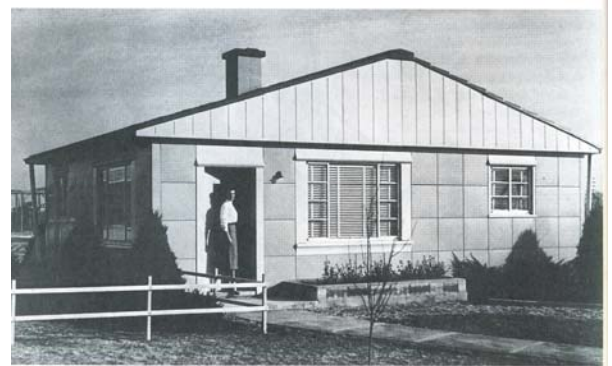


Figure #10 - Exterior of Newport model

(Fig. #10). The front door was moved to the left corner of the front wall and a large bay window was set in the living room sidewall where the front door was located on the Westchester units. Other substantial changes was the use of a standup furnace and the use of standard forced-air circulation instead of radiant heating as used in the Westchester. The Newport model was released during a time when the company was under attack by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, thus this negatively impacted the potential widespread distribution and acceptance. At least three Newport models are known to exist in New York State. Finally, Lustron offered a slightly larger 2 & 3 bedroom Meadowbrook model but very few were built and none are known to exist in New York State.

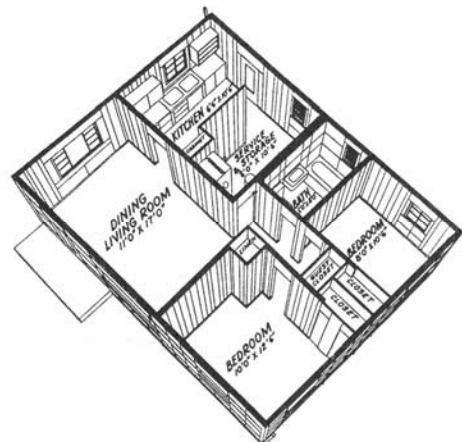


Figure #9 - Floor plan of 2-bdrm Newport model.

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Lustron House Model Statistics:

- The **Westchester Standard 2-bedroom** house was model number 021 and measured 31'x35' (1085 sq. ft.) and was \$5,210 from the factory and sold for approximately \$8,600.
- The **Westchester Standard 3-bedroom** house was model number 031 and measured 31'x39' (1209 sq. ft.) and was \$5,765 from the factory and sold for approximately \$9,300.
- The **Westchester Deluxe 2-bedroom** house was model number 02 and measured 31'x35' (1085 sq. ft.) and was \$5,407 from the factory and sold for approximately \$9,000.
- The **Westchester Deluxe 3-bedroom** house was model number 03 and measured 31'x39' (1209 sq. ft.) and was \$6,482 from the factory and sold for approximately \$10,000.
- The **Newport 2-bedroom** house was model number 023 and measured 31'x23' (713 sq. ft.) and was \$4,110 from the factory and sold for approximately \$7,000.
- The **Newport 3-bedroom** house was model number 033 and measured 31'x31' (961 sq. ft.) and was \$5,065 from the factory and sold for approximately \$8,200.
- The **Meadowbrook 2-bedroom** house was model number 022 and measured 31'x25' (775 sq. ft.) and was \$4,510 from the factory and sold for approximately \$7,400.
- The **Meadowbrook 3-bedroom** house was model number 032 and measured 31'x33' (1023 sq. ft.) and was \$5,410 from the factory and sold for approximately \$8,700.

In late 1949, the Lustron Corp. approached Boston-based architect, Carl Koch about designing the new 1950 models. Koch was experienced in designing pre-fabricated houses. Koch worked with the Lustron design-staff to formulate a new model whose components were reduced from 3,000 to 37 by providing for the assembly of window sections, storage walls, and plumbing walls within the plant itself. This would prevent the problem of the trucks carrying 3,000 parts and often arriving with some missing or lost during the assembly. The biggest departure with these house designs was the two-by-eight foot load-bearing solid wall sections that wear interchangeable and eliminated the need for heavy studs or gaskets are the joints. In essence, the new designs reduced the number of parts and increased the interchangeability to allow for more variety in the appearance and floor plans of the models. It also reduced the weight of the house from 12 tons to 9 tons. Unfortunately, the company's financial problems in early 1950 prevented any of these plans from being realized.

Typical construction features of most of the houses included foundation of a basic concrete slab specified to be no less than 3 inches thick. This concrete slab was placed over a gravel sub-base and reinforced with welded mesh of no. 6 gauge steel wire. Although a slab foundation was the most typical, the houses could and in a few instances were built over basements. This was arranged with the dealer who was responsible for setting the foundation. The exterior and interior steel panels were bolted to a skeleton of steel. Wall framing was constructed of factory-welded metal studs placed two-foot on-center and supported by diagonal braces. The bottom plate was fastened to the concrete foundation by anchor bolts. The exterior or perimeter walls on the Westchester model were composed of twenty straight wall framing sections and ten corner assemblies (two bedroom versions only). This model also included ten steel roof trusses set at four-foot intervals replaced the traditional rafters and joist assembly. The steel panels were attached to the frame in the field with concealed screws along a grooved channel and interlocked along a hidden tongue-and-grooved joint. Compressed between the panels was a permanent vinyl gasket which formed and assured an airtight enclosure. The exterior panels were two feet square, while the interior panels were two feet wide and measured eight feet in height running from floor to ceiling in the living, dining and bedrooms. The kitchen and bathroom had two feet square wall panels. Enameled ceiling panels were four feet square. Other house features such as window and door frames and jambs, gable ends, gutters and soffits and the roof shingles were all prefabricated enameled steel.

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Foundation, walls and ceiling were all insulated. The attic space which was accessed by a ceiling panel in the utility room, was insulated with three-inches of glass wool with aluminum foil bonded to the inside face of the roof. Floors were covered with 1/8-inch thick asphalt tile. The kitchen was equipped with a Lustron manufactured sink, steel cabinets, and an optional garbage disposal unit. An oil or gas forced-air furnace circulated heat through the plenum chamber above the ceiling panels with the ceiling panels serving as the radiant heat source directing warm air to the living room space below (Fig. #11). Models later than the Westchester substituted this radiant heat with a conventional stand-up furnace and standard forced-air circulation in the "high wall discharge heating system."

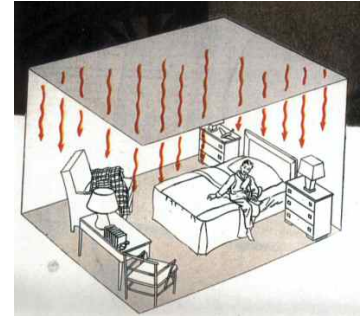


Figure #11 - Company diagram of radiant heating.

The basic Westchester model measured 32-feet by 36-feet and offered five rooms. Only the bedrooms and bathroom were completely enclosed with doors (sliding pocket doors) with the rest of the house having an open floor plan. Other spaces were typically divided with prefabricated storage and partitions such as the double-sided pass-through cabinets dividing the kitchen and dinette. The vanity and full height closet wall in the bedroom aligned with the living room bookshelf on the reverse side.

Each homeowner received a set of erection plans and specifications, along with a home guide at the time of their home's construction. (Exhibit #1 -Owner's Home guide) The company literature and home guide described each space and its distinctive features (Fig. #12). The Master Bedroom, as confirmed by this guide typically measures 12' x 12' (144 sq. ft.). "To cut down furniture needs and to increase room area, one entire wall is devoted to step-saving, space-saving and money-saving built-in features. A smart vanity is completely surrounded by drawers, cabinets, and closets. A large mirror (21 sq ft) is included. Overhead cabinets line the wall at ceiling level while wide, deep wardrobe cabinets reach from floor to ceiling on either side. This is in addition to the large closet space on the adjoining wall, providing practically unlimited storage capacity for normal needs." All doors were of the "sliding" type for greater convenience. The earliest houses featured a pair of small windows set high in the wall to provide added light the bedrooms and the size and layout of the room will accommodate twin beds, if desired.



Figure #12 - Lustron owner's home guide (Master bedroom).

The second bedroom measures 10'-6"x14' (147 sq .ft.) and thus has about the same amount of floor space as the master bedroom. It too accommodates twin beds and features one large picture window and a smaller window. Generous closet space is provided and there are two additional built-in closets with shelves for linens in the hall between the two bedrooms.

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The bathroom came equipped with a bathtub, toilet, and sink plus an illuminated medicine cabinet with a mirror, a towel bar, a soap dish in the tub, and a curtain rod. The tub and sink were fabricated in the Lustron factory, while the rest of the furnishings were purchased from outside manufacturers. A built-in chest of drawers (vanity) was offered as an added feature. The kitchen includes storage cabinets (upper), exhaust fan, combination dish & clothes washer built into the sink cabinet and space for standard sized stove and refrigerator (Fig. #13).

The dining room measured 9'x10' (90 sq. ft.) with its character-defining features being the large picture window and the display cabinet for china with drawers for linens. The adjoining living room measures 16'x14' (224 sq. ft.) "with ample, unbroken wall space for pleasing and attractive furniture arrangements. The window and wall areas are designed for flexibility in interior decoration, to accommodate your furnishings. Not one inch of floor space need be wasted space." The living room includes a big picture window, compact and attractive built-in bookshelves and random-width vertical wall panels (Fig. #14).

These Lustron house were transported all over the country from Columbus, Ohio on specially built trailers. The Lustron Corporation claimed that its houses were so simple to assemble that anyone with the basis carpentry skills could put one together. Strandlund's objective was to create a housing which the ordinary man could erect for himself, taking his cues from the manufacturers of past mass-produced housing, such as Sears & Roebuck, Barber, and others. In reality, he knew that most of the houses would be constructed on the site by professional labor. Strandlund had signed an agreement with organized labor unions in order to avoid problems with the buildings trade organizations. However, the obligations of these contracts along with the problems resulting from outdated building codes in many areas led to unexpected price increases. For example local building codes varied from one area to another. In some cases they directly conflicted with the construction plans of the Lustron house. In Chicago, local codes required plaster walls and ceilings, thus preventing any Lustrons from being built within the city limits. Connecticut codes called for basements. Copper plumbing which was used exclusively in the Lustron house was banned by many codes and even in Columbus, Ohio, only stone or brick chimneys were allowed. In the State of Tennessee, tandem trailers in the weight range of the trucks Lustron used were forbidden on highways preventing travel to and through the state. Keep in mind that these houses were being designed, manufactured and sold in the same way automobiles were and still are sold. The various states were assigned a zone in relation to the location of the Columbus, Ohio plant. The delivered prices varied within \$1,200 from the closest zone to the furthest. Estimated sale prices excluded the cost of the land, but included a transportation allowance for a radius of 200-400 miles from Columbus. Actual prices depended on the distance from Columbus and local construction costs. What had intended to be a price tag of roughly \$7,500 could often rise to \$10,000 due to these variations in site costs. To many, this seems exorbitant for a house of this size and design.



Figure #13 - Lustron owner's home guide (kitchen)

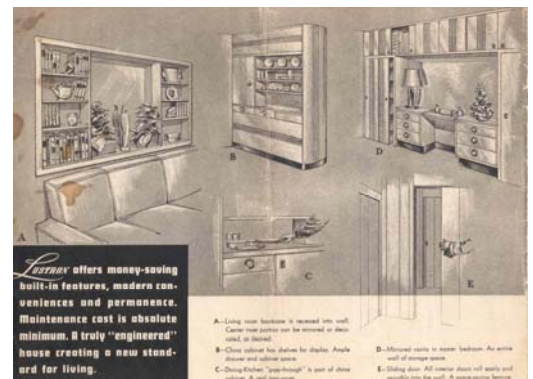


Figure #14 - Lustron home guide (built-in features)

Figure 13 shows two views of a kitchen. The left view shows a woman standing at a counter with a sink and cabinets. The right view shows a woman standing at a counter with a sink and cabinets, with a refrigerator visible on the right. Figure 14 shows a living room with a sofa, a picture window, and built-in bookshelves. A text box in the bottom left corner reads: 'Lustron offers money-saving built-in features, modern convenience and permanence. Maintenance cost is absolute minimum. A truly "engineered" house creating a new standard for living.' A legend in the bottom right corner lists: A - Living room bookshelves fit recessed into wall. Cabinet door opens can be recessed in door itself, or hidden. B - Close colored box shelves for dishes. Angled glass and cabinet doors. C - Dining table "set-back" is part of china cabinet. A and B are shown. D - Storage chest in corner between A and B. E - Dining chair. All corner doors roll away and disappear into the wall. A recessing feature.

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Lustron Dealerships

In order to reach the national market of homebuyers and to distribute the homes, Lustron created a network of dealerships across the country. At the beginning, Lustron offered exclusive dealer franchises to selected wealthy businessmen established specific sales territories. Some dealerships covered large metropolitan areas such as New York City, or entire states. The creation of this dealer network coincided with the national advertising campaign which began in mid-1948. As the company planned and produced model display houses, they were located in major cities where a dealer was identified so that interested buyers had a local dealership to purchase through. Strandlund envisioned that the sale of the Lustron house would be similar and modeled after that of an automobile. However, there were many problems faced by the dealers, the buyers, and the Lustron Corporation from the beginning. For the dealers, they appeared to be at a disadvantage right from the start. Their biggest problems were the lack of supply to meet the demand and the high outlay of cash necessary to get started. Eventually, the new exclusive dealers realized that more capital was required to set up franchises than they cared to venture or could raise. In response to this, Lustron ceased the practice of dispensing exclusive dealerships and instead began to try to reclaim the larger domains. The company struggled with deciding just how many dealers it should have and how large the service areas should be. With the national advertising campaign, advertisements generated nearly 10,000 applications for dealerships. However, the Lustron Corp. had substantial control over the dealers. It required the dealers to get the company's approval before setting the prices to be charged for houses in their areas. It also set the dealer's allowance for profit and expenses based on the projected volume of business that the dealer was expected to have. The dealers protested that the overhead on the Lustron houses, which were experimental in nature, was enormous, thus making the profit quite low. The Company's response was that overhead should in fact be lower than claimed since services such as national advertising and centralized purchasing was covered by them as a cost-saving measure to the dealers.

In the end the largest hurdle for the dealers was the fact that they were required to pay in advance for the houses before they were shipped from the factory, as well as have sufficient capital to buy vacant lots, pour concrete foundations, and run utility lines. The homes cost the dealers \$6000 each and had to be bought in large quantities meaning the dealers needed \$50,000 to \$100,000 to get started. This placed a very heavy burden on the franchises and meant the dealers needed to come up with their own money or find customers who were willing to pay nearly \$10,000 up-front for the house. At the same time, the company had been promoting the houses for almost a full year before any left the factory. This lack of production became the biggest headache for the dealers, since customers were forced to wait long periods for their homes. The dealers, not the factory, bore the direct assault of the customer's anger. They were faced with placating customers who had been promised a house (and had likely paid in full) or lose the business. In one instance, a New York customer who had waited ten months for delivery sued the dealer (Architectural Forum 1949).

Additional unexpected costs for the dealers only exacerbated the problem and difficulties of running a franchise. *Architectural Forum* reported that a major sales handicap was the lack of a fixed national price for the Lustron houses. This resulted in houses that were no longer even moderately priced - they had increased from the original proposed retail price of \$6000-7000 to upward of \$12000 when all the expenses were figured in. These expenses included the land cost, freight, utility services (water, sewer, gas, electric, etc.) and site improvements such as the foundation and concrete slab, sidewalk, curbing, walks, driveway, fill, grading, landscaping, and lastly the dealer's commission. (Exhibit #3 - Dealer's cost estimate sheet)

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Regardless of these problems, the network of dealerships continuously grew. Once production had started and by May 1949, it was reported that 143 dealerships existed and that the factory had produced more than 600 houses. This was just months before the company's peak production (July). By the end of 1949, there were 234 dealers in 35 states and one in Venezuela. Thirteen of these dealerships were in New York State. The cost of shipping components over the Rocky Mountains rather than dealer interest restricted the location of the dealerships to the eastern United States. When the plant ceased operations on June 5, 1950, 2498 Lustron houses had been shipped to 36 states east of the Rocky Mountain and Venezuela. At this time, there were also dealers with 10 projects on the books totaling 1,270 houses ready to start production. Over a two-year period of dealer experimentation, training and growth, there was a marked turning point for the company and dealer operations. Many of the most difficult sales problems such as building code issues, relations with the local building labor, and major transportation problems have been solved.

In an attempt to answer the many questions generated by the dealers, the Lustron Corporation produced and distributed a series of informational literature explaining how Lustron dealers operate and were selected. In summary this literature states that "dealers are franchised on a non-exclusive basis to operate in their community" and will be "limited to a city and its immediate trading area." The dealers were selected and given the franchise if they were able to demonstrate their ability to "fully realize the sales potential in the territory requested." To judge this ability the Lustron Corp. required applications and evaluated the current building or contracting experience of the franchise applicant along with the past business success record, demonstration of ample financial backing, and local reputation. The applicant also needed to demonstrate that they had an organization composed of experienced construction, real estate and financing personnel. The dealer's responsibility to the Lustron Corporation was to erect, sell and service the houses, as well as helping to arrange mortgage financing. It was specified that the dealers were responsible to lay the foundations for the houses and that to "hold down costs and to ensure quality, Lustron dealers are not permitted to subcontract this work." No homes were to be sold to "middlemen" for resale, instead the dealer was required to sell directly to the owner-occupant. The Lustron Corp. held sales and management training programs at the plant in Columbus, Ohio for the dealers, while the construction personnel of each dealership were expected to attend training sessions on the basics on home erection and service.

A series of "Lustron Home Planning Guides" were distributed to the dealership to offer basic ideas for how to present a model display home and to introduce prospective buyers this "New Standard for Living." These guides covered site selection and planning, as well as interior decoration.

Lustron Development in NYS 1949-1950

There were at least 13 dealers in the state of New York covering all regions of the state, with the exception of the Rochester and Watertown areas (Fig. #15). These dealers were responsible for initiating their own sales and for constructing the homes, and often assisted the buyer in obtaining financing. Any variations from the standard plans, such as inclusion of basements, etc., were the responsibility of the dealers. Given the topography of New York State, the inclusion of basements was not that unusual particularly in the Hudson Valley, Adirondacks and areas of the Southern Tier where flat sites were rarer.

LANGE-FINN CONSTRUCTION CO INC
JOSEPH F. FINN, Pres.
BUILDING CONTRACTORS
NEW CONSTRUCTION
INDUSTRIAL
COMMERCIAL
522 Bway 5-5400

Lange-Finn Construction Co Inc 522 Bway 5-5400
Larkin Clifford E J Patten as Reus. 4-9613
Leto Contracting Co 425 Central av. 6-7117

LUSTRON HOMES

America's Family Home. Beautiful life-time porcelain finish. Unmatched built-in features. Easy to clean. Radiant panel heat. Low Maintenance. Fire-safe. Easy financing.

"WHERE TO BUY IT"

UPSTATE CONSTRUCTION CORP
1521 Washin. av. 2-7040

M K Engineering Co Inc 30 State 4-8652
MALY DUGAN & MALDY INC
Excavating, Grading Contractors
Shaker rd 8-4621
If no answer 2-7405
Maloy Dugan & Maloy Inc Shaker rd 8-4621
Maloy James H Inc Shaker rd 2-2405
MARR E W 138 Lark 4-0393
Mayersohn Louis 30 State 3-5121
McKenna James P
Van Weert & Manning bldg. 5-1168
McKINLEY WILLIAM E CONTR INC
212 Sheridan av. 62-0419
McKinley William E Contr Inc
212 Sheridan av. 62-0419

Figure #15 - Albany, NY area dealer advertisement in City Directory

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The history of most dealers was essentially the same across the country. Generally, most new dealers built very few houses in their first few months with the initial Lustron home taking workmen as many as 1500 hours to piece the Westchester deluxe 2-bedroom model together in the field. Engineering developments and improved erection methods as well as training and increased experience eventually cut this time down to an average of 350 hours. At this rate the normal building time was approximately two weeks. Naturally most dealers didn't want to stress the sales angle until they were sure that they could build the houses in 350 hours or less, because that is what their sales price was based on. Typically by the tenth house, dealers were able to greatly reduce the construction hours. As construction time became shorter, sales numbers began to increase gradually. The sales by the dealers often grew in a pyramid manner - the first one was often difficult to sell because buyers were afraid of them, and the crews were inexperienced. Once they were able to sell and occupy the house, potential buyers were more readily willing to purchase the next house. In fact, the initial buyer often served as the most effective salesperson, with word of mouth and owner testimony serving to supplement any marketing efforts by the dealers. In essence for every house sold, there was another salesperson for the company. Many dealers offered Lustron homeowners a bonus if they were able to refer new buyers that led to the sale of a new Lustron house.

The press and the Government pointed to the difficulties and struggles of selling the Lustron house through dealers as one of the reasons the company failed. However, most of the dealers would say otherwise. On March 1, 1950, there was a hearing before a subcommittee of the Committee on Banking and Currency of the U.S. Senate regarding the problems of independent small business Lustron Dealers. The committee was requested to hold a hearing in the interest of small-business dealers regarding the continued manufacture of Lustron houses. A total of 221 dealers in the country sent telegrams giving statements on the success and effectiveness of the dealer system and the marketability of the Lustron home. It was the sentiment of the majority of small business dealers that if the houses were continued to be manufactured, and if there was confidence that production would persist, that they were confident that they could sell them with sales numbers steadily increased over time. The Lustron Corporation claimed that if they could build 8,000 houses a year they could be a profitable business and would be able to pay back the government loans. The dealers insisted to the Senate Committee that they dealers could build the number of houses necessary to put Lustron back on its feet, regardless of who managed the plant. By March of 1950, most dealers were averaging 320 hours to erect a Lustron house while their prices were based on 350 hours. At the time of the hearing, 97 of the 221 dealers had commitments to sell & erect 8,102 houses in 1950 compared to 729 houses built by all the dealers in 1949.

With regard to the impact of the Company's closure on the dealerships, the dealers were so concerned with the company continuing that they were committed to perpetuating the organization and helping the other newer dealers get themselves up and running. It was estimated by the spokesperson for the dealers that the dealers had an investment of \$10,000,000 in the project. It was stated that "if [they] thought for one minute that this house didn't have a future, [they] would have quit a long time ago; because [they] were all expanding, all advertising, and all getting more salesman; it would be foolish for [them] to even want to continue." Many dealers had \$50,000-\$70,000 of investment to be lost if production were to stop.

The testimony of the Albany, New York dealer, Upstate Construction Corporation, via a telegram stated:

"Have been a Lustron dealer for 8 months and have erected and sold 20 Lustron houses without use of sales force or sales effort. Have used this time (8 months) to train crews. Now can turn out a Lustron house every 3 days in 350 erection hours. Have

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just employed large sales staff and can sell 100 houses in matter of weeks. Am prepared to erect 100 houses in next 4 months and 300 houses in year. Have 18 years as leading builder in our area. Lustron is the best value ever offered. All dealers this section in similar position having spent months training crews. None employed any sales effort during training period. We're all ready now to meet tremendous demand for Lustron. If Lustron permitted to continue this year, success is assured."

In addition the Amsterdam/Schenectady region dealer, Wilson Bartlett, Taylor, Inc. provided the following testimony:

"Have erected 21 houses. Due to wide area in four counties where Lustron houses are built by us are scattered, a greater opportunity presents itself for displaying the same to the public. We believe this arrangement has a tendency to increase sales where a concentration of houses in one development would not do so well."

The New Hartford, New York dealer, D'Agostino Brothers stated:

"Enthusiastic acceptance by two present owners. Hope for four in 4 months, eight in 12 months. Crews trained and waiting."

Luduca Builders, the Niagara Falls, New York dealer provided the following testimony via telegram:

"Since September 1949, sold and erected eight Lustron houses in Niagara Falls and vicinity. Plan to erect at least three houses a month during 1950. Expect to sell 40 to 50 houses in 1950 to prospects now on file. Speed can be made in erecting houses in 1950, as we now have trained crews."

It is not known what the ultimate financial loss for these New York State dealers were when the plant officially closed in June of 1950. It is presumed that many lost tens of thousands of dollars that had been invested.

The only corporate documentation indicating the number of shipments to New York State was a dealer performance report for the year end of 1949. As of December 31, 1949 there totaled 103 houses amongst the 13 dealers. (Exhibit 5 - Dealer Performance Report)

<u>Territory</u>	<u># Built</u>	<u>Dealer Name</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>/</u>	<u>% of Corp. goal of</u>
<u>10,000 homes</u>					
Albany	18	Upstate Construction Corp.	66		32%
Amsterdam	21	Wilson Bartlett Taylor	68		55%
Binghamton	11	O'Connell	71		26%
Buffalo	CANCELLED	- -			
Jamestown	5	Erickson	66		31%
Liberty	4	- -	42		67%
Newburgh	7	Totanelli	43		33%
New Hartford	2	D'Agnostino Brothers	32		5%
NYC	16	CANCELLED	101	n/a	
Niagara Falls	8	Luduca Builders	32		32%
Olean	2	E. K.	51		13%
Saranac Lake	3	Donat Gendron	29		19%
Syracuse	10	Woodruff Construction Co.	77		22%

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F. Associated Property Types

PROPERTY TYPE: Lustron House

I. DESCRIPTION

Lustron House Characteristics - general

The original Lustron prototype house, named the "Esquire," was designed by architects Roy Blass and Morris H. Beckman from Illinois. They perceived the house to be a durable variation of the established bungalow house type, yet designed in a streamlined fashion out of metal and using traditional residential house components such as a simple gabled roof, bay & picture windows, sliding pocket doors, recessed porch, and built-in cabinetry. This prototype house featured porcelain enamel panels at the exterior walls, roof, gutters, and downspouts, while the window casements were aluminum. The house measured 31'x35' and contained a living room, a dinette with a built-in china cabinet forming the room divider, a kitchen with a door leading to the rear of the house, a master bedroom, guest or child's bedroom, bathroom and a utility room. Despite having a compact footprint with approximately 990 square feet of floor space, there was much built-in storage with ample full height closets in the bedrooms, linen and storage closets in the hall, and full metal cabinetry in the kitchen. The house was designed to be built on a concrete slab, with structural steel support members that formed the wall sections, steel trusses that supported the roof, 1½ inches of fiberglass insulation within the exterior wall panels, and 4 inches of insulation above the ceiling panels. Radiant heat was supplied to the structure through the ceiling panels from a Williams Oil-O-Matic furnace. The house came with a choice of six pastel colors for the interior - all intended to be natural and easy to decorate with. The wall panels both interior and exterior required no more maintenance than washing with soap and water to preserve the luster of the porcelain finish.

Floor Plans

Lustron corporate documents and promotional materials indicate that there were 8 house types. Three models: the Westchester; the Newport and the Meadowbrook each came in two- and three-bedrooms floor plans, while the Westchester offered a deluxe or standard version.

Lustron House Model Statistics:

- The **Westchester Standard 2-bedroom** house was model number 021 and measured 31'x35' (1085 sq. ft.) and was \$5,210 from the factory and sold for approximately \$8,600.
- The **Westchester Standard 3-bedroom** house was model number 031 and measured 31'x39' (1209 sq. ft.) and was \$5,765 from the factory and sold for approximately \$9,300.
- The **Westchester Deluxe 2-bedroom** house was model number 02 and measured 31'x35' (1085 sq. ft.) and was \$5,407 from the factory and sold for approximately \$9,000.
- The **Westchester Deluxe 3-bedroom** house was model number 03 and measured 31'x39' (1209 sq. ft.) and was \$6,482 from the factory and sold for approximately \$10,000.
- The **Newport 2-bedroom** house was model number 023 and measured 31'x23' (713 sq. ft.) and was \$4,110 from the factory and sold for approximately \$7,000.

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- The **Newport 3-bedroom** house was model number 033 and measured 31'x31' (961 sq. ft.) and was \$5,065 from the factory and sold for approximately \$8,200.
- The **Meadowbrook 2-bedroom** house was model number 022 and measured 31'x25' (775 sq. ft.) and was \$4,510 from the factory and sold for approximately \$7,400.
- The **Meadowbrook 3-bedroom** house was model number 032 and measured 31'x33' (1023 sq. ft.) and was \$5,410 from the factory and sold for approximately \$8,700

Westchester

The Westchester model was the first and biggest selling model for the company. It was very similar to the original prototype with the minor modification of larger windows in the bedrooms and the elimination of a jog in the corner of the rear wall to allow for a larger bathroom and rear bedroom. The Westchester was available in both a two- and three-bedroom version.

The exterior of the 2-bedroom Westchester model (021) can be easily recognized due to its notched porch area clipped out the front corner. There are two large picture windows on the front façade with the living room window in a projecting bay area. There are two additional large picture windows, one on the rear façade and the other on the dining room side façade. The windows are aluminum casement type hinged to open outward and screens came as a standard feature. The end bedroom (master bedroom) wall was modified over the two years of production and can be used to date the houses. The earliest houses featured pairs of small square windows set high in the wall. This later became a single small window in each bedroom and lastly changed to be a medium sized single casement window for each room. The house exterior panels were offered in four pastel shades - dove gray, maize yellow, surf blue, and desert tan. The model home which opened in Atlanta was the first departure in the original four color schemes when it was offered in a pale lime green. The Quantico Marine Corps base Lustrons also offered a "dusty pink" color. The interior colors were neutral gray, ivory, blue, yellow, and pink.

The three bedroom version of the Westchester (031) had no notched porch since two bedrooms were aligned on the front façade along with the living room. It was entered directly from the gable end under an attached canopy or awning.

The Deluxe Westchester models had an identical floor plan as the Standard version, but differed in that it included the built-in vanity/bookcase, the pass-through china cabinet, the ceiling radiant heat, the projecting bay window, the bathroom vanity, the asphalt tile floor covering and 2'x2' kitchen wall panels. The Standard version did not include these features and instead had conventional heating systems, minimum built-in features and the floor covering was supplied by the builder. The two-bedroom Westchester Deluxe model (02) was the most popular and there are approximately 78 in New York State. The Lustron directory in Thomas Fetter's 2002 book, notes that only 111 Westchester three-bedroom models (03) have been found in the U.S. At least 6 three-bedroom Westchester models are known to exist in New York State.

Newport

Given the success of the Westchester model, the Lustron Corporation later introduced a second style, the "Newport," again offered in either a two- (023) or three-bedroom (033) version. Their first Newport model production began in late 1949 with the first house (serial # 2036) shipped to Birmingham, AL. It included many of the conventional parts used in the Westchester but had a much smaller footprint measuring 31ft x 23ft.

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The distinctive characteristic was that the roof gable was turned 90 degrees from its orientation on the Westchester. The front door was moved to the left corner of the front wall and a large bay window was set in the living room sidewall where the front door was located on the Westchester units. Other substantial changes included the use of a standup furnace and the use of standard forced-air circulation instead of radiant heating. At least three Newport models are known to exist in New York State.

Meadowbrook

Lastly, before filing bankruptcy, the Lustron Corporation offered a slightly larger 2 & 3 bedroom Meadowbrook model. However, very few were built and none are known to exist in New York State. The Meadowbrook model is a larger version of the Newport model.

Accessory Structures

The Lustron Corp. offered garages and breezeway additions made of porcelain enameled steel. Two garage packages were available in late 1949-1950. While clad in enamel steel panels, they were not constructed of steel framing like the houses. Instead the panels were fastened to light wood framing typically provided by the dealer who erected the structure. At least one breezeway package was offered, to connect the house and the garage. Promotional materials touted that the garages were easy "add-ons" for Lustron property owners to consider since the enameled panel colors would always match perfectly since they would not change with age or weathering, even years after the original house was constructed.

- Garage Model G-1 was a one and one-half car size, measuring 15'x23' (345 sq. ft.).
- Garage Model G-2 was a two and one-half car size, measuring 23'x23' (529 sq. ft.).

II. SIGNIFICANCE

The Lustron house is significant in architecture and engineering for its associations with important developments in post-World War II prefabricated houses; as an excellent example of an innovative and unusual type of prefabrication which used an assembly-line production of all-steel building components in a manner similar to automobile manufacturing; and for its modern, durable gabled-roof ranch design. The Lustron house was a technologically advanced prefab solution to the severe housing shortages in the post-War era.

The Lustron Corporation shipped the majority of its houses during 1949 (with roughly 1952 of almost 2600). Production reached its peaking in July of 1949 with 270 units shipped although this was the same period of time when the RFC (Reconstruction Finance Corp.) put pressures on the company to increase production while there was an onslaught of negative publicity. This resulted in the unfortunately drop in sales over the follow 12 months with less than 100 units shipped in March of 1950 when the RFC filed foreclosure proceedings and the company went into receivership. The factory shipped the final 130 units between May 1 and June 6, 1950 when the plant officially closed. At that time, Lustron dealer had commitments for projects involving 1,270 units.

At the time the plant closed, the Lustron Corporation and its dealers and builder has overcome many of the obstacles that had caused the slow sales in the beginning. Among these were building code issues, local labor relations, transportation problems,

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construction time, dealer confidence or familiarity with the product, and public satisfaction with the product. If not for the negative press concerning the questionable future of the company, the Lustron Corp. and its dealers were confident that the level of sales would have continued to grow from the peak production mark set in July 1949. Company officials also believed that many dealers had gained sufficient experience with the product to shift from the construction of the single house to much larger, multi-unit projects, similar to the Quantico military base project. By August of 1949, the company had signed three separate contracts for projects encompassing nearly 5,000 Lustron houses, with a fourth contract of an additional 3,000 units negotiated in November 1949. They were felt to be particularly well-suited for the military with the part being easily adapted for other types of buildings, such as barracks, mess halls, offices and hospitals.

Despite documentation from the Company and the dealers that production was picking up, that sales were increasing and that sufficient public interest existed, the RFC foreclosed on the loans that had enabled the company to outfit its plant and produce the first 2,500 units. The company simply was not given the time necessary to establish a steady level of production to cover and pay back its debts. A company that produced all-steel houses in the end proved to be very expensive to start-up and keep running. While Strandlund was confident that given enough time and capital, the business would run like the well-oiled machine he envisioned. Unfortunately, in the end time was not an asset he had, thus the Lustron Corporation survived for only five short years, 1946-1950.

Lustron properties in New York State are significant under architecture and engineering if they are one of the eight models listed above and if they have retained historic integrity. Lustron Houses in New York State meet National Register Criterion A as examples of the type of innovative use of modern material technology and marketing techniques that were used to meet the demands of a severe housing crisis following World War II. Lustron Houses also meet Criterion C as examples of the type of creative house design, assembly-line production and on-site construction used for prefabricated housing during the late 1940s. The all-steel prefabricated house represents the culmination of decades of attempts to manufacture a steel component house as well as a national effort of combining resources of both private enterprise and federal government assistance to alleviate one of the worst housing shortages in our nation's history.

III. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to meet the property type registration requirements, an existing Lustron house must be a one-story, ranch-type Lustron with exterior two-foot square, porcelain-enameled steel panels and porcelain-enameled, roof tiles. The interior must retain a significant portion of the enameled steel ceiling and wall panels, as well as built-in features if originally included. The house must be manufactured by the Lustron Corporation and maintain a high degree of integrity by retaining most of its metal construction, an intact floor plan, aluminum casement windows, enameled steel roof tiles and chimney and a concrete slab foundation.

Additions made to Lustron houses on the rear façade do not represent loss of integrity as long as the square footage of the addition does not exceed that of the original Lustron house or its massing does not overwhelm or obscure the original form. Often original sites allowed for the construction of a full basement by the construction

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companies that erected the Lustron house. Lustron houses set on a basement or crawl space instead of a concrete slab at the time of the original house construction, will meet registration criteria if otherwise intact and retaining a high degree of integrity.

Alterations that would result in the loss of historic integrity and therefore being considered ineligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places include exterior vinyl siding, artificial siding, major front façade changes (i.e. removing bay window, full enclosure of entry porch, additions) inappropriate window or roof replacement, or doubling the size of a Lustron house with an addition.

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G. Geographical Data

The geographical area encompasses the entire State of New York. The listing below accounts for 99 properties that have been identified. Seven of these Lustron properties have been demolished. At least 28 properties have been found to be eligible for National Register listing.

COUNTY	CITY	STREET ADDRESS	MODEL	COLOR	SERIAL #	NR ELIGIBLE
Albany	Albany	1 Jermain Street	Westchester 2	Yellow		No (sided, interior alterations)
Albany	Albany	2 Jermain Street	Westchester 2			<i>Demolished</i>
Albany	Albany	249 Hackett Blvd	Westchester 2	Tan		No (sided, roof replaced)
Albany	Albany	27 Pinehurst Street	Westchester 2	Gray		No (sided, relocated)
Albany	Albany	3 Jermain Street	Westchester 2	Blue		Yes
Albany	Albany	355 S. Main Street	Westchester 2 + G-1 garage	Tan		Yes
Albany	Albany	4 Jermain Street	Westchester 2			<i>Demolished</i>
Albany	Albany	5 Jermain Street	Westchester 2	Gray		Yes
Albany	Albany	6 Jermain Street	Westchester 2			<i>Demolished</i>
Albany	Albany	7 Jermain Street	Westchester 2	Yellow		No (windows replaced, porch enclosed, addition)
Albany	Albany	8 Jermain Street	Westchester 2	Tan		Yes
Montgomery	Amsterdam	110 Evelyn Avenue	Westchester 2	Blue		Yes
Montgomery	Amsterdam	20 Henrietta Blvd	Westchester 2	Tan		Yes
Montgomery	Amsterdam	207 Northampton Road	Westchester 2	Tan		No (windows replaced, porch enclosed, basement)
Montgomery	Amsterdam	23 Dartmouth	Westchester 3 + G-2 garage & breezeway	Gray	1884	Yes
Saratoga	Ballston Lake	26 Palmer Ave	Westchester 2 (deluxe)	Tan		?
Saratoga	Ballston Spa	62 Church Avenue	Westchester 2	Tan		Yes
Broome	Binghamton	10 Edna Avenue	Westchester 2	??	no plate	No (sided, windows replaced, addition)
Broome	Binghamton	1235 Chenango Street (@ Hinds Street)	Westchester 2+ G-1 garage	Yellow	no plate	No (sided, windows replaced, porch enclosed, addition)
Broome	Binghamton	147 Rosedale Drive	Westchester 2	Gray		Yes

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Broome	Binghamton	22 Edgewood Road	Westchester 2 + G-1 garage	Blue		Yes
Broome	Binghamton	38 N. Morningside Drive	Westchester 2	Blue	1348	Yes
Montgomery	Canajoharie	__ Ridge Road	Westchester 2			?
Chatauqua	Chatauqua	23 Hurst Avenue	Westchester 2	Blue	1697	No (window openings added to front, addition)
Schoharie	Cobleskill	__ Legion Drive				?
Schoharie	Cobleskill	__ Legion Drive				?
Schoharie	Cobleskill	__ Legion Drive				?
Albany	Cohoes	125 Adam Avenue	Westchester 2	Tan		No (relocated, windows replaced, on basement)
Albany	Colonie	__ Bought Corners @ Rt. 9	Westchester 2	Tan		Demolished
Westchester	Croton-on-Hudson	10 Pond Meadow Road	Westchester 2	Yellow		?
Schenectady	Duanesburg	Old Duanesburg Rd @ Rt 7		Blue		?
Schenectady	East Glenville	26 Slater Drive	Westchester 2	Gray	1458	Yes
Rensselaer	East Greenbush	35 Phillips Road	Westchester 2	Gray		Yes
Rensselaer	East Greenbush	551 Rivers Road	Westchester 2	Gray		?
Rensselaer	East Greenbush	7 Willow Lane	Westchester 3	Blue		No (windows replaced, chimney added)
Rensselaer	East Greenbush	8 Lakeshore Drive (Hampton Manor)	Westchester 3	Blue		Yes
Broome	Endwell	2701 Robins Street	Westchester 2 Deluxe	Gray	1364	Yes
Chatauqua	Fredonia	10 Holmes Place	Westchester 2	Gray	1998	?
Nassau	Glen Cove Long Island	25 McGrady Street	Westchester 2	Blue		No (sided, addition, windows replaced, proch enclosed)
Nassau	Glen Cove Long Island	27 McGrady Street	Westchester 2 + G-2 garage	Yellow		No (sided, windows replaced)
Nassau	Glen Cove Long Island	29 McGrady Street	Westchester 2	Blue		No (sided, second story addition, most features replaced)
Cattaraugus	Gowanda	??	Westchester 2	Gray	1046	?
Madison	Hamilton	19 Hamilton Street	Newport 2 ??	Gray		?
Orange	Highland Falls	4 Riverview Rd	Westchester 2 (deluxe)	Blue	1622	Yes
Suffolk	Huntington Station		Westchester 2 (deluxe)			?

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Tioga	Ithaca	102 Homestead Road	Westchester 2 + G-2 garage	Yellow	2525	Yes
Tompkins	Ithaca	___ (Cornell University)	Westchester 2	Yellow (or Gray)		<i>Demolished</i>
Tompkins	Ithaca	111 Halcyon Hill Road	Westchester 2	Gray	2548	Yes
Tompkins	Ithaca	1315 E. State Street (Cornell Univ)	Westchester 2	Gray		?
Chatauqua	Jamestown	226 Hall Avenue	Westchester 2	Blue		?
Chatauqua	Jamestown	557 Falconer Street	Westchester 2	Blue		?
Niagara	Lewistown	47 Water Street	Westchester 2	Gray		?
Sullivan	Liberty	27 Charles Street	Westchester 2	Yellow		No (windows replaced, gutters removed)
Sullivan	Liberty	72 Winslow Place	Westchester 2	Yellow	2001	No (windows replaced)
Albany	Loudonville	10 Clover Lane	Westchester 2 + G-1 garage	Gray		Yes
Albany	Loudonville	11 Clover Lane	Westchester 2	??		No (sided, windows replaced, oversized addition)
Albany	Loudonville	12 Clover Lane	Westchester 2 + G-2 garage	Yellow	1692	No (sided, porch enclosed, windows replaced, roof & chimney replaced, oversized addition)
Albany	Loudonville	14 Clover Lane	Westchester 2	Yellow		?
Albany	Loudonville	266 Osborne Road	Westchester 2	Tan		No (sided, porch enclosed, windows replaced, oversized addition)
Albany	Loudonville	268 Osborne Road	Newport 2	??		No (sided, windows replaced, roof replaced, oversized addition)
Albany	Loudonville	270 Osborne Road	Westchester 2	??		No (sided, roof replaced)
Albany	Loudonville	7 Clover Lane	Westchester 3 + G-1 garage	Yellow		Yes
Albany	Loudonville	8 Clover Lane	Westchester 2	??		No (sided, windows replaced, roof replaced, entry relocated)
Orange	Middletown	6 Roosevelt Avenue	Westchester 2	Gray	1055	No (windows replaced, partially sided)
Orange	Middletown	9 Roosevelt Avenue	Westchester 2	Blue		No (addition, enclosed porch)
Oneida	New Hartford	128 Genesee Street	Westchester 2	Gray	1106	Yes

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New York	New York City	Ave. of Americas & 52nd Street	Westchester 2	Blue	1	<i>Demolished</i>
Niagara	Niagara Falls	__ Pine Ave & 66th	Westchester 2	Blue		?
Niagara	Niagara Falls	278 South Avenue	Westchester 2	Blue		?
Niagara	Niagara Falls	8621 Rivershore Drive	Westchester 3	Tan		?
Niagara	Niagara Falls	89 Meadowbrook Road	Westchester 2	Blue		?
Niagara	Niagara Falls	9100 Hennepin Avenue	Westchester 2	Gray		?
Niagara	Niagara Falls	Devoe & Rozelle	Westchester 2	Blue		?
Cattaraugus	Olean	1912 W. State Street	??	Blue		?
Clinton	Plattsburgh	7 Sanborn Avenue	Westchester 3 + G-2 garage	Blue		Yes
Clinton	Plattsburgh	9 Sanborn Avenue	Westchester 3 + garage	Yellow		Yes
Clinton	Plattsburgh	17 Sanborn Avenue	Westchester 3 + G-2 garage	Yellow		Yes
Clinton	Plattsburgh	23 Sanborn Avenue	Westchester 3 (deluxe)	??		No (sided, windows replaced, roof replaced, entry addition)
Saratoga	Rexford	__ Blue Barn Road @ Rt. 146	Westchester 2	??		?
Saratoga	Rexford	__ Blue Barn Road @ Rt. 146	Westchester 2	??		?
Saratoga	Rexford	14 Blue Barn Road @ Rt. 146	Westchester 2	Gray		?
Essex	Saranac Lake	62 Petrova Avenue	Westchester 2	Tan		Yes
Schenectady	Scotia	4 Drome Road Extension	Westchester 2	Tan		No (porch enclosed, windows replaced, addition)
Schenectady	Scotia	520 Beacon Street	Westchester 2	Blue		No (addition, porch enclosed, windows replaced)
Schenectady	Scotia	615 Riverside Avenue	Westchester 2 + G-2 garage	Tan		Yes
Schenectady	Scotia	807 Pleasantview	Westchester 2	Tan		No (porch enclosed, windows replaced, addition)
Rockland	Stony Point	38 Main Street	Westchester 2	Blue		?
Onondaga	Syracuse	121 Manor Drive	Westchester 2	Yellow		Yes
Onondaga	Syracuse	201 Brookland Drive	Westchester 2	Yellow		Yes
Onondaga	Syracuse	201 Fayette Blvd	Westchester 2 (02)	Yellow	1216	No (porch enclosed, windows replaced)
Onondaga	Syracuse	332 Lathrop Rd	Westchester 2 (deluxe)	?? - painted		Yes
Onondaga	Syracuse	455 Buckingham Avenue	Westchester 2	Gray		<i>Demolished</i>

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Onondaga	Syracuse	521 Roxford Rd S	Westchester 2	Blue		Yes
Erie	Tonawanda	269 Creekside Drive	Westchester 2	Blue		?
Broome	Vestal	___ Vestal Parkway (next to #2448)	Newport 2	Yellow		Yes
Broome	Vestal	2448 Vestal Parkway	Westchester 2	Blue	2391	No (porch enclosed, windows replaced, stove pipe)
Broome	Vestal	601 Clay Street	Westchester 3	Yellow	2303	Yes
Chatauqua	Westfield	125 Elm Street	Westchester 2 + G-1 garage	Blue		Yes

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H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

This multiple property nomination is largely based on the information gathered through the New York State (NYS) Lustron Project from January 2007 through August 2007, which involved the surveying and documentation of identified Lustron houses across the state. The efforts to locate the Lustron properties began with the assembly of rough directory of addresses from the Thomas Fetter book, The Lustron House (2002) which includes a directory by state in its appendices. The State Historic Preservation Office provided a directory listing for cross-referencing purpose and from these two sources a database was started. An informational pamphlet on the NYS Lustron Project was sent out to all known properties as well as preservation organizations across the state encouraging more information regarding the locations of Lustron homes. A database was developed with fields that corresponded to the information obtained on the survey forms. This survey work across five different regions of the state (Capital Region/Adirondacks; Central NY; Western NY, Southern Tier; & Downstate/NYC) involved countless volunteers in order locate and confirm each address, complete a standardized Lustron building form, provide photographic and geographic mapping documentation and in some cases interviews with owners. There was a single site visit to the Ohio Historical Society in Columbus, Ohio to review Lustron Corporation archived papers. In addition, several sources, from company promotional materials, documentary films and books, articles and papers provided the basis of information for the historic contexts and significance. These sources are listed under the Major Bibliographic Resources in Section I.

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- Michelmores, Bill & Anne Neville, "Lustron Living." The Buffalo News, July 18, 1999.
- Wolfe, Tom and Leonard Garfield. "A New Standard for Living: The Lustron House, 1946-50" Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1989.
- Series of Leo Burnett Company, Inc. Advertisements for The Lustron Home:
Advertisement 106 - "Tonight's grand prize...a new standard for living"
Advertisement 128 - "A Contribution to American building"
Advertisement 230
Advertisement 231
Advertisement 234 - "(Name of builder-dealer) appointed Lustron dealer"
Advertisement 235 - "Now we can take your order"
Advertisement 236 - "See the house America is talking about"
Advertisement 237 - "What's new about the heating in this new kind of house?"
Advertisement 238 - "You'll say "I never saw a house so easy to keep clean"

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Advertisement 239 - "Never before in America a house like this"
Advertisement 240 - "Never before in America a house like this"
Advertisement 241 - "Here it is: the house America has been waiting for"
Advertisement 242 - "The rooms are BIG in this new kind of house"
Advertisement 243 - "See it today!"
Advertisement 244 - "You keep it clean with a damp cloth"
Advertisement 246 - "Here comes your house"
Advertisement 247 - "Put the key in the door"

Series of Corporation documents from Archived Papers held at the Ohio Historical Society in Columbus, Ohio.

- "Dealer Performance Report," March 8, 1950 (Numbers effective through Feb. 28, 1950)
- "A Study on Lustron Homes made among 200 Lustron Home Owners," July 17, 1953 (mailed to 320 homeowners; 200 responses)
- "Answers to your Questions about the Lustron Home" - informational brochure produced by Lustron Corporation.
- "Lustron Sales Program"
- "Consolidated Lustron Accessory Price List" - memo to all Dealers from W.A. Matheson on October 26, 1949
- "Facts about Lustron" - letter and information sent to the media from Carl Strandlund on December 31, 1949.

Interviews:

Tom Fetters, Author, 11/29/06, 1/20/07
Harold Green, Upstate Construction Corporation (Albany Lustron Dealership), 1/27/07
Harold Bishop, Lustron Original Homeowner (E. Glenville), 7/9/07, 7/10/07.
Harold Gibbs, Lustron Original Homeowner (Amsterdam), 3/22/07
Betty Madison, Lustron Homeowner (Cohoes), 1/10/07
Ken Barley, Lustron Homeowner (Chataqua), 3/14/07
Sandra VanVorst, Lustron Homeowner, (E. Greenbush), 3/15/07
Nancy & Joe Danforth-Norfleet, Lustron Homeowners (Albany), 11/28/07, 12/9/05
John Schumacher, Lustron Homeowner (Albany), 5/4/07
John Shaner, Lustron Homeowner (Endwell), 3/10/07